

The  
**FOUNDING  
CONFERENCE**

of the  
**FOURTH  
INTERNATIONAL**

*(World Party of the Socialist Revolution)*

Program and Resolutions

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Published by the  
**SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**  
of the United States  
*(Section of the Fourth International)*

116 University Place, New York

**LABOR BOOK SHOP**

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OF THE UNITED STATES



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## Foreword

In 1933, after the seizure of power in Germany by the fascists, the International Communist League, composed primarily of those revolutionists expelled from the Third International for "Trotskyism", raised the slogan: *For the organization of a new, a Fourth International! For the organization of new communist parties in all countries!*

Up to that time, the I.C.L. had followed the policy of working to reform the Communist International. The new slogan marked the abandonment of this policy. The cowardly capitulation of the German Communist party marked the collapse of the Comintern as definitely as the collapse of the Second International had been marked by its open support of the imperialist war on August 4, 1914. The unreserved endorsement of the policy and conduct of the German C. P. which the Executive Committee of the Third International made mandatory upon all its sections, only confirmed the transformation of the International into a reactionary force in the labor movement.

The five years since 1933 have witnessed tremendous changes in the international labor movement. One catastrophe after another—the Saar, Austria, Ethiopia, Russia, Spain, China, France—have emphasized the bankruptcy of the two old Internationals. The growing rapprochement between the social democrats and Stalinists has not served the aim of proletarian unity and victory, but of subordinating the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and, as a consequence, adding to a long list of disgraceful defeats. The Second International is nothing but an instrument for preserving the social dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in its decaying democratic form. The Third International is nothing but an instrument for preserving the political dictatorship of the anti-Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy.

In the same period, however, the movement launched by the I.C.L. has moved with difficulty but determination towards its goal—the founding of the Fourth International. Without serious consequences in its own ranks, it overcame the internal difficulties created by a whole series of ultra-leftist and diletante tendencies which manifested themselves in its midst and which, after breaking with it, condemned themselves to impotence and nationalist

decay. Without affecting its revolutionary principles, it succeeded in fusing with whole sections of militants who broke away from the Second International and joined the new movement in Holland, France, Belgium, Austria, England and the United States.

At the same time, it proved to be the only movement capable of surviving the rigorous test to which events subject principles and tactics, and which expanded its program to embrace the lessons of these events. This was made possible not only by the revolutionary Marxian principles it has always taken as its point of departure, but by the rigidly-followed regime of democratic centralism in its ranks—essential condition for the free and fruitful exchange of opinions.

The significance of this consolidation is enhanced by the contrast offered in the evolution of the various centrist groupings. Entirely illusory have proved all hopes of maintaining an independent revolutionary position in between the Second and Third Internationals, on the one side, and the Fourth International on the other. This is demonstrated by the development of the two main centrist currents.

The first is the Brandler-Lovestone "International". Its physical disintegration is in itself sufficient commentary on the disdainful sneer at "Trotskyist sectarianism" which constituted one of its main "principles". Its political disintegration confirms our original analysis of this movement as a bridge leading back to social democracy. Its Czech section went over to the Czech branch of the Second International. Its Swedish and French friends are, essentially, in the same camp. In Alsace, its group has successfully replaced right-wing communism with petty-bourgeois nationalism. In India, its representative, Roy, is a Stalinist in every respect save official recognition by Moscow. Nothing is left of this "International" but the inconsequential German emigre group and the Lovestoneites in the U.S.A. The latter have sunk to the level of endorsing bourgeois party candidates in the election; in the trade unions, their policy is based on the boots of labor bureaucrats; and, through their pacifist "united front", they have recently been committed to national defense under capitalism. The decay of Brandlerism is symbolized by its recent adherence to. . . .

The second current: the London Bureau. Its evolution, too, has been in the direction of the Second International. Its largest section, the Norwegian Labor party, has actually joined the L.S.I.

and now runs the government for the bourgeoisie of Norway. Its next largest section, the P.O.U.M. of Spain, abandoned the most elementary principles of Marxism in entering a coalition government of the bourgeois state. Its third largest section, the I.L.P. of Great Britain, not only condoned the crimes of its associates—in general, all the affiliates of the London Bureau are ever so tolerant towards each other!—but continues to tolerate as its real and decisive party leadership the Parliamentary spokesmen of the party who contemptuously flout its verbal radicalism with impunity. Its fourth largest section, the S.A.P. of Germany, openly supports People's Frontism, flirts with the Stalinists, and beseeches Wels, Stampfer, Deutsch and Co. for admission into a "reconstituted" All-German social democracy. Its other affiliates are worthy of their compeers.

The contrast is not accidental. Serenely unaffected by the jeers and jibes of our opportunist adversaries who have always been convinced that they can keep or gain the support of big masses if only they are not too particular about the principles they advocate, we, on the contrary, have proceeded on the tested assumption that, while there are periods when the revolutionists must have the tenacity to hold together even as a small group, they can blossom into an influential party of the masses only by sticking doggedly to the principles of Marxism. Throughout the vicissitudes of the past 10-15 years, that has been the course we followed. There is no reason to regret it. It made possible the crowning of the first decade of our struggle with the founding of the Fourth International (World Party of the Socialist Revolution).

Our founding conference could not take place in a public hall. The bourgeoisie, and its Stalinist and social-democratic sergeants-at-arms, forced the revolutionary internationalists to assemble secretly, and under the difficulties that attend such assembly. Yet, despite this handicap and the handicap of ever-strained finances, thirty delegates met "somewhere in Switzerland" on September 3, 1938, to found the Fourth International, to approve its program of action and to adopt the other resolutions which are printed in this brochure. The delegates represented directly eleven countries—the United States, France, Great Britain (England and Scotland), Germany, the Soviet Union, Italy, Latin America, Poland, Belgium, Holland and Greece. In addition to the organizations in these countries, there were quite a number of others which, for a variety of legal and physical reasons, were

unable to send delegates but which are nevertheless wholeheartedly pledged to the Fourth International: Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, Chile, China, Indo-China, Union of South Africa, Australia, Spain, Norway, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Canada, Switzerland, where sections exist, as well as small nuclei which, many of them for reasons of illegality, do not even have a regular press: Lithuania, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, New Zealand, Sweden, Ireland, Palestine, India, etc.

The banner of the Fourth International—neither the First nor the Second were ever able to say this; not even the Third could say it at its founding congress!—is thus already planted on every continent of the globe, and in virtually every important country.

The Fourth International is proud of the fact that during the dramatic Munich week, when Europe seemed to be hurtling headlong towards a new imperialist slaughter, when the traditional parties of the proletariat were rallying to the flag of the bourgeoisie and the centrists were paralyzed by their internal contradictions—our world conference, meeting at the same time, issued the only clear-cut, flaming call to the proletariat to unite in resolute internationalist struggle against imperialism, its war and its lackeys.

The Fourth International is proud of the fact that at a time when the masses are being disoriented and demoralized by the hollow cries about "democracy" and "peace" and "People's Fronts", clamorous devices for covering up treachery, it has adopted a transitional program of concrete demands which reflect the needs and longings of the masses throughout the world, which gives an unambiguous, realistic and practical answer to the burning problems of the workers, the poor farmers and peasants, and the colonial peoples.

The Fourth International is proud of the fact that its traditions and ideas are so deep-rooted and irrepressible that its popular name—"Trotskyism"—is applied to those thousands of heroic revolutionary pioneers and old fighters who represent the resurgent forces of proletarian democracy which the reactionary, anti-Soviet bureaucracy of the Kremlin is attempting so cruelly to drown in a sea of blood.

The Fourth International is proud of its heroes and martyrs, who so fearlessly gave their lives or freedom in the struggle against capitalist and Stalinist reaction in Germany, Austria,



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Greece, Latin America, China, Indo-China, Spain, France, the Soviet Union. They are the heralds and the exemplars of the new movement.

Calumny, isolation, frameups, persecution, imprisonment and murder—the Fourth International has met them all from its enemies. It has survived, just as it shall survive all its enemies—all, all. Today it is armed mainly with its program, with its noble ideals, with its unflagging confidence in the cause it fights for. Tomorrow its strength will be the strength of the millions, for whom its program offers the only way out of the abominations and sufferings of an outlived social order. And the millions, the masses, will conquer. At the head of their triumphal march will be the banner of the Fourth International, the World Party of the Socialist Revolution.

M. S.

January 1, 1939

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# Salute to Our Living Martyrs And Our Heroic Dead

At the moment when representatives of the Bolshevik-Leninists of all countries, gathered together in an international conference, are formally constituting the Fourth International (World Party of the Socialist Revolution), their thoughts and their revolutionary greetings go first of all to their comrades who everywhere in the world are victims of the repressions of capitalism and of totalitarian dictatorships.

Our cadres are as yet few and young; but already numerous are those of our comrades who lie in prisons or concentration camps established throughout the world by rotting bourgeois regimes and reactionary governments. From an Indo-China oppressed by French imperialism, through the bars of his prison, there comes to us the unconquerable voice of Ta-Tu Thau, weak, paralyzed, but as intransigent and loyal as ever.

In Brazil, a young worker and militant Bolshevik-Leninist, Hilcar Leite, sick, tortured, already sentenced to four and a half years of prison and threatened with an even more ferocious additional sentence, far from weakening, reaffirms, together with his prison-comrades, his unshakable faith in the victory of our cause, and expects his freedom only as a result of the triumphs of the Fourth International.

Our heroic Greek comrades, dozens and dozens of whom languish on the prison-islands of Metaxas, hold aloft with magnificent valor the banner of the Socialist Revolution, ranged around Stinas, sentenced to five years of prison and perpetual exile, and Polioupoulos, whose fate is unknown, and swear to evenge their comrade Scalaio, who died in the concentration camp of Acronauplia.

The concentration-camps of Germany and Austria are full of devoted militants, implacable "Trotskyite" revolutionaries, who are standing up against the executioners unleashed by Hitler.

The Polish Bolshevik-Leninists are not spared by the Bonapartist dictatorship there, but in the jails of Poland continue the fight for the cause of Socialism.

But it is not only to the fascist and Bonapartist dictatorships that the Trotskyites fall victim. The so-called democratic governments also rabidly attack our movement and our comrades: in Morocco, in China, in Latin-America, in France, in the United States, everywhere, our comrades are the object of persecution by the police. In Spain, while the mercenary gangs of Franco murder, without distinction of party, the best fighters in the republican trenches, the Negrin government hunts down the most militant and tested revolutionaries—when, indeed, it does not simply abandon them to the paid agents of Stalin.

To the heroic Spanish Bolshevik-Leninists who in the republican lines fight against the fascist bandits, or who in the prisons of Negrin and the G.P.U. hold unflinchingly to the program of socialist revolution—the sole guarantee of victory over Franco!—to Grandiso and his companions, greetings from the first international conference of the Fourth International!

In China, the situation is the same as in Spain: our comrades, even while in the first ranks of the Chinese armies facing the Japanese invader, are stabbed in the back by the agents of Chiang Kai-shek and Stalin who thus prepare the ground for a treacherous compromise with the Japanese imperialist bandits.

The Fourth International dips its stainless flag in salute over the still fresh graves of our heroic comrades who during the last two years have fallen under the bullets of Franco in Spain; under the axe or in the concentration camps of Hitler, in Germany and in Austria; in the prisons and prison-islands of Metaxas and Vargas, in Greece and Brazil; under the blows of the Bonapartist dictatorships in Poland, in China, etc.; under the Stalinist bullets and tortures in the U.S.S.R., in Spain, in China, Switzerland and in France.

Fauconnet, Pasque, Medeiros, Scalaio, Hans Freund, Isidor Fassner, Erwin Wolf, Reiss, Rossini, Sedoff, Klement! Your names are written across our banner! We salute also those young unknown revolutionaries who in Russia fall under the executions of the G.P.U. still crying "Long live Trotsky!"

None of these repressions, these tortures, these assassinations, shall stop us, for our task is laid out for us by history, and not by the activities of police or of state terror-machines, no matter how powerful and totalitarian.

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The first international conference of the World Party of the Socialist Revolution sends its greetings and its solidarity to all revolutionary militants thrown into bourgeois prisons, fascist prisons, and Stalinist prisons. It calls on all comrades, sympathizers, and conscious proletarians to put into practice their feelings of solidarity with all militants who have fallen victim to capitalist oppression and fascist and Stalinist terror. The very salvation of the socialist revolution requires that those militants who are being so sorely tried should feel that they are supported by an international solidarity which is active and effective.

Today's sacrifice is tomorrow's guarantee of triumph. The proletarian revolution, victorious under the banner of the Fourth International, will avenge the comrades who have fallen, and snatch from their prisons those who languish there.

## Greetings to the Fighters in Spain

The Conference of the Fourth International proclaims its complete solidarity with the fighters in Spain, whatever their parties, who with arms in hand are struggling against the criminal gangs of Franco-Hitler-Mussolini.

It proclaims its firm will to set to work in every way to break the blockade established on August 6, 1936, by the French Popular Front Government, the English Government, and the Russian Government.

It recalls with pride that the first effective practical aid in the form of volunteers, while the Popular Front parties were still babbling away about neutrality, was given by the sections of the Fourth International, particularly the French and Belgian sections. It salutes its members who fell in the first days of the fight against Franco: Robert de Fauconnet, member of the P.O.I., killed at Huesca, Pasqué, of the Belgian P.S.R., killed at Irun, as well as many other comrades wounded or crippled.

In those days, the revolutionary workers, in the militias, in the factories, in the rear and at the front, were the masters. That is why they won the first decisive victories. Today they, the winners of the first victories, have been imprisoned and are hunted down. Stalin's bureaucracy, allied with the socialist tops, the "anarchist" leaders, and the bourgeoisie, has, in return for very precarious material aid, forced repressions against the "Trotskyites" and against the anarchist rank-and-file fighters. The end sought by this Stalin-bourgeois terror was the restoration of bourgeois property-relations and the recapture from the workers of their July, 1936, conquests. It is in this repression, which decapitates the republican army, that one can find the principal cause of the defeat.

Free the best fighters! Free the members of the P.O.U.M., of the F.A.I.! Free Munis and Carlini, former militiamen, members of the Fourth International! All they ask is to go back to their posts at the front, in the vanguard of the republican armies. Working-class fighters, force Negrin-Stalin to put an

end to their frame-ups and persecutions, direct importations from Moscow!

All the time that they are slandering and persecuting revolutionaries throughout the entire world, the leaders of the Popular Front, who are responsible for the blockade, confine themselves to mere phrases intended to lull the fighting spirit of the workers.

The Fourth International, all the while that it is trying to organize solidarity in every domain, has been proclaiming ever since the beginning that the best and most effective aid that the workers of the whole world can give to their Spanish brothers lies in direct action, organized especially by trade unions in the war industries, in transportation, and in seaports, in boycotting all shipments to the fascists, and in the general strike to overthrow the governments that support the blockade.

The Fourth International proclaims that only victory over Franco can re-open the perspective of a proletarian revolution. That is the reason why, despite the frame-ups and persecutions of the Negrin-Stalin government, and while fighting against that government of defeat and reaction, advanced workers must strive with all their strength for the victory of the republican armies.

### The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

# World Congress Greetings to Leon Trotsky

Dear Comrade:

The Conference of the Fourth International sends you its warmest greetings.

The barbarous repression which rabidly attacks our movement in general and you in particular prevented you from being with us to bring to our debates the contributions of the former founder of the Red Army, the organizer of the October insurrection, the theoretician of the permanent revolution, and the direct successor of Lenin.

The Stalinist, the fascist, and the imperialist enemies have subjected you to severe trials. Leon Sedoff, Erwin Wolf, Rudolf Klement are dead, fallen victims to the Stalinist-counter-revolution. Ta-Thu Thau lies suffering in the prisons of French imperialism. Numerous German and Greek comrades are being tortured in fascist prisons. You are the object of constant attempts at assassination. But all these persecutions, though they rain painful blows upon us, have as their final result only the definite strengthening of our conviction of the value of the Marxist program, of which you are in our opinion, since the death of Lenin, the principal interpreter.

That is why our greeting contains more than just affection for the great present-day theoretician of revolutionary Marxism. There is also the certainty that the enemy's blows, however heavy, will not prevent the doctrine of the socialist revolution from becoming the living reality of tomorrow. The Conference of the Fourth International marks a new spring forward of our movement along the road of unification, of organizational reinforcement, and of the perfecting of its propaganda by the adoption of the transitional program. We express the strong hope that you will long share in its successes as you have shared in its vicissitudes.

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# **The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International**

## **The Objective Prerequisites for a Socialist Revolution**

The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat.

The economic prerequisite for the proletarian revolution has already in general achieved the highest point of fruition that can be reached under capitalism. Mankind's productive forces stagnate. Already, new inventions and improvements fail to raise the level of material wealth. Conjunctural crises under the weight of the social crisis affecting the whole capitalist system weigh ever heavier deprivations and sufferings upon the masses. Growing unemployment, in its turn, deepens the financial crisis of the State and undermines the unstable monetary systems. Democratic regimes, as well as fascist, stagger on from one bankruptcy to another.

The bourgeoisie itself sees no way out. In countries where it has already been forced to stake its last upon the card of fascism, it now toboggans with closed eyes toward an economic and military catastrophe. In the historically-privileged countries, i.e., in those where the bourgeoisie can still for a certain period permit itself the luxury of democracy at the expense of national accumulations (Great Britain, France, United States, etc.) all of capital's traditional parties are in a state of perplexity, bordering on a paralysis of will. The "New Deal," despite its first period pretentious resoluteness, represents but a special form of political perplexity, possible only in a country where the bourgeoisie succeeded in accumulating incalculable wealth. The present crisis, far from having run its full course, has already succeeded in showing that "New Deal" politics, like Popular Front politics in France, opens no new exit from the economic blind-alley.



International relations present no better picture. Under the increasing tension of capitalist disintegration, imperialist antagonisms reach an impasse at the height of which separate clashes and bloody local disturbances (Ethiopia, Spain, the Far East, Central Europe) must inevitably coalesce into a conflagration of world dimensions. The bourgeoisie, of course, is aware of the mortal danger to its domination represented by a new war. But that class is now immeasurably less capable of averting war than on the eve of 1914.

All talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet "ripened" for socialism is the product of ignorance or conscious deception. The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only "ripened;" they have begun to get somewhat rotten. Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period, at that—a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. The turn is now to the proletariat, i.e., chiefly to its revolutionary vanguard. The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.

## **The Proletariat and Its Leadership**

The economy, the state, the politics of the bourgeoisie and its international relations are completely blighted by a social crisis, characteristic of a pre-revolutionary state of society. The chief obstacle in the path of transforming the pre-revolutionary into a revolutionary state is the opportunist character of proletarian leadership; its petty bourgeois cowardice before the big bourgeoisie and its perfidious connection with it even in its death agony.

In all countries the proletariat is wracked by a deep disquiet. In millions, the masses again and again move onto the road of the revolutionary outbreaks. But each time they are blocked by their own conservative bureaucratic apparatus.

The Spanish proletariat has made a series of heroic attempts since April, 1931, to take power in its hands and guide the fate of society. However, its own parties (Social Democrats, Stalinists, Anarchists, POUMists)—each in its own way—acted as a brake and thus prepared Franco's triumphs.

In France, the great wave of "sit-down" strikes, particularly during June, 1936, revealed the whole-hearted readiness of the proletariat to overthrow the capitalist system. However, the leading organizations (Socialists, Stalinists, Syndicalists) under the

label of the Popular Front succeeded in canalizing and damning, at least temporarily, the revolutionary stream.

The unprecedented wave of sit-down strikes and the amazingly rapid growth of industrial unionism in the United States (the CIO) is most indisputable expression of the instinctive striving of the American workers to raise themselves to the level of the tasks imposed on them by history. But here, too, the leading political organizations, including the newly-created CIO, do everything possible to keep in check and paralyze the revolutionary pressure of the masses.

The definite passing over of the Comintern to the side of the bourgeois order, its cynically counter-revolutionary role throughout the world, particularly in Spain, France, the United States and other "democratic" countries, created exceptional supplementary difficulties for the world proletariat. Under the banner of the October Revolution, the conciliatory politics practiced by the "People's Front" dooms the working class to impotence and clears the road for fascism.

"People's Fronts" on the one hand—fascism on the other; these are the last political resources of imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution. From the historical point of view, however, both these resources are stop-gaps. The decay of capitalism continues under the sign of the Phrygian cap in France as under the sign of the swastika in Germany. Nothing short of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie can open a road out.

The orientation of the masses is determined first by the objective conditions of decaying capitalism, and second, by the treacherous politics of the old workers' organizations. Of these factors, the first, of course, is the decisive one: the laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus. No matter how the methods of the social-betrayers differ—from the "social" legislation of Blum to the judicial frame-ups of Stalin—they will never succeed in breaking the revolutionary will of the proletariat. As time goes on, their desperate efforts to hold back the wheel of history will demonstrate more clearly to the masses that the crisis of the proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International.

## The Minimum Program and a Transitional Program

The strategic task of the next period—a pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organization—consists in overcoming the contradiction between the maturity of the objective revolutionary conditions and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard (the confusion and disappointment of the older generation; the inexperience of the younger generation). It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of *transitional demands*, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat.

Classical Social Democracy, functioning in an epoch of progressive capitalism, divided its program into two parts, independent of another; the *minimum program* which limited itself to reforms within the framework of bourgeois society, and the *maximum program* which promised substitution of socialism for capitalism in the indefinite future. Between the minimum and the maximum program no bridge existed. And indeed Social Democracy has no need of such a bridge, since the word Socialism is used only for holiday speechifying. The Comintern has set out to follow the path of Social Democracy in an epoch of decaying capitalism; when, in general, there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses' living standards; when every serious demand of the proletariat and even every serious demand of the petty-bourgeoisie inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state.

The strategic task of the Fourth International lies not in reforming capitalism but in its overthrow. The political aim, the conquest of power by the proletariat for the purpose of expropriating the bourgeoisie. However, the achievement of this strategic task is unthinkable without the most considered attention to all, even small and partial questions of tactics. All sections of the proletariat, all its layers, professions and groups should be drawn into the revolutionary movement. The present epoch is distinguished not for the fact that it frees the revolutionary party from day-to-day work but because it permits this work to be carried on indissolubly with the actual tasks of the revolution.

The Fourth International does not discard the program of the old "minimal" demands to the degree to which these have preserved at least part of their vital forcefulness. Indefatigably, it defends the democratic rights and social conquests of the workers. But it carries on this day-to-day work within the framework of the correct actual, that is, revolutionary perspective. Insofar as the old, partial "minimal" demands of the masses clash with the destructive and degrading tendencies of decadent capitalism—and this occurs at each step—the Fourth International advances a system of *transitional demands*, the essence of which is contained in the fact that ever more openly and decisively they will be directed against the very bases of the bourgeois regime. The old "minimal program" is superseded by the *transitional program*, the task of which lies in systematic mobilization of the masses for the proletarian revolution.

## Sliding Scale of Wages and Sliding Scale of Hours

Under the conditions of disintegrating capitalism, the masses continue to live the meagerized life of the oppressed threatened now more than at any other time with the danger of being cast to the pit of pauperism. They must defend their mouthful of bread, if they cannot increase or better it. There is neither the need nor the opportunity to enumerate here those separate, partial demands which time and again arise on the basis of concrete circumstances—national, local, professional. But two basic economic afflictions, in which is summarized the increasing absurdity of the capitalist system: that is *unemployment* and *high prices*, demand generalized slogans and methods of struggle.

The Fourth International declares uncompromising war on the politics of the capitalists which, to a considerable degree, like the politics of their agents, the reformists, aims to place the whole burden of militarism, the crisis, the disorganization of the monetary system and all other scourges stemming from capitalism's death agony upon the backs of the toilers. The Fourth International demands *employment* and *decent living conditions* for all.

Neither monetary inflation nor stabilization can serve as slogans for the proletariat because these are but two ends of the same stick. Against a bounding rise in prices, which with the approach of war will assume an ever more unbridled character, one can fight only under the slogan of a *sliding scale of wages*. This means that collective agreements should assure an automatic rise

in wages in relation to the increase in prices of consumer goods.

Under the menace of its own disintegration, the proletariat cannot permit the transformation of an increasing section of the workers into chronically unemployed paupers, living off the slops of a crumbling society. *The right to employment* is the only serious right left to the worker in a society based upon exploitation. This right today is being shorn from him at every step. Against unemployment, "structural" as well as "conjunctural," the time is ripe to advance along with the slogan of public works, the slogan of a *sliding scale of working hours*. Trade unions and other mass organizations should bind the workers and the unemployed together in the solidarity of mutual responsibility. On this basis, all the work on hand would then be divided among all existing workers in accordance with how the extent of the working week is defined. The average wage of every worker remains the same as it was under the old working week. Wages, under a strictly guaranteed *minimum*, would follow the movement of prices. It is impossible to accept any other program for the present catastrophic period.

Property owners and their lawyers will prove the "unrealizability" of these demands. Smaller, especially ruined capitalists, in addition will refer to their account ledgers. The workers categorically denounce such conclusions and references. The question is not one of a "normal" collision between opposed material interests. The question is one of guarding the proletariat from decay, demoralization and ruin. The question is one of life or death of the only creative and progressive class, and by that token of the future of mankind. If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands, inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish. "Realizability" or "unrealizability" are in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery.

## Trade Unions in the Transitional Epoch

In the struggle for partial and transitional demands, the workers, now more than ever before, need mass organizations; principally, trade unions. The powerful growth of trade unionism in France and the United States is the best refutation to the preach-

ments of those ultra-left doctrinaires, who have been teaching that trade unions have "outlived their usefulness."

The Bolshevik-Leninist stands in the front-line trenches of all kinds of struggles, even when they involve only the most modest material interests or democratic rights of the working class. He takes active part in mass trade union for the purpose of strengthening them and raising their spirit of militancy. He fights uncompromisingly against any attempt to subordinate the unions to the bourgeois state and bind the proletariat to "compulsory arbitration" and every other form of police guardianship—not only fascist but also "democratic." Only on the basis of such work within the trade unions is successful struggle possible against the reformists, including those of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Sectarian attempts to build or preserve small "revolutionary" unions, as a second edition of the party, signify in actuality the renouncing of the struggle for leadership of the working class. It is necessary to establish this firm rule: self-isolation of the capitulationist variety from mass trade unions, which is tantamount to a betrayal of the revolution, is incompatible with adherence to the Fourth International.

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At the same time, the Fourth International resolutely rejects and condemns trade union fetishism, equally characteristic of trade unionists and syndicalists.

(a) Trade unions do not offer, and in line with their task, composition, and manner of recruiting membership, cannot offer a finished revolutionary program; in consequence, they cannot replace the *party*. The building of national revolutionary parties as sections of the Fourth International is the central task of the transitional epoch.

(b) Trade unions, even the most powerful, embrace no more than 20 to 25 per cent of the working class, and at that, predominantly the more skilled and better paid layers. The more oppressed majority of the working class is drawn only episodically into the struggle, during a period of exceptional upsurges in the labor movement. During such moments it is necessary to create organizations, *ad hoc*, embracing the whole fighting mass: strike committees, factory committees, and finally, Soviet.

(c) As organizations expressive of the top layers of the proletariat, trade unions, as witnessed by all past historical experience, including the fresh experience of the anarcho-syndicalist unions in Spain, developed powerful tendencies toward compro-

mise with the bourgeois-democratic regime. In periods of acute class struggle, the leading 'functionaries of the trade unions aim to become masters of the mass movement in order to render it harmless. This is already occurring during the period of simple strikes; especially in the case of the mass sit-down strikes which shake the principle of bourgeois property. In time of war or revolution, when the bourgeoisie is plunged into exceptional difficulties, trade union leaders usually become bourgeois ministers.

Therefore, the sections of the Fourth International should always strive not only to renew the top leadership of the trade unions, boldly and resolutely in critical moments, advancing new militant leaders in place of routine functionaries and careerists; but also to create in all possible instances independent militant organizations corresponding more closely to the problems of mass struggle bourgeois society; not stopping, if necessary, even in the face of a direct break with the conservative apparatus of the trade unions. If it be criminal to turn one's back to mass organizations for the sake of fostering sectarian fictions, it is no less so to passively tolerate subordination of the revolutionary mass movement to the control of openly reactionary or disguised conservative ("progressive") bureaucratic cliques. Trade unions are not ends in themselves; they are but means along the road to proletarian revolution.

## Factory Committees

During a transitional epoch, the workers' movement does not have a systematic and well-balanced but a feverish and explosive character. Slogans as well as organizational forms should be subordinated to the indices of the movement. On guard against routine handling of a situation as against a plague, the leadership should respond sensitively to the initiative of the masses. Sit-down strikes, the latest phenomenon of this kind of initiative, go beyond the limits of "normal" capitalist procedure. Independently of the demands of the strikers, the temporary seizure of factories deals a blow to the idol, capitalist property. Every sit-down strike poses in a practical manner the question of who is boss of the factory: the capitalist or the workers?

If the sit-down strike raises this question episodically, the *factory committee* gives it organized expression. Elected by all the factory employees, the factory committee immediately creates a counterweight to the will of the administration.

To the reformist criticism of bosses of the so-called "economic"

royalist" type like Ford in contra-distinction to "good," "democratic" exploiters, we counterpose the slogan of factory committees as centers of struggle against both the first and the second.

Trade union bureaucrats, in accordance with their general conduct, will resist the creation of factory committees as they resist every bold step taken along the road of mobilizing the masses.

However, the wider the sweep of the movement, the easier will it be to break this resistance. Where the closed shop has already been instituted in "peaceful" times, the committee will formally coincide with the usual organ of the trade union, but will renew its personnel and widen its functions. The prime significance of the committee, however, lies in the fact that it becomes the militant staff for such working class layers as the trade union is usually incapable of moving to action. It is precisely from these more oppressed layers that the most self-sacrificing battalions of the revolution will come.

From the moment that the committee makes its appearance, a factual dual power is established in the factory. By its very essence, it represents the transitional state because it includes in itself two irreconcilable regimes: the capitalist and the proletariat. The fundamental significance of factory committees is precisely contained in the fact that they open the doors if not to a direct revolutionary, then to a pre-revolutionary period—between the bourgeois and the proletarian regimes. That the propagation of the factory committee idea is neither premature nor artificial is amply attested to by the waves of sit-down strikes spreading through several countries. New waves of this type will be inevitable in the immediate future. It is necessary to begin a campaign in favor of factory committees in time in order not to be caught unawares.

## **"Business Secrets" and Workers' Control of Industry**

Liberal capitalism, based upon competition and free trade, has completely receded into the past. Its successor, monopolistic capitalism not only does not mitigate the anarchy of the market but on the contrary imparts to it a particularly convulsive character. The necessity of "controlling" economy, of placing state "guidance" over industry and of "planning" is today recognized—at least in words—by almost all current bourgeois and petty bourgeois tendencies, from fascist to social-democratic. With the fascists, it is mainly a question of "planned" plundering of the



people for military purposes. The social-democrats prepare to drain the ocean of anarchy with spoonfuls of bureaucratic "planning." Engineers and professors write articles about "technocracy." In their cowardly experiments in "regulation," democratic governments run head into the invincible sabotage of big capital.

The actual relationship existing between the exploiters and the democratic "controllers" is best characterized by the fact that the gentlemen "reformers" stop short in pious trepidation before the threshold of the trusts and their business "secrets." Here the principle of "non-interference" with business dominates. The accounts kept between the individual capitalist and society remains the secret of the capitalist: they are not the concern of society. The motivation offered for the principle of business "secrets" is ostensibly, as in the epoch of liberal capitalism, that of free "competition." In reality, the trusts keep no secrets from one another. The business secrets of the present epoch are part of a persistent plot of monopoly capitalism against the interest of society. Projects for limiting the autocracy of "economic royalists" will continue to be pathetic farces as long as private owners of the social means of production can hide from producers and consumers the machinations of exploitation, robbery, and fraud. The abolition of "business secrets" is the first step towards actual control of industry.

Workers no less than capitalists have the right to know the "secrets" of the factory, of the trust, of the whole branch of industry, of the national economy as a whole. First and foremost, banks, heavy industry and centralized transport should be placed under an observation glass.

The next tasks of workers' control should be to explain the debits and credits of society, beginning with individual business undertakings; to determine the actual share of the national income wolfed by the individual capitalist and by all the exploiters taken together; to expose the behind-the-scenes deals and swindles of banks and trusts; finally, to reveal to all members of society that unconscionable squandering of human labor which is the result of capitalist anarchy and naked pursuit of profits.

No office-holder of the bourgeois state is in a position to carry out this work, no matter with how great authority one would wish to endow him. All the world was witness to the impotence of President Roosevelt and Premier Blum against the plottings of the "60" or "200 families" of their respective nations. To break the resistance of the exploiters, the mass pressure of the proletariat is necessary. Only factory committees can bring about

real control of production calling in—as consultants but not as “technocrats”—specialists sincerely devoted to the people; accountants, statisticians, engineers, scientists, etc.

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The struggle against unemployment is not to be considered without the calling for a broad and bold organization of *public works*. But public works can have a continuous and progressive significance for society, as for the unemployed themselves, only when they are made part of a general plan, worked out to cover a considerable number of years. Within the framework of this plan, the workers would demand resumption, as public utilities, of work in private businesses closed as a result of the crisis. Workers' control in such cases would be replaced by direct workers management.

The working out of even the most elementary economic plan—from the point of view of the exploited, not the exploiters'—is impossible without workers' control, that is, without the penetration of the workers' eye into all open and concealed springs of capitalist economy. Committees representing individual business enterprises should meet at conferences to choose corresponding committees of trusts, whole branches of industry, economic regions and finally, of national industry as a whole. Thus, workers' control becomes a *school for planned economy*. On the basis of the experience of control, the proletariat will prepare itself for direct management of nationalized industry when the hour for that eventuality will strike.

To those capitalists, mainly of the lower and middle strata, who of their own accord sometimes offer to throw open their books to the workers—usually to demonstrate the necessity of lowering wages—the workers answer that they are not interested in the bookkeeping of individual bankrupts or semi-bankrupts but in the account ledgers of all exploiters as a whole. The workers cannot and do not wish to accommodate the level of their living conditions to the exigencies of individual capitalists, themselves victims of their own regime. The task is one of reorganizing the whole system of production and distribution on a more dignified and workable basis. If the abolition of business secrets be a necessary condition to workers' control, then control is the first step along the road to the socialist guidance of economy.

## Expropriation of Separate Groups of Capitalists

The socialist program of expropriation, i.e., of political overthrow of the bourgeoisie and liquidation of its economic domination, should in no case during the present transitional period hinder us from advancing, when the occasion warrants, the demand for the expropriation of several key branches of industry vital for national existence or of the most parasitic group of the bourgeoisie.

Thus, in answer to the pathetic jeremiads of the gentlemen-democrats anent the dictatorship of the "60 Families" of the United States or the "200 Families" of France, we counterpose the demand for the expropriation of these 60 or 200 feudalistic capitalist overlords.

In precisely the same way we demand the expropriation of the corporations holding monopolies on war industries, railroads, the most important sources of raw materials, etc.

The difference between these demands and the muddle-headed reformist slogan of "nationalization" lies in the following: (1) we reject indemnification; (2) we warn the masses against demagogues of the People's Front who, giving lip-service to nationalization, remain in reality agents of capital; (3) we call upon the masses to rely only upon their own revolutionary strength; (4) we link up the question of expropriation with that of seizure of the power by the workers and farmers.

The necessity of advancing the slogan of expropriation in the course of daily *agitation* in partial form, and not only in our propaganda in its more comprehensive aspects, is dictated by the fact that different branches of industry are on different levels of development, occupy a different place in the life of society, and pass through different stages of the class struggle. Only a general revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat can place the complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie on the order of the day. The task of transitional demands is to prepare the proletariat to solve this problem.

## The Picket Line — Defense Groups — Workers' Militia — The Arming of the Proletariat

Sit-down strikes are a serious warning from the masses addressed not only to the bourgeoisie but also to the organizations of the workers, including the Fourth International. In 1919-1920, the Italian workers seized factories on their own initiative, thus signaling the news to their "leaders" of the coming of the social revolution. The "leaders" paid no heed to the signal. The victory of fascism was the result.

Sit-down strikes do not yet mean the seizure of factories in the Italian manner; but they are a decisive step toward such seizures. The present crisis can sharpen the class struggle to an extreme point and bring nearer the moment of denouement. But that does not mean that a revolutionary situation comes on at one stroke. Actually, its approach is signaled by a continuous series of convulsions. One of these is the wave of sit-down strikes. The problem of the sections of the Fourth International is to help the proletarian vanguard understand the general character and tempo of our epoch and to fructify in time the struggle of the masses with ever more resolute and militant organizational measures.

The sharpening of the proletariat's struggle means the sharpening of the methods of counter-attack on the part of capital. New waves of sit-down strikes can call forth and undoubtedly will call forth resolute counter-measures on the part of the bourgeoisie. Preparatory work is already being done by the confidential staffs of big trusts. Woe to the revolutionary organizations, woe to the proletariat if it is again caught unawares!

The bourgeoisie is nowhere satisfied with official police and army. In the United States, even during "peaceful" times, the bourgeoisie maintains militarized battalions of scabs and privately-armed thugs in factories. To this must now be added the various groups of American Nazis. The French bourgeoisie at the first approach of danger mobilized semi-legal and illegal fascist detachments, including such as are in the army. No sooner does the pressure of the English workers once again become stronger than immediately the fascist bands are doubled, trebled, increased ten-fold to come out in bloody march against the workers. The bourgeoisie keeps itself most accurately informed about the fact that in the present epoch the class struggle irresistibly tends to trans-

form itself into civil war. The examples of Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain and other countries taught considerably more to the magnates and lackeys of capital than to the official leaders of the proletariat.

The politicians of the Second and Third Internationals, as well as the bureaucrats of the trade unions, consciously close their eyes to the bourgeoisie's private army; otherwise, they could not preserve their alliance with it for even twenty-four hours. The reformists systematically implant in the minds of the workers the notion that the sacredness of democracy is best guaranteed when the bourgeoisie is armed to the teeth and the workers are unarmed.

The duty of the Fourth International is to put an end to such slavish politics once and for all. The petty-bourgeois democrats—including social-democrats, Stalinists and Anarchists—yell louder about the struggle against fascism the more cravenly they capitulate to it in actuality. Only armed workers' detachments, who feel the support of tens of millions of toilers behind them, can successfully prevail against the fascist bands. The struggle against fascism does not start in the liberal editorial office but in the factory—and ends in the street. Scabs and private gun-men in factory plants are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. *Strike pickets* are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army. This is our point of departure. In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating *workers' groups for self-defense*. It is necessary to write this slogan into the program of the revolutionary wing of the trade unions. It is imperative everywhere possible, beginning with the youth groups, to organize groups for self-defense; to drill and acquaint them with the use of arms.

A new upsurge of the mass movement should serve not only to increase the number of these units but also to unite them according to neighborhoods, cities, regions. It is necessary to give organized expression to the valid hatred of the workers toward scabs and bands of gangsters and fascists. It is necessary to advance the slogan of a *workers' militia* as the one serious guarantee for the inviolability of workers' organizations, meetings, and press.

Only with the help of such systematic, persistent, indefatigable, courageous agitational and organizational work, always on the basis of the experience of the masses themselves, is it possible to root out from their consciousness the traditions of submissiveness and passivity; to train detachments of heroic fight-

ers capable of setting an example to all toilers; to inflict a series of tactical defeats upon the armed thugs of counter-revolution; to raise the self-confidence of the exploited and oppressed; to compromise fascism in the eyes of the petty-bourgeois and pave the road for the conquest of power by the proletariat.

Engels defined the state as bodies of "armed men." *The arming of the proletariat* is an imperative concomitant element to its struggle for liberation. When the proletariat wills it, it will find the road and the means to arming. In this field, also, the leadership falls naturally to the sections of the Fourth International.

## The Alliance of the Workers and Farmers

The brother-in-arms and counterpart of the worker in the country is the agricultural laborer. They are two parts of one and the same class. Their interests are inseparable. The industrial workers' program of transitional demands, with changes here and there, is likewise the program of the agricultural proletariat.

The peasants (farmers) represent another class: they are the petty bourgeoisie of the village. The petty bourgeoisie is made up of various layers: from the semi-proletarian to the exploiter elements. In accordance with this, the political task of the industrial proletariat is to carry the class struggle into the country. Only thus will he be able to divide his allies and his enemies.

The peculiarities of national development of each country find their queerest expression in the status of farmers and to some extent of the urban petty bourgeoisie (artisans and shopkeepers). These classes, no matter how numerically strong they may be, essentially are representative survivals of pre-capitalist forms of production. The sections of the Fourth International should work out with all possible concreteness a program of transitional demands concerning the peasants (farmers) and urban petty-bourgeoisie and conformable to the conditions of each country. The advanced workers should learn to give clear and concrete answers to the questions put by their future allies.

While the farmer remains an "independent" petty producer, he is in need of cheap credit, of agricultural machines and fertilizer at prices he can afford to pay, favorable conditions of transport, and conscientious organization of the market for his agricultural products. But the banks, the trusts, the merchants

rob the farmer from every side. Only the farmers themselves, with the help of the workers, can curb this robbery. *Committees elected by small farmers* should make their appearance on the national scene and jointly with workers' committees and committees of bank employees take into their hands control of transport, credit, and mercantile operations affecting agriculture.

By falsely citing the "excessive" demands of the workers, the big bourgeoisie skillfully transforms the question of *commodity prices* into a wedge to be driven between the workers and farmers and between the workers and the petty bourgeoisie of the cities. The peasant, artisan, small merchant, unlike the industrial worker, office and civil service employee, cannot demand a wage increase corresponding to the increase in prices. The official struggle of the government with high prices is only a deception of the masses. But the farmers, artisans, merchants, in their capacity of consumers, can step into the politics of price-fixing shoulder to shoulder with the workers. To the capitalist's lamentations about costs of production, of transport and trade, the consumers answer: "Show us your books; we demand control over the fixing of prices." The organs of this control should be the *committees on prices*, made up of delegates from the factories, trade unions, cooperatives, farmers organizations, the "little man" of the city, house-wives, etc. By this means the workers will be able to prove to the farmers that the real reason for high prices is not high wages but the exorbitant profits of the capitalists and the overhead expenses of capitalist anarchy.

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The program for the *nationalization of the land and collectivization of agriculture* should be so drawn that from its very basis it should exclude the possibility of expropriation of small farmers and their compulsory collectivization. The farmer will remain owner of his plot of land as long he himself believes it possible or necessary. In order to rehabilitate the program of socialism in the eyes of the farmer, it is necessary to expose mercilessly the Stalinist methods of collectivization, which are dictated not by the interests of the farmers or workers but by the interests of the bureaucracy.

The expropriation of the expropriators likewise does not signify forcible confiscation of the property of artisans and shopkeepers. On the contrary, workers' control of banks and trusts—even more, the nationalization of these concerns, can create for the urban petty bourgeoisie incomparably more favorable condi-

tions of credit, purchase, and sale than is possible under the unchecked domination of the monopolies. Dependence upon private capital will be replaced by dependence upon the State, which will be the more attentive to the needs of its small co-workers and agents the stronger the toilers themselves will keep control of the State in their hands.

The practical participation of the exploited farmers in the control of different fields of economy will allow them to decide for themselves whether or not it would be profitable for them to go over to collective working of the land—at what date and on what scale. Industrial workers should consider themselves duty-bound to show farmers every cooperation in traveling this road: through the trade unions, factory committees, and, most importantly, through a workers' and farmers' government.

The alliance proposed by the proletariat, not to the "middle classes" in general but to the exploited layers of the urban and rural petty-bourgeoisie, against all exploiters, including those of the "middle classes,"—can be based not on compulsion but only on free consent, which should be consolidated in a special "contract." This "contract" is the program of transitional demands voluntarily accepted by both sides.

## **The Struggle Against Imperialism and War**

The whole world outlook, and consequently also the inner political life of individual countries, is overcast by the threat of world war. Already the imminent catastrophe sends violent ripples of apprehension through the very broadest masses of mankind.

The Second International repeats its infamous politics of 1914 with all the greater assurance since today it is the Comintern which plays first fiddle in chauvinism. As quickly as the danger of war assumed concrete outline, the Stalinists, outstripping the bourgeois and petty bourgeois pacifists by far, became blatant haranguers for so-called "national defense." The revolutionary struggle against war thus rests fully on the shoulders of the Fourth International.

The Bolshevik-Leninist policy regarding this question, formulated in the thesis of the International Secretariat (*War and the Fourth International*, 1934) preserves all of its force today. In the next period a revolutionary party will depend for success pri-



marily on its policy on the question of war. A correct policy is composed of two elements: an uncompromising attitude on imperialism and its wars and the ability to base one's program on the experience of the masses themselves.

The bourgeoisie and its agents use the war question, more than any other, to deceive the people by means of abstractions, general formulas, lame phraseology: "neutrality," "collective security," "arming for the defense of peace," "national defense," "struggle against fascism," and so on. All such formulas reduce themselves in the end to the fact that the war question, i. e., the fate of the people, is left in the hands of the imperialists, their governing staffs, their diplomacy, their generals, with all their intrigues and plots against the people.

The Fourth International rejects with abhorrence all such abstractions which play the same role in the democratic camp as in the fascist: "Honor," "blood," "race." But abhorrence is not enough. It is imperative to help the masses discern, by means of verifying criteria, slogans, and demands, the concrete essence of these fraudulent abstractions.

*"Disarmament?"*—But the entire question revolves around who will disarm whom. The only disarmament which can avert or end war is the disarmament of the bourgeoisie by the workers. But to disarm the bourgeoisie the workers must arm themselves.

*"Neutrality?"*—But the proletariat is nothing like neutral in the war between Japan and China, or a war between Germany and the U.S.S.R. "Then what is meant is the defense of China and the U.S.S.R.?" Of course! But not by the imperialists who will strangle both China and the U.S.S.R.

*"Defense of the Fatherland?"*—But by this abstraction, the bourgeoisie understands the defense of its profits and plunder. We stand ready to defend the fatherland from foreign capitalists, if we first bind our own (capitalists) hand and foot and hinder them from attacking foreign fatherlands; if the workers and the farmers of our country become its real masters; if the wealth of the country be transferred from the hands of a tiny minority to the hands of the people; if the army becomes a weapon of the exploited instead of the exploiters.

It is necessary to interpret these fundamental ideas by breaking them up into more concrete and partial ones, dependent upon the course of events and the orientation of the thought of the masses. In addition, it is necessary to differentiate strictly between

the pacifism of the diplomat, professor, journalist and the pacifism of the carpenter, agricultural worker, and charwoman. In one case, pacifism is a screen for imperialism; in the other, it is the confused expression of distrust in imperialism. When the small farmer or worker speaks about the defense of the fatherland, he means defense of his home, his families and other similar families from invasion, bombs and poisonous gas. The capitalist and his journalist understand by the defense of the fatherland the seizure of colonies and markets, the predatory increase of the "national" share of world income. Bourgeois pacifism and patriotism are shot through with deceit. In the pacifism and even patriotism of the oppressed there are elements which reflect on the one hand a hatred of destructive war and on the other a clinging to what they believe to be their own good—elements which we must know how to seize upon in order to draw the requisite conclusions.

Using these considerations as its point of departure, the Fourth International supports every, even if insufficient, demand, if it can draw the masses to a certain extent into active politics, awaken their criticism and strengthen their control over the machinations of the bourgeoisie.

From this point of view, our American section, for example, critically supports the proposal for establishing a referendum on the question of declaring war. No democratic reform it is understood, can by itself prevent the rulers from provoking war when they wish it. It is necessary to give frank warning of this. But notwithstanding the illusions of the masses in regard to the proposed referendum, their support of it reflects the distrust felt by workers and farmers for bourgeois government and congress. Without supporting and without sparing illusions, it is necessary to support with all possible strength the progressive distrust of the exploited toward the exploiters. The more widespread the movement for the referendum becomes, the sooner will the bourgeois pacifists move away from it; the more completely will the betrayers of the Comintern be compromised; the more acute will distrust of the imperialists become.

From this viewpoint, it is necessary to advance the demand: electoral rights for men and women beginning with the age of 18. Those who will be called upon to die for the fatherland tomorrow should have the right to vote today. The struggle against war must first of all begin with the *revolutionary mobilization of the youth*.

Light must be shed upon the problem of war from all

angles, hinging upon the side from which it will confront the masses at a given moment.

War is a gigantic commercial enterprise, especially for the war industry. The "60 Families" are therefore first-line patriots and the chief provocateurs of war. *Workers control of war industries* is the first step in the struggle against the "manufacturers" of war.

To the slogan of the reformists: *a tax on military profit*, we counterpose the slogans: *confiscation of military profit* and *expropriation of the traffickers in war industries*. Where military industry is "nationalized," as in France, the slogan of *workers' control* preserves its full strength. The proletariat has as little confidence in the government of the bourgeoisie as in individual bourgeois.

Not one man and not one penny for the bourgeois government!

Not an armaments program but a program of useful public works!

Complete independence of workers' organizations from military-police control!

Once and for all we must tear from the hands of the greedy and merciless imperialist clique, scheming behind the backs of the people, the disposition of the people's fate.

In accordance with this we demand:

Complete abolition of secret diplomacy; all treaties and agreements to be made accessible to all workers and farmers;

Military training and arming of workers and farmers under direct control of workers and farmers committees;

Creation of military schools for the training of commanders among the toilers, chosen by workers' organizations;

Substitution for the standing army of a *people's militia*, indissolubly linked up with factories, mines, farms, etc.

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Imperialist war is the continuation and sharpening of the predatory politics of the bourgeoisie. The struggle of the proletariat against war is the continuation and sharpening of its class struggle. The beginning of war alters the situation and partially the means of struggle between the classes, but not the aim and basic course.

The imperialist bourgeoisie dominates the world. In its basic character the approaching war will therefore be an imperialist war. The fundamental content of the politics of the international proletariat will consequently be a struggle against imperialism and

its war. In this struggle the basic principle is: "the chief enemy is in *your own* country," or "the defeat of *your own* (imperialist) government is the lesser evil."

But not all countries of the world are imperialist countries. On the contrary the majority are victims of imperialism. Some of the colonial or semi-colonial countries will undoubtedly attempt to utilize the war in order to cast off the yoke of slavery. Their war will be not imperialist but liberating. It will be the duty of the international proletariat to aid the oppressed countries in war against oppressors. The same duty applies in regard to aiding the U.S.S.R., or whatever other workers' government might arise before the war or during the war. The defeat of *every* imperialist government in the struggle with the workers' state or with a colonial country is the lesser evil.

The workers of imperialist countries, however, cannot help an anti-imperialist country through their own government, no matter what might be the diplomatic and military relations between the two countries at a given moment. If the governments find themselves in temporary and, by very essence of the matter, unreliable alliance, then the proletariat of the imperialist country continues to remain in class opposition to its own government and supports the non-imperialist "ally" through *its own* methods, i. e., through the methods of the international class struggle (agitation not only against their perfidious allies but also in favor of a workers' state in a colonial country; boycott, strikes, in one case; rejection of boycott and strikes in another case, etc.).

In supporting the colonial country or the U.S.S.R. in a war, the proletariat does not in the slightest degree solidarize either with the bourgeois government of the colonial country or with the Thermidorian bureaucracy of the U.S.S.R. On the contrary it maintains full political independence from the one as from the other. Giving aid in a just and progressive war, the revolutionary proletariat wins the sympathy of the workers in the colonies and in the U.S.S.R., strengthens there the authority and influence of the Fourth International, and increases its ability to help overthrow the bourgeois government in the colonial country, the reactionary bureaucracy in the U.S.S.R.

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At the beginning of the war the sections of the Fourth International will inevitably feel themselves isolated: every war takes the national masses unawares and impels them to the side of the government apparatus. The internationalists will have to swim against the stream. However, the devastation and misery

brought about by the new war, which in the first months will far outstrip the bloody horrors of 1914-1918, will quickly prove sobering. The discontent of the masses and their revolt will grow by leaps and bounds. The sections of the Fourth International will be found at the head of the revolutionary tide. The program of transitional demands will gain burning actuality. The problem of the conquest of power by the proletariat will loom in full stature.

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Before exhausting or drowning mankind in blood, capitalism befouls the world atmosphere with the poisonous vapors of national and race hatred. *Anti-semitism* today is one of the more malignant convulsions of capitalism's death agony.

An uncompromising disclosure of the roots of race prejudices and all forms and shades of national arrogance and chauvinism, particularly anti-semitism, should become part of the daily work of all sections of the Fourth International, as the most important part of the struggle against imperialism and war. Our basic slogan remains: workers of the world unite!

## Workers and Farmers Government

This formula, "Workers and Farmers Government," first appeared in the agitation of the Bolsheviks in 1917 and was definitely accepted after the October Insurrection. In the final instance it represented nothing more than the popular designation for the already established dictatorship of the proletariat. The significance of this designation comes mainly from the fact that it underscored the idea of an *alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry* lodged in the base of the Soviet power.

When the Comintern of the epigones tried to revive the formula buried by history of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," it gave to the formula of the "workers and peasants government" a completely different, purely "democratic," i. e., bourgeois content, *counterposing* it to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Bolshevik-Leninists resolutely rejected the slogan of the "workers and peasants government" in the bourgeois-democratic version. They affirmed then and affirm now that when the party of the proletariat refuses to step beyond bourgeois-democratic limits, its alliance with the peasantry is simply turned into a support for capital, as was the case with the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries in 1917, with the Chinese Communist party in 1925-1927, and as is now the

case with the "People's Front" in Spain, France and other countries.

From April to September, 1917, the Bolsheviks demanded that the S.R.'s and Mensheviks break with the liberal bourgeoisie and take power into their own hands. Under this provision the Bolshevik Party promised the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s, as the petty bourgeois representatives of the workers and peasants, its revolutionary aid against the bourgeoisie; categorically refusing, however, either to enter into the government of the Mensheviks and S.R.'s or to carry political responsibility for it. If the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s had actually broken with the Cadets (liberals) and with foreign imperialism, then the "workers and peasants government" created by them could only have hastened and facilitated the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But it was exactly because of this that the leadership of petty bourgeois democracy resisted with all possible strength the establishment of its own government. The experience of Russia demonstrated and the experience of Spain and France once again confirm that even under very favorable conditions the parties of petty bourgeois democracy (S.R.'s, Social-Democrats, Stalinists, Anarchists) are incapable of creating a government of workers and peasants, that is, a government independent of the bourgeoisie.

Nevertheless, the demand of the Bolsheviks, addressed to the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s: "Break with the bourgeoisie, take the power into your own hands!" had for the masses tremendous educational significance. The obstinate unwillingness of the Mensheviks and S.R.'s to take power, so dramatically exposed during the July days, definitely doomed them before mass opinion and prepared the victory of the Bolsheviks.

The central task of the Fourth International consists in freeing the proletariat from the old leadership, whose conservatism is in complete contradiction to the catastrophic eruptions of disintegrating capitalism and represents the chief obstacle to historical progress. The chief accusation which the Fourth International advances against the traditional organizations of the proletariat is the fact that they do not wish to tear themselves away from the political semi-corpse of the bourgeoisie. Under these conditions the demand, systematically addressed to the old leadership: "Break with the bourgeoisie, take the power!" is an extremely important weapon for exposing the treacherous character of the parties and organizations of the Second, Third and Amsterdam Internationals. The slogan "Workers and Farmers Gov-

ernments," is thus acceptable to us only in the sense that it had in 1917 with the Bolsheviks, i. e., as an anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist slogan, but in no case in that "democratic" sense which later the epigones gave it, transforming it from a bridge to socialist revolution into the chief barrier upon its path.

Of all parties and organizations which base themselves on the workers and peasants and speak in their name we demand that they break politically from the bourgeoisie and enter upon the road of struggle for the workers and farmers government. On this road we promise them full support against capitalist reaction. At the same time, we indefatigably develop agitation around those transitional demands which should in our opinion form the program of the "Workers and Farmers Government."

Is the creation of such a government by the traditional workers organizations possible? Past experience shows, as has already been stated, that this is to say the least highly improbable. However, one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.) the petty bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie. In any case one thing is not to be doubted: even if this highly improbably variant somewhere at some time becomes a reality and the "Workers and Farmers Government," in the above mentioned sense, is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat.

However, there is no need to indulge in guess-work. The agitation around the slogan of a workers-farmers government preserves under all conditions a tremendous educational value. And not accidentally. This generalized slogan proceeds entirely along the line of the political development of our epoch (the bankruptcy and decomposition of the old bourgeois parties, the downfall of democracy, the growth of fascism, the accelerated drive of the workers toward more active and aggressive politics). Each of the transitional demands should, therefore, lead to one and the same political conclusion: the workers need to break with all traditional parties of the bourgeoisie in order, jointly with the farmers, to establish their own power.

It is impossible in advance to foresee what will be the concrete stages of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses. The sections of the Fourth International should critically orient themselves at each new stage and advance such slogans as will aid

the striving of the workers for independent politics, deepen the class character of these politics, destroy reformist and pacifist illusions, strengthen the connection of the vanguard with the masses, and prepare the revolutionary conquest of power.

## Soviets

*Factory committees*, as already stated, are elements of dual power inside the factory. Consequently, their existence is possible only under condition of increasing pressure by the masses. This is likewise true of special mass groupings for the struggle *against war*, of the *committee on prices* and all other new centers of the movement, the very appearance of which bears witness to the fact that the class struggle has overflowed the limits of the traditional organizations of the proletariat.

These new organs and centers, however, will soon begin to feel their lack of cohesion and their insufficiency. Not one of the transitional demands can be fully met under the conditions of preserving the bourgeois regime. At the same time, the deepening of the social crisis will increase not only the sufferings of the masses but also their impatience, persistence, and pressure. Ever new layers of the oppressed will raise up their heads and come forward with their demands. Millions of toil-worn "little men," to whom the reformist leaders never gave a thought, will begin to pound insistently on the doors of workers' organizations. The unemployed will join the movement. The agricultural workers, the ruined and semi-ruined farmers, the oppressed of the cities, the women-workers, housewives, proletarianized layers of the intelligentsia—all of these will seek unity and leadership.

How are the different demands and forms of struggle to be harmonized, even if only within the limits of one city? History has already answered this question: through *soviets*. These will unite the representatives of all the fighting groups. For this purpose, no one has yet proposed a different form of organization; indeed, it would hardly be possible to think up a better one. Soviets are not limited to an *a priori* party program. They throw open their doors to all the exploited. Through these doors pass representatives of all strata, drawn into the general current of the struggle. The organization, broadening out together with the movement, is renewed again and again in its womb. All political currents of the proletariat can struggle for leadership of the soviets on the basis of the widest democracy. The slogan of *soviets*, there-



fore, crowns the program of transitional demands.

Soviets can arise only at the time when the mass movement enters into an openly revolutionary stage. From the first moment of their appearance, the soviets, acting as a pivot around which millions of toilers are united in their struggle against the exploiters become competitors and opponents of local authorities and then of the central government. If the factory committee creates a dual power in the factory, then the soviets initiate a period of dual power in the country.

Dual power in its turn is the culminating point of the transitional period. Two regimes, the bourgeois and the proletarian are irreconcilably opposed to each other. Conflict between them is inevitable. The fate of society depends on the outcome. Should the revolution be defeated—the fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie will follow. In case of victory—the power of the soviets, that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist reconstruction of society, will arise.

## Backward Countries and the Program of Transitional Demands

Colonial and semi-colonial countries are backward countries by their very essence. But backward countries are part of a world dominated by imperialism. Their development, therefore, has a *combined* character: the most primitive economic forms are combined with the last word in capitalist technique and culture. In like manner are defined the political strivings of the proletariat of backward countries: the struggle for the most elementary achievements of national independence and bourgeois democracy is combined with the socialist struggle against world imperialism. Democratic slogans, transitional demands and the problems of the socialist revolution are not divided into separate historical epochs in this struggle, but stem directly from one another. The Chinese proletariat had barely begun to organize trade unions before it had to provide for soviets. In this sense, the present program is completely applicable to colonial and semi-colonial countries, at least to those where the proletariat has become capable of carrying on independent politics.

The central task of the colonial and semi-colonial countries is the *agrarian revolution*, i. e., liquidation of feudal heritages, and *national independence*, i. e., the overthrow of the imperialist yoke. Both tasks are closely linked with one another.

It is impossible merely to reject the democratic program:

it is imperative that in the struggle the masses outgrow it. The slogan for a National (or Constituent) Assembly preserves its full force for such countries as China or India. This slogan must be indissolubly tied up with the problem of national liberation and agrarian reform. As a primary step, the workers must be armed with this democratic program. Only they will be able to summon and unite the farmers. On the basis of the revolutionary democratic program, it is necessary to oppose the workers to the "national" bourgeoisie. Then at a certain stage in the mobilization of the masses under the slogans of revolutionary democracy, soviets can and should arise. Their historical role in each given period, particularly their relation to the National Assembly, will be determined by the political level of the proletariat, the bond between them and the peasantry and the character of the proletarian party policies. Sooner or later, the soviets should overthrow bourgeois democracy. Only they are capable of bringing the democratic revolution to a conclusion and likewise opening an era of socialist revolution.

The relative weight of the individual democratic and transitional demands in the proletariat's struggle, their mutual ties and their order of presentation, is determined by the peculiarities and specific conditions of each backward country and to a considerable extent—by the *degree* of its backwardness. Nevertheless, the general trend of revolutionary development in all backward countries can be determined by the formula of the *permanent revolution* in the sense definitely imparted to it by the three revolutions in Russia (1905, February 1917, October 1917).

The Comintern has provided backward countries with a classic example of how it is possible to ruin a powerful and promising revolution. During the stormy mass upsurge in China in 1925-27, the Comintern failed to advance the slogan for a National Assembly, and at the same time, forbade the creation of soviets. (The bourgeois party, the Kuomintang, was to replace, according to Stalin's plan, both the National Assembly and soviets.) After the masses had been smashed by the Kuomintang, the Comintern organized a caricature of a soviet in Canton. Following the inevitable collapse of the Canton uprising, the Comintern took the road of guerrilla warfare and peasant soviets with complete passivity on the part of the industrial proletariat. Landing thus in a blind alley, the Comintern took advantage of the Sino-Japanese war to liquidate "Soviet China" with a stroke of the pen, subordinating not only the peasant "Red Army" but

also the so-called "Communist" Party to the identical Kuomintang, i. e., the bourgeoisie.

The betrayal of the international proletarian revolution by the Comintern for the sake of friendship with the "democratic" slave masters, could not but help it betray simultaneously also the struggle for the liberation of the colonial masses, and, indeed, with even greater cynicism than practiced by the Second International before it. One of the tasks of People's Front and "national defense" politics is to turn hundreds of millions of the colonial population into cannon fodder for "democratic" imperialism. The banner on which is emblazoned the struggle for the liberation of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, i. e., a good half of mankind, has definitely passed into the hands of the Fourth International.

## **The Program of Transitional Demands in Fascist Countries**

It is a far cry today from the time when the strategists of the Comintern announced the victory of Hitler as being merely a step toward the victory of Thaelmann. Thaelmann has been in Hitler's prisons now for more than five years. Mussolini has held Italy enchained by fascism for more than sixteen years. Throughout this time, the parties of the Second and Third Internationals have been impotent not only to conduct a mass movement but even to create a serious illegal organization, even to some extent comparable to the Russian revolutionary parties during the epoch of Czarism.

Not the least reason exists for explaining these failures by reference to the power of fascist ideology. (Essentially, Mussolini never advanced any sort of ideology.) Hitler's "ideology" never seriously gripped the workers. Those layers of the population which at one time were intoxicated with fascism, i. e., chiefly the middle classes, have had enough time in which to sober up. The fact that a somewhat perceptible opposition is limited to Protestant and Catholic church circles is not explained by the might of the semi-delirious and semi-charlatan theories of "race" and "blood," but by the terrific collapse of the ideologies of democracy, social-democracy and the Comintern.

The collapse of the Paris Commune paralyzed the French workers for nearly eight years. After the defeat of the 1905 Russian revolution, the toiling masses remained in a stupor for almost as long a period. But in both instances the phenomenon was

only one of physical defeat, conditioned by the relationship of forces. In Russia, in addition, it concerned an almost virgin proletariat. The Bolshevik fraction had at that time not celebrated even its third birthday. It is completely otherwise in Germany where the leadership came from powerful parties, one of which had existed for seventy years, the other—almost fifteen. Both these parties, with millions of voters behind them, were morally paralyzed before the battle and capitulated without a battle. (History has recorded no parallel catastrophe. The German proletariat was not smashed by the enemy in battle.) It was crushed by the cowardice, baseness, perfidy of its own parties. Small wonder then that it has lost faith in everything in which it had been accustomed to believe for almost three generations. Hitler's victory in turn strengthened Mussolini.

The protracted failure of revolutionary work in Spain or Germany is but the reward for the criminal politics of Social-Democracy and the Comintern. Illegal work needs not only the sympathy of the masses but the conscious enthusiasm of its advanced strata. But can enthusiasm possibly be expected for historically bankrupt organizations? The majority of those who come forth as emigre leaders are either demoralized to the very marrow of their bones, agents of the Kremlin and the G.P.U., or social-Democratic ex-ministers, who dream that the workers by some sort of miracle will return them to their lost posts. Is it possible to imagine even for a minute these gentlemen in the role of future leaders of the "anti-fascist" revolution?

And events on the world arena—the smashing of the Austrian workers, the defeat of the Spanish revolution, the degeneration of the Soviet State—could not give aid to a revolutionary upsurge in Italy and Germany. Since for political information the German and Italian workers depend in great measure upon the radio, it is possible to say with assurance that the Moscow radio station, combining Thermidorian lies with stupidity and insolence, has become the most powerful factor in the demoralization of the workers in the totalitarian states. In this respect, as in others Stalin acts merely as Goebbels' assistant.

At the same time, the class antagonisms which brought about the victory of fascism, continuing their work under fascism, too, are gradually undermining it. The masses are more dissatisfied than ever. Hundreds and thousands of self-sacrificing workers, in spite of everything, continue to carry on revolutionary mole-work. A new generation, which has not directly experienced the shattering of old traditions and high hopes, has come to the fore.

Irresistibly, the molecular preparation of the proletarian revolution proceeds beneath the heavy totalitarian tombstone. But for concealed energy to flare into open revolt, it is necessary that the vanguard of the proletariat find new perspectives, a new program and a new unblemished banner.

Herein, lies the chief handicap. It is extremely difficult for workers in fascist countries to make a choice of a new program. A program is verified by experience. And it is precisely experience in mass movements which is lacking in countries of totalitarian despotism. It is very likely that a genuine proletarian success in one of the "democratic" countries will be necessary to give impetus to the revolutionary movement on fascist territory. A similar effect is possible by means of a financial or military catastrophe. At present, it is imperative that primarily propagandistic, preparatory work be carried on which will yield large scale results only in the future. One thing can be stated with conviction even at this point: once it breaks through, the revolutionary wave in fascist countries will immediately be a grandiose sweep and under no circumstances will stop short at the experiment of resuscitating some sort of Weimar corpse.

It is from this point onward that an uncompromising divergence begins between the Fourth International and the old parties, which outlive their bankruptcy. The emigre "People's Front" is the most malignant and perfidious variety of all possible People's Fronts. Essentially, it signifies the impotent longing for coalition with a non-existent liberal bourgeoisie. Had it met with success, it would simply have prepared a series of new defeats of the Spanish type for the proletariat. A merciless exposure of the theory and practice of the "People's Front" is therefore the first condition for a revolutionary struggle against fascism.

Of course, this does not mean that the Fourth International rejects democratic slogans as a means of mobilizing the masses against fascism. On the contrary, such slogans at certain moments can play a serious role. But the formulas of democracy (freedom of press, the right to unionize, etc.) mean for us only incidental or episodic slogans in the independent movement of the proletariat and not a democratic noose fastened to the neck of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie's agents (Spain!). As soon as the movement assumes something of a mass character, the democratic slogans will be intertwined with the transitional ones; factory committees, it may be supposed, will appear before the old routinists rush from their chancelleries to organize trade unions; soviets will cover Germany before a new Constitutional As-

sembly will gather in Weimar. The same will be true of Italy and the rest of the totalitarian and semi-totalitarian countries.

Fascism plunged these countries into political barbarism. But it did not change their social structure. Fascism is a tool in the hands of finance capital and not of feudal landowners. A revolutionary program should base itself on the dialectics of the class struggle, obligatory also to fascist countries, and not on the psychology of terrified bankrupts. The Fourth International rejects with disgust the ways of political masquerade, which impelled the Stalinists, the former heroes of the "Third Period," to appear in turn behind the masks of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, German nationalists, liberals—only in order to hide their own unattractive face. The Fourth International always and everywhere appears under its own banner. It proposes its own program openly to the proletariat in fascist countries. The advanced workers of all the world are already firmly convinced that the overthrow of Mussolini, Hitler and their agents and imitators will occur only under the leadership of the Fourth International.

## The U.S.S.R. and Problems of the Transitional Epoch

The Soviet Union emerged from the October Revolution as a workers' state. State ownership of the means of production, a necessary prerequisite to socialist development, opened up the possibility of rapid growth of the productive forces. But the apparatus of the workers' state underwent a complete degeneration at the same time; it was transformed from a weapon of the working class into a weapon of bureaucratic violence against the working class and more and more a weapon for the sabotage of the country's economy. The bureaucratization of a backward and isolated workers' state and the transformation of the bureaucracy into an all-powerful privileged caste is the most convincing refutation—not only theoretically but this time practically—of the theory of socialism in one country.

The U.S.S.R. thus embodies terrific contradictions. But it still remains a *degenerated workers' state*. Such is the social diagnosis. The political prognosis has an alternative character: either the bureaucracy, becoming ever more the organ of the world bourgeoisie in the workers' state, will overthrow the new forms of property and plunge the country back to capitalism; or the

working class will crush the bureaucracy and open the way to socialism.

To the sections of the Fourth International, the Moscow trials came not as a surprise and not as a result of the personal madness of the Kremlin dictator, but as the legitimate off-spring of the Thermidor. They grew out of the unbearable conflicts within the Soviet bureaucracy itself, which, in turn, mirror the contradictions between the bureaucracy and the people, as well as the deepening antagonisms among the "people" themselves. The bloody "fantastic" nature of the trials gives the measure of the intensity of the contradictions and by the same token predicts the approach of the denouement.

The public utterances of former foreign representatives of the Kremlin, who refused to return to Moscow, irrefutably confirm in their own way that all shades of political thought are to be found among the bureaucracy: from genuine Bolshevism (Ignace Reiss) to complete fascism (F. Butenko). The revolutionary elements within the bureaucracy, only a small minority, reflect, passively it is true, the socialist interests of the proletariat. The fascist, counter-revolutionary elements, growing uninterruptedly, express with ever greater consistency the interests of world imperialism. These candidates for the role of *compradores* consider, not without reason, that the new ruling layer can insure their positions of privilege only through rejection of nationalization, collectivization and monopoly of foreign trade in the name of the assimilation of "Western civilization," i. e., capitalism. Between these two poles, there are intermediate, diffused Menshevik-S.R.-liberal tendencies which gravitate toward bourgeois democracy.

Within the very ranks of that so-called "classless" society, there unquestionably exist groupings exactly similar to those in the bureaucracy, only less sharply expressed and in inverse proportions: conscious capitalist tendencies distinguish mainly the prosperous part of the kolkhozes and are characteristic of only a small minority of the population. But this layer provides itself with a wide base for petty bourgeois tendencies of accumulating personal wealth at the expense of general poverty, and are consciously encouraged by the bureaucracy.

Atop this system of mounting antagonisms, trespassing ever more on the social equilibrium, the Thermidorian oligarchy, today reduced mainly to Stalin's Bonapartist clique, hangs on by terroristic methods. The latest judicial frame-ups were aimed as a blow *against the left*. This is true also of the mopping up of the

leaders of the Right Opposition, because the right group of the old Bolshevik Party, seen from the viewpoint of the bureaucracy's interests and tendencies, represented a *left* danger. The fact that the Bonapartist clique, likewise in fear of its own right allies of the type of Butenko, is forced in the interests of self-preservation to execute the generation of Old Bolsheviks almost to a man, offers indisputable testimony of the vitality of revolutionary traditions among the masses as well as of their growing discontent.

Petty-bourgeois democrats of the West, having but yesterday assayed the Moscow trials as unalloyed gold, today repeat insistently that there is "neither Trotskyism nor Trotskyists within the U.S.S.R." They fail to explain, however, why all the purges are conducted under the banner of a struggle with precisely this danger. If we are to examine "Trotskyism" as a finished program, and, even more to the point, as an organization, then unquestionably "Trotskyism" is extremely weak in the U.S.S.R. However, its indestructible force stems from the fact that it expresses not only revolutionary tradition but also today's actual opposition of the Russian working class. The social hatred stored up by the workers against the bureaucracy—this is precisely what from the viewpoint of the Kremlin clique constitutes "Trotskyism." It fears with a deathly and thoroughly well-grounded fear the bond between the deep but inarticulate indignation of the workers and the organization of the Fourth International.

The execution of the generation of Old Bolsheviks and of the revolutionary representatives of the middle and young generations has yet more swung the political pendulum to the side of the right, the bourgeois wing of the bureaucracy and its allies throughout the land. From them, i. e., from the right, we can expect ever more determined attempts in the next period to revise the socialist character of the U.S.S.R. and bring it closer in pattern to "Western civilization" in its fascist form.

From this perspective, impelling concreteness is imparted to the question of the "defense of the U.S.S.R." If tomorrow the bourgeois-fascist grouping, the "fraction of Butenko," so to speak, should attempt the conquest of power, the "fraction of Reiss" inevitably would align itself on the opposite side of the barricades. Although it would find itself temporarily the ally of Stalin, it would nevertheless defend not the Bonapartist clique but the social base of the U.S.S.R., i. e., the property wrenched away from the capitalists and transformed into State property. Should the "fraction of Butenko" prove to be in alliance with Hitler, then



the "fraction of Reiss" would defend the U.S.S.R. from military intervention, inside the country as well as on the world arena. Any other course would be a betrayal.

Although it is thus impermissible to deny in advance the possibility, in strictly defined instances, of a "united front" with the Thermidorian section of the bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counter-revolution, the chief political task in the U.S.S.R. still remains the *overthrow of this same Thermidorian bureaucracy*. Each day added to its domination helps rot the foundations of the socialist elements of economy and increases the chances for capitalist restoration. It is in precisely this direction that the Comintern moves as the agent and accomplice of the Stalinist clique in strangling the Spanish revolution and demoralizing the international proletariat.

As in fascist countries, the chief strength of the bureaucracy lies not in itself but in the disillusionment of the masses, in their lack of a new perspective. As in fascist countries, from which Stalin's *political* apparatus does not differ save in more unbridled rough-shoddedness, only preparatory propagandistic work is possible today in the U.S.S.R. As in fascist countries, the impetus to the Soviet workers' revolutionary upsurge will probably be given by events outside the country. The struggle against the Comintern on the world arena is the most important part today of the struggle against the Stalinist dictatorship. There are many signs that the Comintern's downfall, because it does not have a *direct* base in the G.P.U., will precede the downfall of the Bonapartist clique and of the entire Thermidorian bureaucracy in general.

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A fresh upsurge of the revolution in the U.S.S.R. will undoubtedly begin under the banner of the struggle against *social inequality* and *political oppression*. Down with the privileges of the bureaucracy! Down with Stakhanovism! Down with the Soviet aristocracy and its ranks and orders! Greater equality of wages for all forms of labor!

The struggle for the freedom of the trade unions and the factory committees, for the right of assembly and freedom of the press will unfold in the struggle for the regeneration and development of *Soviet democracy*.

The bureaucracy replaced the soviets as class organs with the fiction of universal electoral rights—in the style of Hitler-Goebbels. It is necessary to return to the soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bour-

geoisie and kulaks were not permitted to enter the soviets, so now *it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the soviets*. In the soviets there is room only for representatives of the workers, rank and file kolkhozists, peasants and Red Army men.

Democratization of the soviets is impossible without *legalization of soviet parties*. The workers and peasants themselves by their own free vote will indicate what parties they recognize as soviet parties.

A revision of *planned economy* from top to bottom in the interests of producers and consumers! Factory committees should be returned the right to control production. A democratically organized consumers' cooperative should control the quality and price of products.

Reorganization of the *kolkhozes* in accordance with the will and in the interests of the workers there engaged!

The reactionary *international policy* of the bureaucracy should be replaced by the policy of proletarian internationalism. The complete diplomatic correspondence of the Kremlin to be published. *Down with secret diplomacy!*

All political trials, staged by the Thermidorian bureaucracy, to be reviewed in the light of complete publicity and controversial openness and integrity. Only the victorious revolutionary uprising of the oppressed masses can revive the Soviet regime and guarantee its further development toward socialism. There is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses to insurrection—the party of the Fourth International!

Down with the bureaucratic gang of Cain-Stalin!

Long live Soviet Democracy!

Long live the international socialist revolution!

## **Against Opportunism and Unprincipled Revisionism**

The politics of Leon Blum's party in France demonstrate anew that reformists are incapable of learning anything from even the most tragic lessons of history. French Social-Democracy slavishly copies the politics of German Social-Democracy and goes to meet the same end. Within a few decades the Second International intertwined itself with the bourgeois democratic regime, became, in fact, a part of it, and is rotting away together with it.

The Third International has taken to the road of reformism at a time when the crisis of capitalism definitely placed the proletarian revolution on the order of the day. The Comintern's policy in Spain and China today—the policy of cringing before the “democratic” and “national” bourgeoisie—demonstrates that the Comintern is likewise incapable of learning anything further or of changing. The bureaucracy which became a reactionary force in the U.S.S.R. cannot play a revolutionary role on the world arena.

Anarcho-syndicalism, in general has passed through the same kind of evolution. In France, the syndicalist bureaucracy of Léon Jouhaux has long since become a bourgeois agency in the working class. In Spain, anarcho-syndicalism shook off its ostensible revolutionism and became the fifth wheel in the chariot of bourgeois democracy.

Intermediate centrist organizations centered about the London Bureau, represent merely “left” appendages of Social Democracy or of the Comintern. They have displayed a complete inability to make head or tail of the political situation and draw revolutionary conclusions from it. Their highest point was the Spanish P.O.U.M., which under revolutionary conditions proved completely incapable of following a revolutionary line.

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The tragic defeats suffered by the world proletariat over a long period of years doomed the official organizations to yet greater conservatism and simultaneously sent disillusioned petty bourgeois “revolutionists” in pursuit of “new ways.” As always during epochs of reaction and decay, quacks and charlatans appear on all sides, desirous of revising the whole course of revolutionary thought. Instead of learning from the past, they “reject” it. Some discover the inconsistency of Marxism, others announce the downfall of Bolshevism. There are those who put responsibility upon revolutionary doctrine for the mistakes and crimes of those who betrayed it; others who curse the medicine because it does not guarantee an instantaneous and miraculous cure. The more daring promise to discover a panacea and, in anticipation, recommend the halting of the class struggle. A good many prophets of “new morals” are preparing to regenerate the labor movement with the help of ethical homeopathy. The majority of these apostles have succeeded in becoming themselves moral invalids before arriving on the field of battle. Thus, under the aspect of “new ways” old recipes, long since buried in the archives of pre-Marxian socialism, are offered to the proletariat.

The Fourth International declares uncompromising war on the bureaucracies of the Second, Third, Amsterdam and Anarcho-syndicalist Internationals, as on their centrist satellites; on reformism without reforms; democracy in alliance with the G.P.U.; pacifism without peace; anarchism in the service of the bourgeoisie; on "revolutionists" who live in deathly fear of revolution. All of these organizations are not pledges for the future but decayed survivals of the past. The epoch of wars and revolutions will raze them to the ground.

The Fourth International does not search after and does not invent panaceas. It takes its stand completely on Marxism as the only revolutionary doctrine that enables one to understand reality; unearth the cause behind the defeats and consciously prepare for victory. The Fourth International continues the tradition of Bolshevism which first showed the proletariat how to conquer power. The Fourth International sweeps away the quacks, charlatans and unsolicited teachers of morals. In a society based upon exploitation, the highest moral is that of the social revolution. All methods are good which raise the class consciousness of the workers, their trust in their own forces, their readiness for self-sacrifice in the struggle. The impermissible methods are those which implant fear and submissiveness in the oppressed before their oppressors, which crush the spirit of protest and indignation or substitute for the will of the masses the will of the leaders; for conviction—compulsion; for an analysis of reality—demagogy and frame-up. That is why Social Democracy, prostituting Marxism, and Stalinism—the antithesis of Bolshevism—are both mortal enemies of the proletarian revolution and its morals.

To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses—no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International. It has shown that it could swim against the stream. The approaching historical wave will raise it on its crest.

## Against Sectarianism

Under the influence of the betrayal by the historic organizations of the proletariat, certain sectarian moods and groupings of various kinds arise or are regenerated at the periphery of the Fourth International. At their base lies a refusal to struggle

for partial and transitional demands, i. e., for the elementary interests and needs of the working masses, as they are today. Preparing for the revolution means to the sectarians the convincing of themselves of the superiority of socialism. They propose turning their backs to the "old" trade unions, i. e., to tens of millions of organized workers, as if the masses could somehow live outside of the conditions of the actual class struggle! They remain indifferent to the inner struggle within reformist organizations—as if one could win the masses without intervening in their daily strife! They refuse to draw a distinction between bourgeois democracy and fascism—as if the masses could help but feel the difference on every hand!

Sectarians are capable of differentiating between but two colors: red and black. So as not to tempt themselves, they simplify reality. They refuse to draw a distinction between the fighting camps in Spain for the reason that both camps have a bourgeois character. For the same reason they consider it necessary to preserve "neutrality" in the war between Japan and China. They deny the principled difference between the U.S.S.R. and the imperialist countries, and because of the reactionary policies of the Soviet bureaucracy, they reject defense of the new forms of property created by the October Revolution against the onslaughts of imperialism. Incapable of finding access to the masses, they therefore zealously accuse the masses of inability to raise themselves to revolutionary ideas.

These sterile politicians generally have no need of a bridge in the form of transitional demands because they do not intend to cross over to the other shore. They simply dawdle in one place, satisfying themselves with a repetition of the self-same meager abstractions. Political events are for them an occasion for comment but not for action. Since sectarians, as in general every kind of blunderer and miracle-man, are toppled by reality at each step, they live in a state of perpetual exasperation, complaining about the "regime" and "the methods" and ceaselessly wallowing in small intrigues. In their own circles they customarily carry on a regime of despotism. The political prostration of sectarianism serves to complement shadow-like the prostration of opportunism, revealing no revolutionary vistas. In practical politics, sectarians unite with opportunists, particularly with centrists, every time in the struggle against Marxism.

Most of the sectarian groups and cliques, nourished on accidental crumbs from the table of the Fourth International, lead an "independent" organizational existence, with great pretensions

but without the least chance for success. Bolsheviki-Leninists, without waste of time, calmly leave these groups to their own fate. However, sectarian tendencies are to be found also in our own ranks and display a ruinous influence on the work of the individual sections. It is impossible to make any further compromise with them even for a single day. A correct policy regarding trade unions is a basic condition for adherence to the Fourth International. He who does not seek and does not find the road to the masses is not a fighter but a dead weight to the party. A program is formulated not for the editorial board or for the leaders of discussion clubs but for the revolutionary action of millions. The cleansing of the ranks of the Fourth International of sectarianism and incurable sectarians is a primary condition for revolutionary success.

## **The Road to the Woman-Worker— The Road to the Youth**

The defeat of the Spanish revolution, engineered by its "leaders;" the shameful bankruptcy of the People's Front in France and the exposure of the Moscow juridical swindles—these three facts in their aggregate deal an irreparable blow to the Comintern and, incidentally, grave wounds to its allies: the Social-Democrats and Anarcho-Syndicalists. This does not mean, of course, that the members of these organization will immediately turn to the Fourth International. The older generation, having suffered terrible defeats, will leave the movement in significant numbers. In addition, the Fourth International is certainly not striving to become an asylum for revolutionary invalids, disillusioned bureaucrats and careerists. On the contrary, against a possible influx into our party of petty bourgeois elements, now reigning in the apparatus of the old organizations, strict preventive measures are necessary: a prolonged probationary period for those candidates who are not workers, especially former party bureaucrats; prevention from holding any responsible post for the first three years, etc. There is not and there will not be any place for careerism, the ulcer of the old Internationals, in the Fourth International. Only those who wish to live for the movement, and not at the expense of the movement, will find access to us. The revolutionary workers should feel themselves to be the masters. The doors of our organization are wide open to them.

Of course, even among the workers who had at one time risen to the first ranks, there are not a few tired and disillusioned ones. They will remain, at least for the next period, as bystanders. When a program or an organization wears out, the generation which carried it on its shoulders wears out with it. The movement is revitalized by the youth who are free of responsibility for the past. The Fourth International pays particular attention to the young generation of the proletariat. All of its policies strive to inspire the youth with belief in its own strength and in the future. Only the fresh enthusiasm and aggressive spirit of the youth can guarantee the preliminary successes in the struggle; only these successes can return the best elements of the older generation to the road of revolution. Thus it was, thus it will be.

Opportunist organizations by their very nature concentrate their chief attention on the top layers of the working class and therefore ignore both the youth and the woman-worker. The decay of capitalism, however, deals its heaviest blows to the woman as a wage-earner and as a housewife. The sections of the Fourth International should seek bases of support among the most exploited layers of the working class; consequently, among the women-workers. Here they will find inexhaustible stores of devotion, selflessness and readiness to sacrifice.

*Down with the bureaucracy and careerism! Open the road to the youth! Turn to the woman-worker! These slogans are emblazoned on the banner of the Fourth International. Under the banner of the Fourth International!*

Sceptics ask: but has the moment for the creation of the Fourth International yet arrived? It is impossible, they say, to create an International "artificially;" it can only arise out of great events, etc., etc. All of these objections merely show that the sceptics are not good for the building of a new International. They are good for scarcely anything at all.

The Fourth International has already arisen out of great events: the greatest defeats of the proletariat in history. The cause for these defeats is to be found in the degeneration and perfidy of the old leadership. The class struggle does not tolerate an interruption. The Third International, following the Second, is dead for purposes of revolution. Long live the Fourth International!

But has the time yet arrived to proclaim its creation? . . . the sceptics are not quieted down. The Fourth International, we answer, has no need of being "proclaimed." It exists and it fights. Is it weak? Yes, its ranks are not numerous because it is

still young. They are as yet chiefly cadres. But these cadres are pledges for the future. Outside of these cadres there does not exist a single revolutionary current on this planet really meriting the name. If our International be still weak in numbers, it is strong in doctrine, program, tradition, in the incomparable tempering of its cadres. Who does not perceive this today, let him in the meantime stand aside. Tomorrow it will become more evident.

The Fourth International, already today, is deservedly hated by the Stalinists, Social-democrats, bourgeois liberals and fascists. There is not and there cannot be a place for it in any of the People's Fronts. It uncompromisingly gives battle to all political groupings tied to the apron-strings of the bourgeoisie. Its task—the abolition of capitalism's domination. Its aim—socialism. Its method—the proletarian revolution.

Without inner democracy—no revolutionary education. Without discipline—no revolutionary action. The inner structure of the Fourth International is based on the principles of *democratic centralism*; full freedom in discussion, complete unity in action.

The present crisis in human culture is the crisis in the proletarian leadership. The advanced workers, united in the Fourth International, show their class the way of exit out of the crisis. They offer a program based on international experience in the struggle of the proletariat and of all the oppressed of the world for liberation. They offer a spotless banner.

Workers—men and women—of all countries, place yourselves under the banner of the Fourth International. It is the banner of your approaching victory!



## A MANIFESTO

**Against Imperialist War!****Unite Against Exploitation, Oppression,  
War and Fascism!****Forward for the Class Struggle, Interna-  
tional Socialism, and Freedom!****Workers, Exploited and Colonial Peoples of All Countries:**

The founding conference of the Fourth International—the World Party of the Socialist Revolution—meeting in September, 1938, issues this appeal at a time when the greatest peril threatens the masses of the entire world and the cause of their emancipation from modern slavery.

We are confronted with the horrors of a *new imperialist world war*. It is a monstrous lie that the war will take place between "peaceful" and "warlike" nations, because war is inherent in capitalism itself, and *every* capitalist nation is engaged in the mad armaments race.

It is a monstrous lie to say that the war will be between "democratic" and "dictatorial" countries, because the "democracies" are already allied with many dictatorships and when war does break out the first victims will be the democratic rights and institutions already largely undermined in the "peaceful" countries.

It is a lie to say that the war will take place for *the national independence* or freedom of Czechoslovakia. That is a cruel falsehood in which Czechoslovakia is playing the same role as "poor Belgium" in 1914.

The Anglo-French imperialists, who mercilessly beat down the fighters for independence in India, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria, Palestine, and everywhere, recognize nothing but their "independent right" to exploit millions of slaves, black, brown and white, throughout the world.

The capitalist world is mortally wounded. *In its agony it*

*exhales the poisons of fascism and totalitarian war, which threatens to subject the workers and farmers everywhere once more to a new and horrible servitude, and to unleash the forces of destruction which will shatter modern civilization.*

In the midst of abundance, with a productive apparatus which could, well organized and directed, cover more than all the present requirements of humanity, capitalism dooms millions of men to unemployment, miserables doles, or to starvation.

The ruling class which long ago broke the chains of feudalism in the name of democracy and equality, brings together the darkest elements of reaction and the most debased of the lower depths of society to abolish all the democratic rights conquered by the people. *It wants, with the dagger and fascist knout, to preserve the sovereignty it would lose through the inexorable victory of socialism.*

Capitalism is utterly incapable of assuring the well-being of the masses and equally incapable of assuring peace. Less than a generation has passed since the last "war to end war" and we already find ourselves on the threshold of a new world war, infinitely more horrible than the last one.

*Once more the exploited are called upon to destroy each other for their respective imperialist masters. Once more the mothers of the people are called upon to become brood sows. Once more fields will be transformed into blood soaked trenches and cities into devastated tombs—so that the imperialists may preserve their profits and their colonies, or acquire new ones.*

## **A Bandit War**

All the ruling classes of the capitalist countries are bandits. Their war, whatever the pretensions and hypocritical slogans, will be a war between bandits. It will not be a workers' war, but on the contrary, the workers, and the exploited in general, will be its victims. *It will not be a war for democracy, since true democracy for the masses can be won only in the struggle against capitalist domination. Even the democratic rights which the masses still enjoy cannot be preserved or extended, as the example of the Spanish civil war has shown, except by methods of militant, revolutionary class struggle for socialism.*

*It will not be a war in the interests of the workers, since the attacks on the social conquests of the French workers of June, 1936, especially the 40-hour week, show that the defense of the most elementary economic and social interests of the*

masses—their daily bread and their freedom—is incompatible with the defense of the fatherland of the bourgeoisie.

Hitler, who destroyed all social gains of the German and Austrian working class, is leading the struggle in the name of capitalism against the interests of the peoples of Europe. In the midst of war threats we emphasize again that the main enemy is in one's own country. The working class has no fatherland to defend except where it conquers and rules. No support to the war makers and to imperialist war—we say—but continuation of the class struggle in every situation and utilization of the war crisis for the overthrow of capitalist rule, i. e., the overthrow of the war and of capitalism itself!

## **Betrayers of the Toilers**

Capitalism is bankrupt. Its social relations, its national boundaries, are strangling the economic and social development of man. It is more than ripe for socialist reorganization. Its prolonged existence can only add to unending horror and misery.

Humanity can be saved from the new barbarism that menaces it only under the leadership of the revolutionary working class, historic champion and ally of the landless and debt-ridden farmers, and of the millions of black, brown and yellow colonial slaves.

But the great tragedy of the proletariat resides today in the fact that paralyzing fetters prevent it from realizing its mission of emancipation, fetters less powerful than those of capitalism itself, but more subtly and insidiously devised. With these fetters the traditional parties of labor, the Second and Third Internationals, have bound it hand and foot.

The leaders of the Second International act as direct agents of "democratic" imperialism, helping it to soften the shocks of the class struggle, and hoping thus to preserve their position in declining capitalist democracy. The leaders of the Third International, betraying all their traditional principles and ideals, have been converted into instruments of the Soviet bureaucracy. The two old Internationals differ now primarily in the degree to which differences exist between the Anglo-French bourgeoisie and the ruling Stalinist clique.

Instead of hastening the dispatch of the putrified corpse of capitalism into the limbo of history, social democracy and Stalinism unite to patch it up and preserve it. They have long since abandoned the class struggle. They concentrate all their

efforts toward bringing the working class into the service of capitalism in the name of a falsified "democracy" or a "People's Front" instead of destroying the monster. They support the domination of colonial peoples by their respective imperialists and offer their military aid to the same end.

## **Impotent Against Fascism**

*Neither of the old Internationals were capable of organizing proletarian resistance to fascism in Germany or in Austria. Even Spain, where the proletariat—by whose side we stand firmly and enthusiastically—has displayed its capacity to struggle effectively against the fascist beasts, the old parties sapped its resistance and brutally exterminated the revolutionary forces behind their own front, acting as agents of Anglo-French imperialism and of the Moscow bureaucracy.*

In reality, by abandoning the vigilance of the working class, abandoning the independence of the workers' movement and subordinating it to the "democratic" bourgeoisie, the old parties facilitated the victory of fascism, whose aim—to smash the proletariat as an independent movement and as a class—is partially carried out in advance by the two old Internationals.

No less traitorous is the role played by the social democracy and Stalinism in the face of the imminent war danger. More cynically than the Second International before the last war—when it at least formally took an anti-war position—the two Internationals now demand for themselves the responsibility of leading the masses to the butchery.

They have neither the desire nor the possibility of organizing the struggle against the coming imperialist war. On the contrary, completely corrupted by social patriotism and flying the pirate flag of "democratic" imperialism, the social patriots are already acting as recruiting sergeants of imperialism.

The role that they play in the defense of the Soviet Union is equally perfidious. They do not defend the great Russian Revolution, but the reactionary, usurping bureaucracy. They do not lay the bases of socialist society but sap the foundations laid 20 years ago by the Russian masses under the leadership of the Bolsheviks.

## **We Are Loyal to U.S.S.R.**

We, the Fourth International, loyal defenders of the U. S. S. R. against all its enemies, within and without, accuse Stalinism of

having subjected the economic life of the country to the interests of the bureaucratic clique at the top. Partisans of real proletarian democracy, we accuse Stalinism of having deprived the Soviet masses of all the great liberties they won arms in hand.

The reactionary bureaucracy has established an odious totalitarian regime by means of a regime of continuous bloody terror supplemented by gangster attacks against revolutionists abroad and the corruption of the workers' and intellectuals' movements. This regime discredits the name of socialism. The so-called Communist Parties are nothing but the hired agencies of this totalitarian regime, whose only world aim is the maintenance of the imperialist status quo. The Second International differs from Stalinism only in its purely verbal and superficial criticism. Bonapartism is undermining the Bolshevik revolution.

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## **Break the Chains!**

The world proletariat cannot advance without breaking the chains that bind it to the old Internationals and their policies. Anarchism, which has shown itself, particularly in Spain, to be the prisoner of its own doctrines, and which capitulated to the bourgeoisie in the name of the People's Front, cannot make this break. Equally futile are the small centrist groups united in the London Bureau which refuse to break clearly with the old Internationals and take the road of class struggle toward international revolutionary socialism.

It is only by restoring the great traditions of revolutionary Marxism, by breaking with class collaboration, social patriotism, and the priests of submission in the labor movement, and by taking the road of resolutely aggressive class struggle, by storming the fortress of the bourgeoisie, armed with the invincible weapons forged by our great masters, Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, that the exploited of the world will be able to escape stagnation and defeat and march forward like a solid phalanx toward the socialist future.

That is the road of the Fourth International! It rests upon the unshakeable foundations of the principles of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. It proudly proclaims itself the heir and perpetuator of the First International of Marx, of the Russian Revolution, and of the Communist International of Lenin.

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## The Fourth International

*The Fourth International does not hide its aims. Its program is known to the working class. It is the program of irreconcilable opposition and of class struggle against injustice, against exploitation, and against oppression.*

Above all, in the present crucial period — a period of crisis vital to the working class and all humanity — the Fourth International issues an appeal to the workers and oppressed people of the entire world.

To the French and German workers especially, who are menaced with mutual destruction in the interest of imperialism, we say: like the proletariat everywhere you hate the hangman Hitler. Like you, we are determined to destroy Fascism and all oppressive rule.

But fascism cannot and will not be destroyed by the bayonets of French imperialism. Only the independent class action of the proletariat will put an end to the hideous rule of fascism.

*Unite* in the unremitting class struggle against fascism and imperialist war.

*Unite* for the freedom of colonial peoples and against the tyranny of imperialist rule.

*Unite* in the only just and sacred war — the war against the oppressors, the exploiters, against their perfidious agents in the working class.

Long live the Fourth International!

Long live the International Socialist Revolution!

—The Executive Committee of the Fourth International  
(World Party of the Socialist Revolution.)

Sept. 15, 1938

# Statutes of the Fourth International

## 1

All the proletarian and revolutionary militants in the world who accept and apply the principles and the program of the Fourth International are joined in a single world-wide organization, under a centralized international leadership, and a single discipline. This organization has as its name THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL (WORLD PARTY OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION), and is governed by these present statutes.

## 2

In all countries the members of the Fourth International are organized into parties or leagues, which constitute the national sections of the Fourth International (World Party of the Socialist Revolution).

The national sections are formed on the platform and in accordance with the organizational structure defined and established by the founding Congress of the Fourth International (September 1938). In its platform the Fourth International concentrated the international experience of the revolutionary Marxist movement, and especially that which rises out of the socialist conquests of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia. It assimilates and bases itself upon all of humanity's progressive social experiences, which lead to the expropriation of the capitalist class and to the ultimate abolition of classes.

## 4

The *internal regime* of the International, on the local, national, and world scales, is determined by the principles and practice of democratic centralism.

The sections are required to observe the decisions and resolutions of the International Conference, and, in its absence, of the International Executive Committee, represented during the intervals between its meetings by the International Secretariat—while nevertheless retaining the right of appeal before the next higher bodies until the next International Conference.

## 5

The national sections must pay, to the treasury of the International Secretariat, regular dues (monthly or quarterly), which are destined for the functioning of the international organisms, and which shall be proportional to the number of their members.

## 6

In each country there can be but one single section of the Fourth International, i.e., only one single organization in each country can be regularly affiliated with the Fourth International.

The procedure and practical measures for the formation or recognition of new national sections in countries where they do not exist, shall be established by the International Executive Committee in each particular case, and submitted to ratification by the

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national leaderships.

arranged by the International Secretariat and submitted to the decision of the International Executive Committee.

ing toward the Fourth International and a national section may be

The supreme body of the Fourth International on the world scale is the *International Conference*, which determines the policy of the International and of its sections in all important political questions, adopts resolutions, and decides in the last resort organizational questions and internal conflicts.

The International Conference must meet at least every two years. It will ordinarily be called by the I.E.C., and shall be composed of the delegates, or their mandated representatives, of all sections. It may be called, extraordinarily, upon the demand of more than one-third of the national sections.

## 8

During the intervals between the international conferences, the international leadership is entrusted to the *International Executive Committee*, composed of 15 members belonging to the most important national sections and elected by the Conference.

The I.E.C. meets at least once every three months, to examine the work of the International Secretariat and decide upon the most important problems. The decisions of the International Secretariat can be appealed from only before the I.E.C. or the International Conference. The I.E.C. may be extraordinarily called together by the majority decision of the I.S., or at the demand of at least three International Conference. Fusion between an organization develop-



The I.E.C. is responsible before the entire International for the carrying out of the decisions and the application of the political line adopted by the International Conference.

## 9

A national section can propose the revocation or substitution of one of its members belonging to the I.E.C. This measure must be approved by the majority vote of the members of the I.E.C.

## 10

The day-by-day administrative and political work, as well as the regular liaisons with the sections, is insured by an *International Secretariat*, composed of 5 members residing at the seat of the Secretariat, chosen in their majority from among the members of the I.E.C., and by the I.E.C.

The I.S. shall have at least one permanent comrade whose activity shall be wholly devoted to the work of the I.S. and whose salary shall be guaranteed by the contributions of the sections. The I.S. publishes a regular monthly bulletin, in, at least, French, English, and German, in the name of the I.E.C.

## 11

The members of the I.S. can be replaced by the majority decision of the I.E.C., which shall also have the right to summon qualified collaborators to its work.

## 12

For the purpose of insuring a better connection and a greater organizational and political cohesion among the countries of continents distant from the seat of the I.S., provision is made for the formation of Sub-Secretariats, charged with the same duties as the I.S., but under the jurisdiction of the I.S.

The formation of these Sub-Secretariats is determined upon in concrete cases by the decision of the International Conference, or, when that is not in session, by the I.E.C.

## 13

The I.E.C. has the right, after examination of and consultation with the interested parties, to pronounce the expulsion of sections or individual members of the Fourth International. Decisions of expulsion are executory, although the interested parties retain the right of appeal before the International Conference.

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# The War In the Far East and The Revolutionary Perspectives

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## I

The conflict in the Far East between China and Japan lays bare some of the principal symptoms of the crisis of world capitalism in its final, most highly developed, imperialist stage, and opens up perspectives of great revolutionary development in a decisive part of the globe. On the one hand, Japan, weakest link in the chain of world imperialism, is seeking to overcome the maladies of its decline by a war of colonial conquest. On the other hand, by their invasion of China, the Japanese imperialists have provoked a defensive campaign which, despite its weakness and inadequacy under the leadership of the Koumintang, assumes the character of a war of national liberation. At the same time, by the pursuit of their predatory aims in China, the Japanese imperialists have accentuated the inter-imperialist antagonisms which are forcing mankind to the brink of a new world war.

## II

Japan, belatedly rising to the stature of an imperialist power toward the end of the nineteenth century, was confronted by a world already substantially divided among its imperialist rivals. The Japanese imperialists, moreover, were obliged to proceed from an exceedingly weak economic base in their plans of empire. Lacking such vital raw materials as coal and iron, copper, oil and cotton, they were driven from the outset to seek these supplies beyond the natural frontiers of Japan. Acquisition of sources of these raw materials was a condition, not only of expansion, but even of survival in the competitive world of imperialist rivalry. The career of Japanese imperialism opened with the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5, when Japan defeated China and seized Korea and Formosa. Ten years later, Japan vanquished Czarist

Russia and took over the sphere of influence held by the latter in South Manchuria. During the world war of 1914-18, Japan seized the Chinese province of Shantung and presented China with the notorious "Twenty-one Demands", which were designed to bring all China under Japanese Control.

### III

The destruction caused in Europe by the World War, creating an ever-increasing demand for products of all kinds, gave a mighty impetus to the development of Japanese industry. The growth of Japan's productive forces during that period, however, intensified all the contradictions of Japanese economy. As the Versailles "peace" conference, Japan, as a junior partner of the Allied Powers, received only a paltry share of the booty of war. After ceding to Japan a few Pacific islands formerly held by Germany, the Allied imperialists, at the Washington Conference in 1922, forced Japan to evacuate Shantung. They also compelled Japan to withdraw her troops from the Maritime provinces of Siberia, where they had formed part of the inter-Allied interventionist forces employed against the first workers' state which had emerged from the October Revolution in Russia. These developments coincided with the erection of tariffs and quota barriers—measures of extreme protectionism designed to overcome the post-war economic crisis in the countries of the West—which dealt Japan double blows on the economic front. Protectionism not only curtailed Japan's trade, but also threatened her supply of raw materials, for Japan depended on the proceeds of her export trade to finance raw material purchases abroad. The blows at Japan's export trade consequently led to a drainage of the country's gold reserves. A sharp currency crisis reflected the entire insecurity of the Japanese economic structure, which was damaged still further by the disastrous earthquake in 1933. Japanese capitalism was doomed to suffocate within its own national boundaries unless it could find a way out by means of colonial conquests.

### IV

The growth of Japan's productive forces and the development of capitalist economic relations did not result, as in the capitalist countries of the West, in the emergence of a corresponding social and political superstructure. The transition from feudal to capitalist society was accomplished without revolution and the bourgeoisie was therefore not faced with the necessity of razing the old institutions of social rule and replacing them by new. Emerging from the ranks of the feudal nobility and the warrior

caste of *Samurai*, the bourgeoisie adapted the old institutions, with some modifications, to the requirements of the new systems of capitalist exploitation. Thus ancient feudal institutions, including a "divine" monarchy, a semi-independent military caste, and semi-feudal types of exploitation exist side by side with a "democratic" parliament and powerful industrial and financial trusts. From the presence of these "feudal survivals," powerful as they appear to be, it would, however, be false to deduce that the next stage in the social progress of Japan must be a "democratic" revolution. This is the shallow opportunist reasoning of the Stalinists. Bourgeois property relations and the capitalist system of exploitation, extending over both the proletariat and the peasantry, decree the revolutionary overthrow of the ruling class and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only reed of salvation for both workers and peasants. If in the high tide of the Japanese revolution, the revolutionary party of the masses should seek to discover an intermediate, "democratic" solution for the great social tasks, the inevitable result will be the disorientation and destruction of the revolutionary forces and the restoration of power to the bankrupt ruling class.

## V

The feudal-military caste of generals and officers, superficially united by the monarchy, is not a homogeneous body. While the lower ranks of officers are drawn largely from rural areas, from the upper layers of the peasantry, the tops fuse with the industrial and financial bourgeoisie. As a whole, the military caste strives to maintain for itself the traditional privileges and semi-independent position which it occupied in the feudal era. For this purpose it is organized in such typically feudal institutions as the secret Black Dragon society. The strivings of the military caste to keep intact its privileges and powers tend to complicate the main problem of the Japanese ruling class as a whole, which is to maintain over both the proletariat and the peasantry the present crushing system of exploitation with all the oppression which accompanies it. Periodically, this caste comes into conflict with industry and finance capital, which seek to stem the drain on economy caused by the parasitic needs of the military caste. Army revolts and the assassination of leading political representatives of the industrial and financial bourgeoisie are the sharpest expressions of this conflict. These revolts also express, insofar as they are led by the younger officers of lower rank, the rebellion of the peasantry against finance capital. But since all sections of the ruling class realize the perils of class disunity, conflicts are finally settled

on the basis of mutual concessions, by loading additional burdens onto the backs of the Japanese masses and by common agreement to embark on predatory military campaigns to enslave neighboring peoples, thereby cementing the cracks in the structure of ruling class domination as a whole.

## VI

China, geographically close to Japan, with a population of some 430,000,000 people spread over a vast expanse of territory, rich in minerals and other basic raw materials, was the logical scene for Japanese imperialist expansion. In China, the Japanese imperialists saw the prospect of a "fundamental solution" of their most pressing economic difficulties. Contemplation of this prospect, moreover, opened up visions of imperial power and grandeur. China came to be viewed not only as the answer to economic problems, but as a jumping-off point for campaigns which would plant the banner of the Rising Sun in Siberia, at least as far as Lake Baikal, in India, and Malaysia, in Indonesia, in Hawaii and the Philippines, in the Antipodes, to say nothing of Latin America and the western portion of the United States. That the Japanese imperialists did not earlier seek to bring all China under their control by means of war was due largely to fear of their powerful rivals in the West whose interests in China they would inevitably have to assail. The Chinese revolution of 1925-27 dictated to Japan a policy of watchful waiting, especially since the anti-imperialist wave in China during that period was being directed exclusively against Britain. The world economic crisis which, following the post-war reconstruction period, afflicted the capitalist world, gave Japan both her opportunity and an added spur to action. Taking advantage of the preoccupation of the Western powers with their own acute domestic problems, the Japanese imperialists seized Manchuria in 1931 and in the following year established there their Manchukuo "protectorate." In 1933, they seized the province of Jehol, annexed it to Manchukuo, and then proceeded to establish a foothold in North China. The military frightfulness with which Japan is now scourging China represents a further stage in the Japanese plans of colonial conquest.

## VII

As a "backward" country, China has been the victim of imperialist rapacity for more than a century. Imperialist guns, in the early nineteenth century, ended China's age-old seclusion and isolation and introduced modern industry and capitalist forms of exploitation into the country. The imperialists came to China first

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as traders. But with the rapid advance of industry in the West, and the growing accumulation of surplus value as a result of ever more intense labor exploitation, it was only a matter of time before China came to be regarded not only as a commodity market, but as a lucrative field for the investment of capital as well. China's inexhaustible supply of cheap labor proved a magnetic attraction for foreign capital. In a series of wars against which the decadent Manchu Dynasty proved completely impotent, the imperialist powers grabbed Chinese territory, established "concessions" in China's principal cities, and wrested from China a series of "privileges" designed to protect their trade and investments. By limiting Chinese import duties to five per cent *ad valorem*, they assured the competitive position of their products in the China market. By controlling the collection and disbursement of Chinese Customs revenues, they insured the payment of China's rapidly-mounting foreign debts. By establishing the principle of "extraterritoriality" (capitulations), they gained exemption of their business enterprise from Chinese taxation and their nationals from the operation of Chinese law. The unequal treaties in which these "privileges" were embodied were the sign of China's reduction to the status of a semi-colonial country.

### VIII

Imperialist economic penetration shook China's semi-feudal economy, based on agriculture and handicrafts, to its very foundations. Cheap commodities, manufactured in foreign-owned plants both in China and the countries of the West, penetrated the country along railroads built by the imperialists. The most important section of the old ruling class, especially the Manchu officialdom, were converted into brokers for foreign capital (compradores). The special "privileges" which the imperialists exacted from China militated against the all-sided development of an independent Chinese capitalist economy and kept the country's productive forces in a political straight-jacket. During the World War, however, Chinese industry, like the industry of Japan, received a great stimulus. The preoccupation of the major imperialist powers in the Western hemisphere, although giving rain to Japan's colonial ambitions in China, nevertheless relieved the total imperialist pressure on the country. Native industry advanced rapidly.

### IX

It was during this period that the so-called "national" bourgeoisie, seeking to establish its own economic base in competition with the imperialists, began to emerge. The Chinese proletariat,

drawn from the pauperized population of the villages, gained vastly in numerical strength, and as the result of groupment in large factories and enterprises, in class consciousness and fighting spirit. When British imperialism, having overcome the post-war crisis, began to reassert itself in China, it was obliged to direct its guns against striking Chinese workers. Bloody massacres by British imperialist troops and police in 1925-26, in which workers and their student allies were the principal victims, stirred an anti-imperialist wave which threatened to engulf the whole structure of imperialist domination in China. The Chinese national bourgeoisie, irritated by the humiliations visited on them by the imperialists and seeing a chance to strike blows at their principal foreign trade competitors, supported the anti-imperialist movement by means of judicious financial aid to workers on strike in imperialist enterprises. But when the strike movement spread or threatened to spread to native plants, and when, moreover, it deepened into social revolution, the national exploiters bared their class fangs and solidarized themselves with the imperialists against the workers.

## X

Historic belatedness and the subjection of China by the imperialists deprived the Chinese bourgeoisie of that progressive role which had been played by its European forerunners in the bourgeois revolutions of the West. It could neither establish independent class roots in Chinese society nor assert itself as a sovereign master class. The compradores, direct agents of the imperialists recruited from among the landlords and merchants and the old Manchu officialdom, were the first representatives of Chinese capitalism. From the ranks of the compradores emerged the "national" bourgeoisie. A thousand threads of interpenetration, interdependence and mutual interest linked the national bourgeoisie to the compradores. Together they participated in the exploitation, not only of the proletariat, but also of the peasantry, since their interests were closely interlocked with those of the village exploiters, to whom they were connected by the country-wide banking system. In this complex of relationships lies the explanation for the utter inability of the Chinese bourgeoisie to conduct a consistent struggle against imperialism, to erect a modern unified state, or to solve the agrarian problem.

## XI

The petty bourgeoisie occupies an intermediate position between the big bourgeoisie and the proletariat. An overwhelming majority of the class consists of small peasant proprietors and

tenant farmers. In the cities, in addition, is the numerous army of small shopkeepers, handicraft manufacturers, professionals such as teachers, doctors and lawyers, and petty government officials, all of whom are subjected to the oppression of the big bourgeoisie and the imperialists. The peasantry, by reason of its intermediate and dependent social position, its dispersal over vast spaces, its stratified diversification, its individualistic and proprietary characteristics, its cultural backwardness, is unable, despite its numerical preponderance, to play any leading independent political role in Chinese society. It cannot solve even its most pressing problems by regaining possession of the land and relieving itself of the burdens of landlord-usurer parasitism. Much less is it capable of reorganizing the entire agricultural economy on a new and higher level by establishing large scale collectivized farming. The degeneration and disappearance of the so-called Chinese Soviet Republic, the explicit abandonment of the agrarian revolution by the Stalinist leaders of the peasantry, who have led the remnants of a grandiose agrarian movement back into the fold of the bourgeoisie-landlord Kuomintang, is a fresh historic demonstration of the political feebleness of the peasantry. As a class the peasantry can be led, but they cannot lead. In all their movements they come under the leadership either of the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. The petty bourgeoisie of the cities is similarly weak and dependent and can play no leading political role. The collapse of the great student movements directed in recent years against the Kuomintang and imperialism was a direct result of the fact that these movements found no firm base in an active proletariat.

## XII

Because of the reactionary, weak and dependent character of the bourgeoisie, and the political feebleness of the petty-bourgeoisie, the national or democratic tasks (independence from imperialism, creation of a unified state, the agrarian revolution) became the tasks of the proletariat, a class which, alone of all the classes in society, has independent and progressive class goals and is devoid of any ties of mutual interest either with the imperialists or the native exploiters—a class which, moreover, despite its numerical inferiority, possesses a concentrated power to raise it to the summits of society. Placed upon the shoulders of the proletariat were the twin tasks of achieving solution of the national problems and of clearing a road for the socialist reconstruction of society by raising itself to the position of ruling class in alliance with all the exploited masses of the towns and villages. In



1925-27, when the wave of the revolution was rising, revolutionary policy demanded the orientation of the Chinese proletariat in accordance with this perspective. What the proletariat lacked in numerical strength had been supplied by the peasants and the city poor, who represent a mighty reservoir of revolutionary power. Progressive leadership of the peasantry was guaranteed by the proletariat. Together, these classes represented an invincible force against which all the weapons of imperialism and bourgeois-landlord reaction would have proved unavailing—provided this force had been given a clear revolutionary direction.

### XIII

But the Stalin-Bukharin leadership of the Communist international, turning their backs on all previous revolutionary experience including the still fresh experience of Russia, resorted in China to the Menshevik policies which they had been prevented from carrying out in Russia in 1917. Counterposing the national tasks of the Chinese revolution to the emancipatory struggle of the workers and peasants, arbitrarily separating the two in accordance with a lifeless theory of "stages", they declared the immediate tasks in China to be national unification and the expulsion of the imperialists. In line, moreover, with the narrow nationalist conceptions which were already dominating Soviet policy, the Stalinist bureaucracy viewed the Chinese bourgeoisie as a possible ally against Great Britain, then the leader of the anti-Soviet Capitalist front. Stalin-Bukharin therefore assigned to the Chinese bourgeoisie the leading role in the national struggle. They subordinated the Communist Party to the Kuomintang and the proletariat and peasantry to the bourgeoisie. The political formula for this subordination was the "bloc of four classes", wherein the proletariat and the peasantry were supposed to be united with the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie for the "common" struggle against imperialism. The Chinese Communists were ordered by Stalin-Bukharin to hold the strike movement and the activities of the peasants within limits acceptable to the bourgeoisie, in order not to disturb the "national united front." This opportunist betrayal of the revolution was passed off as Bolshevism on the youthful and inexperienced Chinese proletariat and the still more youthful and inexperienced Chinese Communist Party. At the height of the revolutionary wave, the bourgeoisie, under Chiang Kai-shek's leadership, made its peace with imperialism at the price of a few paltry concessions to its "national" sentiments and turned savagely on the unsuspecting workers and peasants who had been taught by the Communists

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to look upon the bourgeoisie as their leaders and saviors. The bourgeoisie sealed its alliance with imperialism in the blood of the insurgent masses.

#### XIV

On the ruins of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 arose the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang regime. The workers returned to a slavery intensified by the new military dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek, who intensified a reign of terror and wiped out all the workers' organizations. Militarist wars, evidence of the complete disunity of the country, revived on an unprecedented scale as Chiang Kai-shek sought to extend his sway over all of China. The peasantry, scourged by landlordism, usury and military requisitioning, fell into deeper ruin. Imperialism, against which the "bloc of four classes" had been specifically directed, was able to strengthen all its commanding positions. The road was prepared for the subsequent invasion by Japan, with its obvious threat to the Soviet Union. These were the real fruits of the Stalin-Bukharin policies in China.

#### XV

The Kuomintang government which arose from the events of 1925-27 represented the triumph of the bourgeois counter-revolution over the popular movement of the masses. Chiang Kai-shek, head of the Kuomintang's military forces, clamped down an iron dictatorship. While stamping out the remaining embers of the revolution, he at the same time "expropriated the bourgeoisie politically in order to save them economically." The petty-bourgeois masses who constituted the driving force of the Kuomintang against the regional military satraps in the high-tide of the revolution, fell into political passivity—with the exception of some of the peasantry, who, goaded by intensified exploitation, took to the path of open civil war against the old and new oppressors. Thus the Kuomintang became a full-fledged party of the bourgeoisie. The new rulers justified their vicious suppression of the masses by appealing to the petty-bourgeois doctrines of Sun Yat-sen, the program of the Kuomintang—especially the so-called "principle of democracy" with its prescription of a period of "political tutelage" for the masses. The military dictatorship, carried forward under the single rule of the Kuomintang, with all other political tendencies driven underground, was represented as a preparation of the masses for "democratic" government. But democracy is no nearer realization today than it was eleven years ago. This fact constitutes the living proof that be-

tween the military dictatorship of the Kuomintang and the realization of the dictatorship of the proletariat, there cannot be any intermediate, transitional, "democratic" stage. Those who, like the Stalinists, contend that such a stage is possible—even inevitable!—deceive and disorient the masses and thereby prepare the betrayal and defeat of the Chinese revolution.

#### XVI

From the fatal opportunist policies which they pursued in 1925-27 during the upsurge of the revolutionary wave, the Chinese Communists veered to the opposite extreme of adventurism in the period of the Kuomintang counter-revolution. After precipitating disastrous and utterly futile uprisings which culminated in the tragic Canton putsch, and thereby cutting themselves away from their working class base, they transferred their activities to the rural interior. Deserting the prostrate proletariat in the cities, they placed themselves at the head of peasant armies which emerged as spearheads of the agrarian revolts during the ebb of the revolutionary tide, setting as their goal the establishment of a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry"—precisely that intermediate "democratic" stage which for China and all other colonial and semi-colonial countries is historically excluded. Although proceeding under the slogan of Soviets, which the Communists had rejected during the high tide of the revolution, but which were later to be sanctified in "Third Period" policies, the peasant war did not succeed in evoking responses among the workers. Held down by Chiang Kai-shek's military dictatorship and a devastating economic crisis, disorganized further by the "Red Trade Union" tactics of the Communists, held in passivity by the refusal of the Communists to unfold a program of democratic demands corresponding to their vital needs in the new counter-revolutionary stage, the workers drifted away from political life. Chiang Kai-shek, unhindered by the proletariat, was finally able, at the end of 1934, to crush the isolated peasant Soviets despite the many heroic battles fought by the peasant Red armies.

#### XVII

The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 found the Kuomintang government waging a war of extermination against the revolting peasants and at the same time strengthening its reactionary dictatorship over the workers. Announcing a policy of "non-resistance" to Japanese imperialism Chiang Kai-shek proclaimed as his supreme tasks the wiping out of the insurgent

peasant movement and the unification of the country—meaning thereby the establishment of Chiang's own power over that of his provincial adversaries. The reverse side of the coin of non-resistance was a vigorous stamping out of the rising anti-Japanese movement. Revealing anew the fundamental unity of interests between imperialists and the national bourgeoisie, the non-resistance policy of the Kuomintang facilitates Japan's invasion of China. The imperialists, on their part, were more than generous in aiding the Kuomintang to crush the peasants and keep the labor movement in a state of prostration.

### XVIII

While holding down the oppressed masses and retreating step after step before the Japanese invaders, the Kuomintang drew closer to British and American imperialism in the hope that these powers, fearful for their own interests in China, would be obliged to halt Japan's onward march. There also existed the hope that China would regain at least a breathing space through Japan becoming embroiled with the U.S.S.R. But the devastating world economic crisis which coincided with Japan's colonial drive together with their own military unpreparedness, compelled Britain and America to adopt a policy of watchful waiting in the Far East while encouraging the Kuomintang to resist Japan as far as it dared. The Stalinist bureaucracy, temporarily wedded to the policy of *status quo*, was prepared to make numerous concessions to Japan in order to insure the uninterrupted building of "socialism" within the borders of the U.S.S.R. When aggravated internal difficulties and the immobilization of its principal rivals spurred Japan to military campaigns of increasing scope in 1937—to the seizure of North China and the attack on the Yangtze valley—the Kuomintang was faced with the alternative of either abdicating before Japan or resisting with the help of such material aid as it could secure abroad. Unlike the earlier Japanese drives, the newest campaign threatened the Kuomintang regime in its own strongholds and the bourgeoisie in the very center of its self and power, thus making it clear that the limits of the non-resistance policy had been reached. The Kuomintang decided upon a purely military-defensive campaign against Japan, which is far different from consistent, principled struggle *against imperialism as a whole* for China's national independence. Other factors entered into the Kuomintang's decision to resist. Bolstered by British and American financial aid and a rising economic conjuncture, encouraged, too, by its victory over the Chinese Soviets, the regime has grown firmer and more self-confident. Moreover, the policy

of non-resistance, coupled with the growth of anti-Japanese sentiment throughout the country, was being exploited against Chiang Kai-shek with increasing success by his provincial rivals.

### XIX

The newest phase of Japan's colonial drive has coincided with the final degeneration of the Communist International. From instruments of the revolutionary class struggle, the Communist parties have been converted into instruments of Stalinist diplomacy. Searching for "allies" among the democratic capitalist powers in face of the growing war threat, the Stalinist bureaucracy ordered these parties to abandon their revolutionary program and support the bourgeoisie of their respective countries. Just as Stalin needed the bourgeois democracies of the west as "allies" against Hitler's Germany, so in the Far East, in line with his Anglo-French-American orientation, he sought once more an alliance with the bourgeois Kuomintang—this time against imperialist Japan. What remained of the Chinese Communist Party after Chiang Kai-shek's forceful liquidation of the peasant Soviets, has publicly surrendered the last remnants of its revolutionary policy in order to enter a "People's Anti-Japanese Front" with the hangman of the Chinese revolution. The Chinese Stalinists have formally liquidated "Soviet China," handed over to Chiang Kai-shek the remnants of the peasant Red armies, openly renounced the agrarian struggle, explicitly abandoned the class interests of the workers. Publicly embracing the petty bourgeois doctrines of Sun Yat-sen, they have proclaimed themselves the gendarmes private property and, in conformity with Stalinist practice everywhere, the enemies of the revolution.

### XX

It is the bounden duty of the international proletariat and above all of the revolutionary vanguard, to support the struggle of China against Japan. The crime of the Stalinists consists, not in supporting and participating in China's struggle, even while it remains under the leadership of the Kuomintang—but in surrendering their class struggle policy, in abandoning the interests of the exploited masses, in capitulating politically to the Kuomintang, in abdicating the right of independent mobilization of the masses against Japanese invaders, in renouncing revolutionary criticism of the Kuomintang's conduct of the war, in fortifying Chiang Kai-shek's leadership, in supporting and spreading the illusion that the Kuomintang and the national bourgeoisie can lead the war consistently and to a successful conclusion.

By these traitorous actions they mislead, confuse and disorient the masses of China and obstruct a revolutionary mobilization. The Stalinists in other countries, impotent to arouse the workers to solidarity with China's cause, make empty appeals to the "democratic," "peaceful" imperialist governments to save China from Japan. They base these appeals, not on any revolutionary grounds (there are none), but on the imperialists' own need to preserve their robber interests in China and the Far East. They urge the workers to support their "own" imperialist governments in "collective security" action against Japan—in reality the action of one set of imperialist robbers against another. Thus the Stalinists, following in the footsteps of the politically bankrupt Second International, stand forth as the social patriotic betrayers of the working class and the oppressed generally—not only in the "democratic" countries of the west, but in the East as well.

## XXI

British imperialism, with vast trade interests and a two-billion-dollar investment stake in China, is becoming more and more perturbed by Japan's advance. The threat to its China interests, however, is but one aspect of British imperialism's fear for its empire in the coming war for redivision of the world, of which Japan's attack on China, following Italy's seizure of Ethiopia and Italo-German intervention in Spain, is but a beginning. Britain strives desperately to build up a war machine that will be adequate to defend her scattered possessions, while pursuing a temporary strategy calculated to delay the inevitable denouncement. Unable at present to challenge Japan at arms, particularly in view of her Mediterranean difficulties, Britain seeks to hinder Japan by placing all possible obstacles in that country's path—in particular by extending material aid to the Kuomintang regime and by parallel diplomatic action with the United States calculated to frighten the Japanese imperialists with the specter of an Anglo-American bloc. Britain hopes Japan will become exhausted in a long-drawn-out war with China. She also banks on the possibility that Japan may become embroiled in war with the U.S.S.R., thus staving off the Japanese threat to British possessions and interests in the Far East. A similar hope animates the British imperialists with regard to the Italo-German-Japanese bloc as a whole which is now the foremost challenger of Britain's world interests. Meanwhile, fearing that revolts of its millions of colonial slaves will create a dangerous rear in the coming war, British imperialism bribes the national bourgeoisie of its colonies (India Constitution, Anglo-Egyptian Treaty) in order to secure their

allegiance. The "dominions" of Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, due to the development of their own economy, have acquired interests separate from and contradictory to the interests of the British Empire as a whole. These interests represent a centrifugal force within the Empire. Australia and New Zealand in particular, because of their nearness to the Far Eastern cauldron, want freedom to remain outside of Empire struggles with Japan if it should prove advantageous to do so. Canada is in a like position with regard to the United States. Britain seeks to check those factors disintegrating the Empire by such means as trade preferences (Ottawa agreements) and periodical Imperial Conferences, which are designed to strengthen the ties between the dominions, on the one hand, and the metropolis on the other. In the present struggle in the Far East, British imperialism is concerned with the fate of China only insofar as the fate of China affects the interests of British imperialism.

## XXII

American imperialism, although having fewer and smaller actual interests in China than Great Britain has, is alarmed at the prospect of Japanese domination of the Pacific. Repeated breakdowns in American Economy, occurring at shorter intervals, serve warning that if American capitalism is to survive and expand, it must soon play a more commanding role, not only in the Pacific area, but on the entire world arena. Roosevelt's speech at Chicago in October, 1937, directed against "aggressor powers", furnished the key to the future politics of American imperialism. Unable now to challenge Japan, the Washington government tacks along devious diplomatic courses such as the Brussels Conference. Such ostensibly disinterested enterprises are useful for sowing pacifist illusions and thereby preparing the American workers to fight for the interests of American imperialism in the coming wars. At the same time, while according a sham independence to the Philippines in order to enlist the Filipino bourgeoisie to its side, the Washington government builds up a mighty army, navy and air force, and consolidates its empire in the Americas by means of the Pan-American Union, preparatory to challenging all its rivals for world supremacy. While regarding war with Japan as inevitable, the American imperialists hope to be able to enter upon such a war as late as possible, believing that Britain will be forced into war with Japan and that both will emerge exhausted from the struggle. For some time, too, the American imperialists have banked on the prospect that a Soviet-Japanese war will destroy their Pacific rival, but the internal crisis raging in the Soviet

Union, testifying to the entire instability of the Stalin regime, causes this prospect to recede more and more into the background. In their efforts to veil their war plans, the American imperialists are given the unstinting aid of the Stalinists, who, paralleling the betrayal by their China confreres, proclaim the "peaceful" role of American imperialism, call upon the Washington government to save China from Japan, and offer their services as war recruiting sergeants.

### XXIII

France, with a large empire of colonial slaves, is interested in the maintenance of the *status quo* in Europe, Africa and the Far East. French interests in China, though smallest and less diffused, are analagous to those of Great Britain. Being concentrated mainly in the colony of French Indo-China, they do not come within the orbit of immediate Japanese ambitions. Hence France's policy of diplomatic conciliation toward Japan, coupled with surreptitious material aid to China, following in all cases the leadership of Great Britain. This policy, however, finds its counterpart in the most cruel exploitation and oppression of the masses of Indo-China (as in all the other colonies of French imperialism) and a campaign of violent persecution of the revolutionists in that territory. As partners in or supporters of French imperialist government of the now defunct Popular Front, the Stalinists and "Socialists" of the Second International bear a full share of the responsibility for all the bestial crimes of French imperialism in Indo-China.

### XXIV

The European fascist states, in contrast to Great Britain, the U.S.A. and France, have a very small economic stake in China. Their diplomatic intervention in the Sino-Japanese struggle is designed, in the main, to exploit imperialist antagonisms in the Far East in the interest of furthering their primary European aims. Hitler, too, is maneuvering for recovery of Germany's former colonial possessions in the Far East, now held by Japan. But not wishing to antagonise Japan, whom he needs as an ally against the U.S.S.R., he refrains from pressing these colonial "claims." Fascist Italy seeks to play Japan off against Great Britain in the interest of Italy's Mediterranean ambitions. Germany and Italy together seek to play off Japan against Great Britain and France as a part of their maneuvers for the alignment of camps in the coming world war. Japan, on the other hand, dallies with the Rome-Berlin axis for the purpose of



blackmailing Great Britain and France and in order to insure a front against the U.S.S.R. in the West.

#### XXV

The U.S.S.R., as a workers' state, has no imperialist interests or aims in China. On the contrary, it is in the interests of the U.S.S.R. to help smash imperialism in all its colonial and semi-colonial strongholds by rendering the fullest possible aid to the oppressed peoples in their struggle against imperialism. When Stalinist opportunism brought the great Chinese revolution to ruin in 1927, a mighty bulwark of the U.S.S.R., not only against imperialist Japan, but against the whole world front of imperialism, was destroyed. When Japan subsequently seized Manchuria, Stalin had no alternative but to surrender to Japan the Chinese Eastern Railway, greatest single strategic asset of the U.S.S.R. in the Far East, and to embark on a course of steady retreat before the Japanese imperialists. In Germany, Stalinist policies facilitated Hitler's triumph and increased the war menace on the Western frontiers of the U.S.S.R. Within the Soviet Union, the system of bureaucratic absolutism engendered a profound crisis, which, threatening the very foundations of the worker's state, has paralyzed Soviet foreign policy and deprived it of any independent character. Thinking to meet and counter the fascist danger in Europe, Stalin has traded away the independence and revolutionary policies of the Communist parties in exchange for pacts with "democratic" bourgeois states. Desiring to pit China against Japan—not in the interests of China's liberation from imperialism, but solely in order to delay the attack of Japanese imperialism on the Soviet Union—he has traded away to the Kuomintang what remained of the Chinese Communist Party and the Peasant Red armies. Soviet policy in China is dictated exclusively by the the conservative and reactionary interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, and lacks any principled revolutionary foundation. Having lined up with the Kuomintang and the "democratic" imperialist powers, Stalin does not hesitate to become the accomplice of imperialism against the new beginnings of the Chinese Revolution.

#### XXVI

It is in the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy that the war between China and Japan should be prolonged, especially in view of the open threat of the Japanese imperialists to attack the U.S.S.R. as soon as their aims in China are realized and the danger that a defeated China may become, even if only passively, an ally of Japan and the European fascist states against the

U.S.S.R. For these reasons, after letting four precious months pass by—the Stalinist government began extending material aid to China, not on the principle basis of aiding an oppressed country against the imperialist oppressor (such revolutionary motivations long ago ceased to be the guiding star of the Stalin government), but purely as a matter of military-strategic necessity. To hasten the extension of this aid, the Kuomintang government entered into a "non-aggression pact" with Moscow after withholding its signature therefrom for four years. This delay reflected the hope of the Kuomintang that it would be able to arrive at a peaceful agreement with Japan. Soviet material aid to China has been mainly to the Kuomintang and not to the former Red army. The aid commenced, moreover, at a time when capitulatory moods in the party of the Chinese bourgeoisie had already begun to weaken the defensive campaign against Japan. It is precisely the lack of any principled revolutionary basis for Soviet policy which deprives this aid of full effectiveness in China's struggle. Quantitatively, the aid is seriously limited by the sharp internal crisis which the bureaucracy has brought on in the Soviet Union, by Stalinist dependence on Anglo-French imperialism in all spheres of foreign policy, and by Stalin's need to avoid any premature military embroilment with Japan.

## XXVII

Driven against its inclination into resistance to Japan, the Kuomintang has confined itself to a purely military-defensive campaign, which, while proving totally inadequate, has resulted in the wanton sacrifice of living forces. From the very beginning of the struggle, by refusing to abrogate Japan's imperialist privileges in China, the Kuomintang has kept the door open to negotiations with the enemy. Compelled to restore a certain amount of freedom to the masses, it has at the same time suppressed and driven underground those popular organizations which it was unable to circumscribe and control. The revolutionary vanguard of the Chinese masses, the organization of the Fourth Internationalists, is compelled to live in illegality. All the political opponents of the Kuomintang regime, including heroic battlers for China's independence, are branded as traitors and treated as such. Afraid to make good the deficiencies of China's defense by arming the masses and summoning them on the widest scale to participate in the struggle, the Kuomintang makes known its willingness to treat with Japan through the intermediation of "friendly powers". Unbridled speculation, corruption and treachery pervade the circles of the government and

reach into the army. The burdens of the war are loaded onto the backs of the masses, while the fortunes of the bourgeoisie are left untouched. In the face of all the crimes of the Kuomintang and the ruling class, the Stalinists, having renounced their political independence and their revolutionary program, maintain a shamefaced silence. Thereby they become party to these crimes and the betrayal which the Kuomintang has been preparing. In the hounding of the Chinese revolutionists, the Stalinists, as in Spain and the Soviet Union, stand in the van of the reaction.

### XXVIII

The course of the Sino-Japanese war has demonstrated that a backward, semi-colonial country, with a feeble industry, poor in heavy armament, cannot long prevail in a purely military-defensive war against a much more powerful adversary. The technical deficiencies of China's defense can be made good only by the development of an all-sided political campaign, which, combined with military operations, will draw the million-headed masses into the struggle, disrupt the forces of the invader, fan the embers of revolution in the enemy country, and inspire the world working class to actions of international solidarity. But the masses can be drawn into the struggle only on the basis of a revolutionary program corresponding to their most urgent needs. The invading forces can be disrupted only by revolutionary appeals. Revolutionary example alone can help stir revolution in the enemy country. Appeals for international working class solidarity can be effective only on a revolutionary basis. Action along these lines cannot be taken by the bourgeois government of the exploiters, which fears the masses and the revolution more than it does the imperialists. That is why, despite the heroic self-sacrifice of the Chinese soldiers, China's struggle has displayed, in its first stage, under the leadership of the Kuomintang, such pitiful bankruptcy and impotence.

### XXIX

The Chinese masses have not yet been able to intervene in the war struggle through their own independent organizations. On the contrary, they have been compelled by all the circumstances to play the role of more or less passive spectators and victims of events. Held prostrate for years under the military dictatorship of the Kuomintang and the economic crisis, the workers finally renewed their activity on the basis of the new conjunctural turn of 1935-36. The war, resulting in the outright physical destruction of much of the important industrial concentration area at Shanghai, and the Japanese military occupation of similar areas

in North China, has halted the process of economic recovery and militants against any uninterrupted revival of the workers' movement. Added to this, the renegecy of the Communist Party, crowning development of years of opportunism and adventurism, has deepened the confusion and disorientation of the masses. A new turn of events, enabling a new revolutionary party to take shape on the foundations created by the Bolshevik-Leninists of the Fourth International, will be required before the Chinese masses will be able to take to the revolutionary road.

### XXX

Despite the bankruptcy of the Kuomintang regime and the delay in the independent entry of the Chinese masses into the war, the Japanese imperialists will find it impossible to conquer China. Insular Britain, in the heyday of world capitalism, could build an empire of millions of colonial slaves in Africa and Asia, proceeding from a powerful economic base at home. Today, the British imperialists are faced with Empire doom. Insular Japan, in the era of the twilight of capitalism, proceeding from a weak economic base, is debarred historically from achieving the imperial destiny of which her ruling classes dream. Underlying the imposing facade of Japanese imperialism are fatal organic weaknesses which have already been aggravated by the military conquest of Manchuria. The resources of Japanese capitalism have been proved inadequate for the task of empire building. The economic fabric of the country is being strained to breaking point by the new military campaigns. Japanese capitalism survives by means of the intensest exploitation of the Japanese proletariat, while the peasants, forming the major part of Japan's population, are victims of growing impoverishment and distress. The burdens of both workers and peasants are being increased unbearably by the war. More than 30,000,000 Chinese in Manchuria await the opportunity to liberate themselves from the Japanese yoke. Another 21,000,000 Koreans and 5,000,000 Formosans strive for their independence from Japan. All these factors constitute the Achilles heel of Japanese imperialism and fardoom it to destruction. Such military victories as the Japanese army is able to win in China have only an episodic importance. The first serious reverses, which are inevitable if the war is protracted, will become the starting point of social and political explosions in Japan and in the territories of Manchuria, Korea and Formosa. Regardless of the immediate outcome of the war in China, Japanese imperialism is doomed. The military machine of the Japanese imperialists has never yet been flung against a first-class power. Weakened by

what will turn out to be Pyrrhic victories in China, Japanese imperialism will go down to defeat in the coming world war if its career is not brought to a speedier end by the proletarian revolution. In the final analysis, the cause of the revolution in the Far East will be advanced to the extent that the masses in both China and Japan, and in the Japanese colonies, are successful in preventing the ruling classes from saddling them with the cost of the present military campaigns.

### XXXI

Should Japan's military victories in the present campaigns cause the downfall of the Kuomintang regime, this will not signify the end of Chinese resistance to Japan, but merely the end of a single phase of the struggle. In the new phase, the pro-Japanese policies of the Kuomintang's successors, combined with the intolerable oppression of the Japanese imperialists, will inevitably engender—even if with some delay—a widespread civil war, which, being directed against both the Japanese imperialists and the Chinese bourgeois government, is bound to assume the character of a social revolution. Having discovered in experience the utter bankruptcy and impotence of the Kuomintang, the national bourgeoisie and their Stalinist allies, the Chinese masses will more and more incline to rely on their own organizations and their own arms. They will look to the Bolshevik-Leninists for leadership and rally under the revolutionary standard of the Fourth International. The revolutionary resurgence in China will encourage revival of the liberation movements in Manchuria, Korea and Formosa. Social tension in Japan will be sharpened to the point of revolution. The reciprocal inter-relationship of these developments will furnish the objective premises for the proletarian and national revolution in China, and the proletarian revolution in Japan. It is the task of revolutionists to prepare for these events. In China, in particular, the Bolshevik-Leninists must participate bravely in the anti-Japanese struggle and raise thereby slogans corresponding to the needs of the struggle and the interests of the masses at each new stage. By these means they will win the confidence of the masses and be able to mobilize them in their own independent organizations for revolutionary action.

### XXXII

The perspectives outlined above obligate the workers in all countries, and especially the revolutionary vanguard, to support China's struggle against Japan by all possible means. The defeat of Japanese imperialism will not only open roads to the revolution

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in China and Japan, but will encourage fresh waves of revolt in all the colonies of the imperialist powers. It will, moreover, remove a grave menace to the Soviet Union and stimulate the Soviet proletariat to struggle against the counter-revolutionary Stalin regime. Revolutionary support for China's struggle does not, however, mean that revolutionists must furnish cover for the bankrupt Kuo-mintang regime and the Chinese bourgeoisie. Nor does it mean calling upon the "democratic" imperialist governments to intervene against Japan and save China, or support of these governments if and when they do intervene against Japan. This is the line of the Stalinist traitors. The imperialists of the West will intervene against Japan only to preserve their own robber interests in the Far East. If Japanese imperialism should be defeated in China by its imperialist rivals, and not by the revolutionary masses, this would signify the enslavement of China by Anglo-American capital. China's national liberation, and the emancipation of the Chinese masses from all exploitation, can be achieved only by the Chinese masses themselves, in alliance with the proletariat and oppressed peoples of all the world. The international revolutionary campaign for aid to China must proceed under the banner of workers' sanctions against Japan and find its full expression in the promotion of the class struggle and the proletarian revolution.

## Thesis On the World Role of American Imperialism

The main spheres of activity of American imperialism are divided among the continents of Europe, Asia and Latin America, in each of which it pursues a different course in conformity with its general interests and adjusted to the concrete circumstances in which it has developed in relation to other powers.

In Latin America, although confronted with a powerful rival in the form of Great Britain and to a lesser but increasing extent of Japan and Germany, the United States remains the dominant imperialist force. The United States appeared on the scene at a later date than did such countries as Spain, Portugal, Germany and England, but by the turn of the century it was already on its way to outstrip its rivals. Its rapid industrial and financial development, the pre-occupation of the European powers during the World War and the transformation of the United States into the world's creditor during that period, facilitated its rise to the top and enabled it to establish its imperialist hegemony over most of the countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean Sea. It proclaimed its intention of maintaining this hegemony against encroachments by European and Japanese imperialism. The political form of this proclamation is the Monroe Doctrine which, particularly since the unfolding of a clear-cut imperialist policy at the end of the 19th century, has been uniformly interpreted by all the Washington administrations as the right of American imperialism to the dominant position in the Latin-American countries, preliminary to the conquest of the position as their exclusive exploiter. In the Central American, Caribbean and upper-South American countries in particular this has signified the reduction of the peoples to the status of oppressed colonies or half-colonies of Yankee imperialism and the imposition, often by the most naked use of force, of governments which are the merest puppets in the hands of Wall Street, backed by the diplomatic and direct military intervention of the United States government. In order to achieve the "closed door" in Latin America—closed, that is, to all rivals and open only to the

United States—"democratic" Yankee imperialism has been propped up in the Latin American countries by the most autocratic "native" military dictatorships which have, in turn, served to prop up the imperialist structure and to guarantee an undisturbed flow of super-profits to the Northern colossus. The most active and vitalism is best revealed by the tyrannical dictatorships in the Latin American countries is American imperialism, the bulk of whose billions of dollars invested abroad is confined to the Western Hemisphere. The real character of "democratic" American capitalism is best revealed by the tyrannical dictatorships in the Latin American countries with which its fortunes and policies are inextricably bound up and without which its days of imperialist sway in the Western Hemisphere are numbered. The bloodthirsty despots under whose oppressive rule the millions of workers and peasants of Latin America suffer, the Vargases and Batistas, are at bottom nothing but the political tools of the "democratic" United States imperialists. In countries like Puerto Rico, American imperialism, through its Governor Winship, directly and ruthlessly frames up and suppresses the nationalist movement. The rising national bourgeoisie in many of the Latin-American countries, seeking a greater share in the booty and even striving for an increased measure of independence—i.e., towards the dominant position in the exploitation of its own country—does, it is true, try to utilize the rivalries and conflicts of the foreign imperialists to this end. But its general weakness and its belated appearance prevent it from attaining a higher level of development than that of serving one imperialist master as against another. It cannot launch a serious struggle against all imperialist domination and for genuine national independence for fear of unleashing a mass movement of the toilers of the country which would, in turn, threaten its own social existence. The recent example of Vargas, who attempts to utilize the rivalry between the United States and Germany but at the same time maintains the most savage dictatorship over the popular masses, is a case in point. The Roosevelt administration, despite all its bland pretensions, has made no real alteration in the imperialist tradition of its predecessors. It has emphatically reiterated the vicious Monroe Doctrine; it has confirmed its monopolistic claims over Latin America at the Buenos Aires Conferences; it has given the sanctification of its approval to the unspeakable regimes of Vargas and Batista; its demand for a bigger navy to police not only the Pacific but also the Atlantic is an earnest of its determination to wield the armed force of the United States in



defense of its imperialist might in the Southern part of the hemisphere. Under Roosevelt, the policy of the iron fist in Latin America is sheathed in the velvet glove of demagogic pretensions of friendship and "democracy." The "good neighbor" policy is nothing but the attempt to unify the Western Hemisphere under the hegemony of Washington, as a solid bloc wielded by the latter in its drive to close the door of the two American continents to all the foreign imperialist powers except itself. This policy is materially supplemented by the favorable trade agreements which the United States seeks to conclude with the Latin-American countries in the hope of systematically edging its rivals out of the market. The decisive role which foreign trade plays in the economic life of the United States impels the latter toward ever more determined efforts to exclude all competitors from the Latin American market, by a combination of cheap production, diplomacy, chicane and, when need be, of force. This is especially true at the present moment with regard to Germany and Japan. Whereas the basic imperialist conflict in Latin-America (particularly in such countries as Mexico and the Argentine) remains that of England and the United States, it is expressed economically above all in the field of investment. In the field of foreign trade, however, the principal immediate rival of the United States is Germany and, increasingly, Japan. Because of their respective world positions and interests, the United States and Great Britain can, therefore, collaborate for the time being in opposition to the encroachments of Germany and Japan in Latin-America, but only on the condition that this collaboration occurs under the hegemony of Yankee imperialism, for which the latter compensates in part by a support of British imperialism on the European continent. At the same time, the policy of American imperialism will necessarily increase the revolutionary resistance of the Latin-American peoples whom it must exploit with growing intensity. This resistance, in turn, will encounter the fiercest reaction and attempts at suppression by the United States which will be revealed ever more plainly as the gendarme of foreign imperialist exploitation and a prop to the native dictatorships. By its very position, therefore, Wall Street's Washington will play an increasingly reactionary role in the Latin American countries. Thus the United States remains the predominant and aggressive master of Latin America, ready to protect its power with arms in hand against any serious assault by its imperialist rivals or against any attempt by the peoples of Latin America to liberate themselves from its exploitive rule.

American policy in Europe has differed from its direct and open intervention in Latin America in several respects, dictated essentially by the fact that the United States appeared as a decisive factor in the Old World at a later stage, namely, in the last generation. Its intervention has passed through three stages. In the first, it appeared as a brutal aggressor in defense of the vast financial interests acquired by the American ruling class in the outcome of the war, and by virtue of its tremendous industrial-financial-military power, it contributed the decisive force required by the Allies for the crushing and prostrating of the Central Powers, especially Germany. While England, France, Belgium and Italy were, consequently, able to impose the degrading Versailles Peace Treaty upon Germany, and to establish the League as a policeman to enforce its provisions, which included the spoilation of the former German colonies and the exacting of enormous tributes from Germany itself, the real victor in the war proved to be the United States which became the main political and financial center of the world and was in a position to exact an even greater tribute from the Versailles victors in the form of war debt payments. In the second stage, inaugurated by the defeat of the German proletariat at the end of 1923, the United States appeared at once as the "pacifier" of Europe and as the greatest counter-revolutionary force. In its role of pacifier of Europe, it revived the rule of capitalism at its weakest point—Germany—by feeding it with the Dawes-Young millions, helped to install the regime of democratic illusion in Germany, France and England, and put forth its demands for the slowing down of the armaments race expenditures which interfered with the payment of the war debts to Wall Street. The demand for European "disarmament" (in the light especially of that American industrial superiority which permits it to outstrip any nation in armaments at short notice), was the pacifistic guise in which American imperialism exerted its pressure in the direction of reducing the already diminishing share of the world market then at the disposal of its European competitors. In the present, last stage of its intervention, it has been demonstrated that far from eliminating or even moderating the conflicts among the European powers themselves, the growing needs of American imperialism itself have resulted in an enormous aggravation of the inner-European conflicts of the various powers. All of them are being driven irresistibly towards a new world war, some in defense of their present share of the rations to which America's power has reduced Europe, others in struggle for such an increase in their share as will contribute substantially

towards resolving their internal contradictions. Where formerly the rise of American imperialism in Europe had the effect of "pacifying" the continent, it now has objectively the effect of hastening a new world war, heralded by the breath-taking armaments race, by the rape of Ethiopia, by the civil war in Spain, by the Japanese invasion of China—a new world war which it will be impossible to confine to Europe and into which every important country on the face of the earth will inexorably be drawn. An understanding of the reality of America's relationship to Europe's development is enough to refute the pretensions of United States imperialism to a Messianic mission as the defender or carrier of peace and democracy in Europe. Quite the contrary. The greater its own difficulties, the more it is compelled to discharge the burden of them upon the shoulders of the older and weaker imperialist powers of Europe—the more surely and speedily does American capitalism bring the ruling classes of the Old World towards war and towards the regime of fascism under which the bourgeoisie finds itself least hampered in preparing for war or in conducting it once it has broken out. The pressure of the new world power which has risen to such enormous strength since the last world war is goading Europe towards the abyss of barbarism and destruction. While the influence exerted by the United States in the past period has been more or less "passive," formulated in the policy of "isolation," its more recent trend has been noticeably in the other direction and foreshadows its active, direct and decisive intervention in the period to come, i.e., the period of the next World War. So world-wide are the foundations of American imperialist power, so significant are its economic interests in Europe itself (billions invested in the industrial enterprises of the telephone-telegraph, automobile, electrical and other trusts as well as the billions in war debts and post-war loans), that it is out of the question for the United States to remain a passive observer of the coming war. Quite the contrary. Not only will it participate actively as one of the belligerents, but it is easy to predict that it will enter the war after a much shorter interval than elapsed before its entry in the last World War. In view of the weakness, financially and technically, of the other belligerents as compared with the still mighty United States, the latter will surely play an even more decisive role in the settling of the coming war than in the last. There is every indication that, unless European imperialism is smashed by the proletarian revolution and peace established on a socialist basis, the United States will dictate the terms of the imperialist peace after emerging as the victor.

Its participation will not only determine the victory of the side it joins, but will also determine the disposition of the booty, of which it will claim the lion's share.

If the rapid establishment of its domination over Latin America dictated to U. S. imperialism the aggressive striving for the "closed door" (the Monroe Doctrine), its belated appearance in Asia, after the partitioning of the continent among England, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, Portugal and Italy was already an accomplished fact, dictated the no less purely imperialist demand for the "open door," which has since been the classic formulation of United States policy in the Far East, specifically, in China. In this form, American imperialism challenges the claims of its older rivals to exclusively exploit China's vast rich resources, both natural and human. Behind this "pacific" slogan is the half-drawn sword—against both Japan and England for an increasing right to exploit China and the Chinese masses. As in all other cases, American imperialism in the Far East is a thin cloak for aggressive imperialist expansion.

The inter-imperialist struggle for the domination of China is at the same time a struggle for the mastery of the Pacific, in which the two principal contenders are Japan and the United States. Given her involvements on the European continent, the Mediterranean and the Near East, Great Britain is greatly handicapped in any attempt to defend single-handedly her position on the Asiatic continent. The Pan-Asian movement fostered by Japanese imperialism and aimed at driving England out of her favored position in China and eventually also in India, cannot be effectively resisted by the British forces alone, especially under conditions which render unlikely the solidarity of all parts of the British Empire in a war against Japan. Britain is therefore increasingly dependent upon the tacit or direct military support of the United States in the conflict against Japan. American imperialism, however, is not inclined to intervene directly in the Far East against Japan exclusively or even mainly for the purpose of assuring the domination of England on the Asiatic continent. Quite the contrary, the conclusive mastery of the Pacific by the United States, that is a decisive defeat for Japan, signifies the beginning of the end of British rule and privilege in the East. That this is recognized even in the Empire, is demonstrated by the fact that a growing section of the Australian bourgeoisie looks to the United States rather than to England for the defense of its interests, more specifically, for the joint struggle against Japan. In a remoter sense, the reorientation of sections

of the British Empire may be discerned in the fact that Canada has been continually drawing away from London and towards New York and Washington.

While the biggest and most important rival of American imperialism in the East remains Great Britain, the most immediate opponent of the United States in that part of the world is now Japan. The question of the war between Japan and the United States for the domination of the Pacific and the Far East is therefore at the top of the order of the day. Fearing the outcome of a war with the United States at the present moment—which would in all probability involve her simultaneously in a war with England and the Soviet Union—Japan has been making desperate efforts to placate the United States and drive a wedge between it and England, at least until her position on the mainland has been consolidated. American imperialism, however, especially in the recent past, has been driving more sharply in the direction of war with Japan, whose advances into potential fields of American exploitation in China and into actual American exploitation in Latin America, are a growing threat to the present and future positions of the American bourgeoisie. The preparations for the American-Japanese war are manifest in the sharper tone of American diplomacy towards Japan, in the increased anti-Japanese jingo agitation of the press, in the virtually open American manoeuvres against Japan, in the military-naval reinforcements of the Aleutians and Guam, and above all in the scarcely concealed anti-Japanese motivation given by Roosevelt for the unprecedented peace-time naval budget appropriations he has demanded of Congress. Thus, the very magnitude of the problems of American imperialism, the world-wide scope of its interests and the foundations which underly its power, dictate to it a vigorous and relentless policy of expansion. Moreover, they make it the principal motive force in propelling the capitalist world towards another war and the firmest brake upon the revolutionary movement of the world proletariat and the liberation movement of the colonies and half-colonies. The epoch during which the United States was able to maintain an approximate equilibrium between agriculture and industry, during which its interests beyond the frontiers of the United States were episodic and in any case comparatively insignificant, during which it followed a more or less "isolationist" policy (also rendered easier by a unique geographical position), is an epoch of the past. The crisis in American economic life demands an increase in foreign trade and an increase in the number of billions of dollars already exported to every

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corner of the earth for investment. It requires, that is, a more intensive exploitation of those fields which are already being exploited by the United States—which means the suppression of the revolutionary proletarian movement abroad and the checking of all revolutionary nationalist movements for independence in its colonies and spheres of influence. It requires, that is, a larger share of the world market as at present divided among the great powers of the earth, which means a new world war. Hence the departure in official American foreign policy from even the pretense of "isolationism" and the announcement of a "vigorous" course throughout the world.

The struggle against American imperialism is therefore at the same time a struggle against the coming imperialist war and for the liberation of oppressed colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Hence, it is inseparable from the class struggle of the American proletariat against the ruling bourgeoisie, and cannot be conducted apart from it. The American working class must gain support in this struggle from the poor farmers in the United States who are under the heel of that monopoly capitalism which constitutes the basis of the imperialist overlords of the country. An indispensable ally in this struggle is the million-headed mass of American Negroes, in industry and in agriculture, who are also bound by many ties to the other groups of Negro peoples oppressed by American imperialism in the Caribbean and in Latin America. It is necessary to carry on a campaign of proletarian education and organization among the white masses against the poisonous chauvinist "superiority" instilled in them by the ruling class; it is necessary also to organize the Negro masses against their capitalist oppressors, against the petty bourgeois demagogues in their own ranks, and against the agents of Japanese imperialism who are endeavoring to win the Negroes, especially in the South, to the treacherous banner of "Pan-Asianism."

One of the primary concerns of the United States section of the Fourth International in the struggle against American imperialism is the support of all genuinely progressive revolutionary movements directed against American Imperialism in Latin America or the Pacific (the Philippines, Hawaii, Samoa, etc.) or against the Wall Street puppet dictatorships in those countries. While preserving their complete organizational and political independence, reserving and exercising the right to organize the working class in a separate movement and the right to present its own independent program as against the petty bourgeois, vacillating and often treacherous program and activities of the

nationalists. The revolutionists in the United States are obliged to rouse the American workers against the sending of any armed forces against the peoples of Latin America and the Pacific and for the withdrawal of any such forces where they now operate as instruments of imperialist oppression, as well as against any other form of imperialist pressure, be it "diplomatic" or "economic," which is calculated to violate the national independence of any country or to prevent its attainment of such national independence. The parties of the Fourth International, throughout the Western Hemisphere, stand for the immediate and unconditional independence of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Philippine Islands, Hawaii, Samoa and all other direct colonies, dependencies and protectorates of American imperialism. The capitulation of the national bourgeoisie of the Philippines to American imperialist dominance, as well as the attempts by certain sections of the North American bourgeoisie to misuse the sentiment for national independence for their own reactionary ends, reveal the indispensability of proletarian class leadership of the colonial and semi-colonial countries as the only assurance that genuine national independence will be fought for seriously and consistently and be achieved. At the same time, the Fourth Internationalists point out that none of the countries of Latin America or the Pacific which are now under the domination of American imperialism, to one degree or another, is able either to attain complete freedom from foreign oppression or to retain such freedom for any length of time, if it confines its struggle to the efforts of its own self. Only a union of the Latin American peoples, striving towards the goal of a united socialist America and allied in the struggle with the revolutionary proletariat of the United States, would present a force strong enough to contend successfully with North American imperialism. Just as the peoples of the Old World can successfully resist and shatter the pressure of the American colossus, which keeps them impoverished and drives them to war, only by establishing a United States of Europe—realizable only in the form of the revolutionary socialist rule of the proletariat—so the peoples of the Western Hemisphere can assure themselves the fullest national independence, the unrestricted possibilities of cultural development, and freedom from exploitation from foreign and domestic tyrants, only by joining in the struggle for the United Socialist Republics of the Americas.

Just as the Latin American sections of the Fourth International must popularize in their press and agitation the struggles

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of the American labor and revolutionary movements against the common enemy, so the section in the U.S. must devote more time and energy in its agitational and propaganda work to acquaint the proletariat of the U.S. with the position and struggles of the Latin American countries and their working class movements. Every act of American imperialism must be exposed in the press and at meetings and, on indicated occasions, the section in the U.S. must seek to organize mass movements of protest against specific activities of Yankee imperialism. In addition, the section in the U.S., by utilizing the Spanish language and literature of the Fourth International, must seek to organize on however a modest scale to begin with, the militant revolutionary forces among the doubly-exploited millions of Filipinos, Mexicans, Caribbeans, Central and South American workers now resident in the U.S., not only for the purpose of linking them with the labor movement in the U.S. but also for the purpose of strengthening the ties with the labor and revolutionary movements in the countries from which these workers originally came. This task shall be carried on under the direction of the American Secretariat of the Fourth International which will publish the necessary literature and organize the work accordingly.

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## Resolution on the Tasks of the French Section

The International Conference considers that the most important problem concerning the situation of the party in France lies in the reenergizing of its activity and in the impulse to be given to a reorganization indispensable to its organizational work. As a matter of fact, Bolshevism's superiority over Menshevism lies not only in the correctness of its policy but also in its ability to bring an organization to share the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat. Bolshevism is genuinely infused with the Marxian spirit contained in the well-known formula: it's not enough just to explain the world; one must change it.

Now the question which instantly faces us is the following: how does it happen that, with a policy that has been in general correct, the French section of the Fourth International has been forced into an organizational retreat, which shows itself in the loss of about 15% of its active membership.

It cannot be explained away solely on the grounds of the objective situation: "sacred union" [of the political parties], war, the failure and disillusionment which produce in the toiling masses a distrust toward attempts at labor organization and the party's general activity.

A close examination of the P.O.I.'s activity during these last two years enables us to point out precisely one of the essential causes for the French section's present state of disorganization.

In every revolutionary organization, responsibility for the state of organizational progress and activity falls predominantly upon the leadership.

Now the activity of the P.O.I.'s leadership during the period just passed has been essentially characterized by its inadequacy in the field of mobilizing the organization's members, the absence of a constant coordination of their efforts and a constant concern with utilizing their special abilities, and, as a result, the inability to create within the organization that political, ideological, and moral cohesion and that team-spirit without which any organization is in jeopardy and heads for ruin.

The inadequacies of the P.O.I.'s leadership are shown by an increasing organizational let-down, with, as sequel, the existence of a certain "revolutionary" amateurism, the lack of a serious party administration, of a normally functioning national treasury, and a *Lutte Ouvriere* editorship which is stable and full of the spirit of emulation.

Naturally these inadequacies result to some extent from the lack of even a modest organizational apparatus composed of comrades who devote all their time to party work.

But this need for a permanent organizational apparatus does not spare us the necessity of taking note of the fact that the P.O.I. leadership has not assimilated, in a factual living way, the idea of what a revolutionary organization really is, and what, as a consequence, the activity of a leadership should be. Whence this "paddling one's own canoe" and "everyone doing what he pleases." Underestimation of the importance of action, i. e., of the necessity of translating into specific acts the initiatives which the members think up, is a fault in no wise confined to the rank-and-file, but common to both the rank-and-file and the leadership. *The situation is not that of a well-functioning leadership, armed with a serious policy, which cannot find among the rank-and-file the necessary forces for the carrying out of its decisions;* but on the contrary a leadership which above all does not know how to lead itself—whence arises the confusion and demoralization of the rank-and-file where the comrades' discontent and aspirations find simultaneous expression in these two words addressed to the leadership: "Lead us!"

The failure to apply the essential principles of Bolshevism is evinced not only by revolutionary amateurism but also by the lack of system in organizational work. Bolshevism has in practice produced, in the field of organization, in addition to the type of professional revolutionary, a whole system of rigorous work.

The P.O.I., and in particular its leadership, have functioned throughout their existence without any serious system of organizational work. The lack of system in the work of the P.O.I. is characterized by two features:

- 1) The lack of agitation, propaganda, and action in the work of the P.O.I. is characterized by two features: concentrated on decisive points. (Thus it is that during many months important branches—18th, 19th, 20th—found themselves without objectives, while the objectives in the Citroen and Renault plants were left without adequate forces.)

2) Within the party itself, there was no plan for the work, and no rigorous supervision of its execution.

The result of work done anarchically, without objective, without order or system, contributes to the growth of the impression of an activity that gets lost upon a thousand occasions and that ends in nothing, an impression which is fatal to the morale of party members. This failure to produce results also explains the party's inability to recruit new members.

A certain improvement should however be noted, as shown in the July, 1938 internal bulletin and in the decisions of the conference of June 2', 1938—an improvement which must be amplified in detail, accentuated, and systematized.

Once more we proclaim the necessity for the P.O.I. to concentrate the essential part of its activity on the principal factories of the Paris region, and, in connection with this, to regard trade-union work (treated below) as the principal branch of its activity.

As regards Paris, it may be said, by way of a simple general indication, that all present and immediately future forces should be centered on Renault-Boulogne, Citroen-15th, Citroen-17th, 14th-Montrouge, and Suburbs-Colombes.

In the provinces, where a certain progress has been made in the building of cadres, there is nevertheless a need for the Party to make its efforts effective, because of the remarkable possibilities there, in the important northern region.

It is outstandingly correct to state and constantly to repeat, as all the P.O.I.'s conventions have done, that improvement in the P.O.I.'s work, and especially improvement in the quality of the leadership, is directly dependent upon its recruiting among the proletariat, i.e., on its efficiently carrying out the directive already announced a hundred times: "orientation toward the trade-unions and the factories."

In this field, however, the widespread and indeed solemn recognition that this is vitally necessary has not been enough. It is in spite of the fact that it generally recognizes the need of this that the P.O.I. stagnates. It is hence absolutely necessary that with all the strength of which they are capable the most conscientious militants should with the greatest administrative rigor force the application of the general measures which have been recommended and admitted to be correct in principle, and should require the necessary sacrifices. It is only if the organization receives the shock necessary to this practical accomplishment that it will improve its social make-up and, as a result, the work of its leadership.

It is with the P.O.I.'s leadership that genuine organizational reform should begin. It is the leadership itself which must radically change its working methods.

Consequently the International Conference is of the opinion that the most urgent practical measures to be taken in order to obtain good results are:

a) Setting up, within the Political Bureau, a secretariat composed of three comrades *who can meet regularly at least one hour a day*. This secretariat should take the necessary political initiatives in between meetings of the Politburo, and make sure that decisions taken by itself, by the Politburo, and by the Central Committee are carried out.

b) Organizing commissions (organizational work, agit-prop, trade-union work, factory work, management of the newspaper, finances, etc.) and putting at the head of each a member of the Politburo or the C.C. To fill these commissions, calling on party comrades according to their inclinations and abilities. Each member of a commission ought to have one particular task determined on the basis of the commission's plan of work, and according to the needs that may arise between meetings. The leadership of the P.O.I. ought not to hesitate to call on new forces, even if they are inexperienced.

c) Drawing up the proper limits of the tasks of Politburo and C.C. members, and thus avoiding overlapping on the jobs of others.

d) Making sure that all comrades in the different party bodies (regional committees, branches), have each their specific job to do from week to week, on the basis of each organism's plan of work.

e) Organizing meetings of branch functionaries, general membership meetings, well prepared and all having as their purpose some precise activity to be carried out. (Reports worked out in advance, brief and precise, and with concrete propositions for work to be done.)

f) Publishing a political and organizational weekly circular addressed to the secretaries of all party bodies; a monthly internal bulletin at the service of internal democracy in the organization. The work of getting out these circulars and internal bulletins should be done at the International Secretariat in order to enable it to supervise the activity of the P.O.I.

g) Guaranteeing a special fund for the full-time functionary.

## The Financial Situation

The P.O.I.'s financial situation has always been very bad. The dues are either not paid at all, or, if they are, it is just by luck, without supervision by the leadership. The leadership has as its duty the choosing of a serious national treasurer who will be active and vigilant. In this way all the comrades will form the habit of paying their dues regularly, and the branch treasurers of also paying regularly that part of the dues which goes into the national treasury.

The national treasury's vigilance should be demonstrated by the periodic publication of non-fulfillments in a monthly treasurer's report sent out to the whole organization.

In this way anyone who will not pay his dues regularly should, after due warning, have his membership in the P.O.I. cut off.

The system of pledges provided by each member's special dues requires the national treasurer's extremely close attention; this system will be reenforced and added to by the party's improving its work and activity, a thing that will *produce a great resurgence of revolutionary devotion and the spirit of sacrifice.*

It is equally necessary to organize systematically the collection of funds from sympathizers and friends.

The national treasurer's task is thus to energize the financial commission, to divide up the various tasks, supervise their execution and point out to the party any failures to carry them out.

## The "Lutte Ouvriere"

The *Lutte Ouvriere*, in trying to become a so-called "mass newspaper," has become too superficial—indeed, even boring. *The stupid ideology* held on this subject was such that certain party members even objected to publishing Trotsky's articles, on the grounds sometimes that they were too long and incomprehensible for the masses, sometimes that they were too violent against the Stalinists. The editorship, especially at the beginning, was thereby paralyzed by the fear of falling under the blows of such criticisms. A certain improvement in recent months, from this point of view, ought to be noted.

The result has been that there have been alienated from *La Lutte* those vanguard readers who used to find in our organ serious revolutionary news from the national and international point of view as well as an instrument for Marxist education which

took daily events as a starting-point. Working-class readers found no substantial answer to their troubles in its hastily edited articles. Our organ thus abandoned its mission as an educator of the cadres and builder of the Fourth International.

Furthermore it is apparent that the articles in *La Lutte* were often written without much attention either to form or content. The language is not the result of a conscious effort to adapt the articles to the workers' concerns; and is on that very account abstract and devoid of straightforwardness. It is important to remedy this state of affairs as quickly as possible, the more so inasmuch as a serious organization of this work would make it possible to obtain fruitful results, in view of the possibilities in this field.

First of all, it is necessary to fight against the stupid and primitive ideology which has crept in under the borrowed label of "mass newspaper." It is time to learn the lesson of the French experience on this point, in the spirit of the excellent brochure by our lamented comrade Erwin Wolf. A real mass newspaper is one which tries to take as its starting point daily happenings, to bring explanations of them and slogans about them to the workers, and first of all to the advanced workers, to the vanguard. The basis of the news should be objective events in the factories, on the farms, etc., up-to-date national and international political news, clearly expressed and analyzed. But this aim is above all interrelated with the aim of the party itself: to forge cadres, provide the explanation of the situation, and not to stop at merely agitational slogans which, lacking explanation and political generalization, are powerless to make the best workers understand the Fourth International's reason for existence, just at the moment when, disgusted with bureaucrats and with the Popular Front, they are looking for a new way out. In the second place, the editing of *La Lutte* must be completely reorganized to facilitate supervision by the International on the one hand, and the rank-and-file on the other. One means of supervision will be the giving up of anonymity, with the exception of the editorial and of certain party articles. Subjects [departments] will be divided among various members, and the leading articles will be signed, either with names or with pseudonyms. By its supervision the editorship will press for a deeper study of questions and for specialization. It shall be arranged to have one day intervene between the delivery of the articles to the editors and their delivery to the printer, to allow correction and selection. Failures will be communicated to the entire party. Each local group of the Parisian Region shall be permitted to send a delegate to the

plenary meeting of the editorial board. Thus every time that a certain spirit of "the-hell-with-it" camouflaged itself behind the spirit of collective anonymous communism, recourse was had to the old procedures for supervision and competition. Finally the editorship shall make a deliberate effort to adapt its language to that of the workers and peasants. It is true that only stubborn and fruitful work in the factories and trade-unions, involving practical collaboration in the vanguard organ by workers who are actually engaged in the struggle, can produce a really radical change in the paper's language and tone. Nevertheless, far from merely waiting passively for this change, which is properly the work of the party, the editors, in reporting the daily events and the lessons of the struggle, should try systematically to obtain the direct participation of those who are taking part in that struggle, with all their interests and language. In a word, the organ of the P.O.I. is its material instrument for agitation, information, education, i.e., the building of the Fourth International.

To keep up its regular weekly appearance is an *absolute duty*.

## **Newspaper — Management**

Despite certain individual efforts, it can be said that on the whole the leadership let the whole administrative and financial work of the paper fall on one single administrative functionary, without creating around the commission of management that spirit of "permanent mobilization" of the whole party which would have enabled it to find financial resources and material aid.

The result has been that financial stability based on pledges has been progressively endangered, and that, on the other hand, material aids in administrative tasks failed one by one.

Taking into account the putting into practice of the financial measures recommended above, the leadership of the P.O.I. should take the running of the paper in hand as a cardinal task, draw up a plan of reorganization on the occasion of the Party Convention, have the branches discuss it, appeal to their spirit of emulation and devotion; guarantee the daily supervision of the execution of these tasks, and the public nature of this supervision, throughout the entire party. It is necessary within three months from the date of the convention to undertake a campaign to double the number of subscribers and readers. And this is a matter, not so much of offering prizes, as of having good articles and good documentary investigations.

## **The Magazine: "La Quatrieme Internationale"**

The progress made in this field consists in the very existence of the magazine. That fact in itself is already a success for the P.O.I. The magazine, the theoretic arm of the Fourth International, must also apply itself to the task of carrying contents adapted to the problems of union struggles, the problems of recent events, and to specifically workers' union problems. Thus it will become not only an arm of theoretic and ideological clarification, but also a fighting weapon that can be used by the present cadres of the labor movement.

To reach this goal, a serious editorial committee should function with regularity, and be under the supervision of the Central Committee.

## **Trade-Union Work**

This is the part of the party's activity that deserves the greatest care and the maximum concentration and specialization of those forces which the party has at its disposal, without withdrawing them from the performance of those other important organizational tasks which may not have a direct connection with their specific trade-union work. While one notes fragmentary and episodic efforts in this direction, the fact must nevertheless be noted that it is today this branch of the party's activity which has been the most abandoned and left to itself without directives. The trade-union work of the P.O.I. requires a total reorganization of the party's activity, beginning with the leadership. It is here that we shall have the greatest success if the work is properly organized. This shall be the task of the Trade-Union Commission.

## **Factory Work**

Since June 1936 the P.O.I. has felt the need of directing its forces towards work in the factories. Together with the straight trade-union work, it is there that the party should stand forth as a fighting weapon of the working class.

The accomplishments already made in this work allow it to be noted in the activity of the P.O.I. branches as the principal task. But the lack of directed trade-union work has failed to make the development of the workers' struggles and the exact understanding of their demands really living subjects in the party.



Whence comes about that, with its weak forces, the P.O.I. has weak connections in the factories—a work insufficiently tied up with the workers' day-by-day lives.

## The Struggle Against Provocateurs

The honesty of the present leadership of the P.O.I. has enabled it to fight back against various provocations that might have cost the party its life.

In estimating the weaknesses of the P.O.I. there must also be taken into account the fact that it has been the party most aimed at by the enemy; but that is only an additional reason for requiring it to have a rigorous and serious organization, which is the best weapon in the fight against provocateurs. In the second place the P.O.I. must see to the creation of special bodies for vigilance against the enemy as well as for the protection of militants, especially leading functionaries and the entire party.

## Conclusions

The International Conference expresses its confidence in the possibilities of a radical rectification of the activity and the organization of the Fourth International's French Section. It has paid particular attention to the French organization's situation because it considers that it is in this country that the interest of the socialist revolution has at the moment principally concentrated. It notes the resolution of the P.O.I. leadership tending to put into practice one of the essential bases of Bolshevism, *revolutionary professionalism* (the choosing of full-time functionaries), and to reorganize the whole party in accordance with a system of rigorous work.

By an enthusiastic application of the conference's directives, the P.O.I. will go forward. It will draw a rigorous line of demarcation between its ranks and fair-weather revolutionary amateurs. Centrist political and trade-union organizations will thus witness the disappearance of one of the principal causes for their development: the organizational weakness of the French section of the Fourth International. But if, in spite of the most favorable symptoms and possibilities which justify a strong hope of successful rectification, the P.O.I. does not succeed in surmounting its grave organizational deficiencies, then a policy, however abstractly correct, will not succeed in wiping out the temporary successes of political and trade-union centrism.

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Lastly, the Conference, putting internationalism into practical effect, decides to guarantee the P.O.I. a regular financial aid from those sections which are in a position to cooperate, in order that the French section may get its paper out with regularity, and assure the functioning of its activities and its organizational work, according to the general measures herein recommended. The International Conference asks the Central Committee of the P.O.I., while taking into account previous experience and concrete facts, to take these general measures as bases in working out a detailed plan of reorganization, and to concentrate thereupon the attention and the discussion of its National Convention.

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# On the Molinier Group

## STATEMENT OF THE I.S.

1. Negotiations have recently been conducted by a special commission of the I.S. with a delegation from the P.C.I. (Molinier Group) on the basis of a formal letter from this group requesting admission to the Fourth International. These negotiations have been broken off because of the refusal of the P.C.I. to give a categorical answer to the specific propositions submitted to them by the I.S., in particular to the most important and unalterable proposition—the unconditional elimination of R. Molinier from any participation in the French section of the Fourth International.

2. It must be recalled that the said R. Molinier was expelled by the International Conference of 1936 for conduct completely incompatible with membership in a proletarian revolutionary organization, namely, for attempting to use money obtained by dubious means to impose his personal control over the organization.

3. When, in connection with the recently concluded world conference, the P.C.I. again approached the Fourth International and formulated a request for admission, it was decided by the responsible bodies of the Fourth International to clarify this question once and for all, bringing to its solution a clear and loyal desire to bring the matter to a positive conclusion. In order to carry out the necessary negotiations and prevent any dilatory maneuvers, the I.S. decided to present a precise seven-point resolution containing the conditions for the fusion of the two organizations.

4. Preliminary attempts of the Molinier group to engage the International Secretariat in a "general discussion" were repulsed by the demand for a precise statement of their attitude to the Fourth International and to the decisions of its conferences and its discipline. Thereupon the delegation of the P.C.I. handed in a formal letter asking admission and declaring readiness to observe discipline.

5. The International Secretariat replied to this letter in a special resolution as follows:

The I.S., having received the P.C.I.'s letter dated September 14, requesting its admission into the ranks of the Fourth International, proposes that the question be solved in the following way:

- (1) The members of the P.C.I. shall be immediately admitted into the P.O.I. (French section of the Fourth International), without any delay.
- (2) The members of the P.C.I. shall receive adequate representation in the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the P.O.I. before the Congress.
- (3) The basis for unification is provided by the decisions of the International Conference, which are obligatory for all members of the Fourth International.
- (4) The personal case of R. Molinier having been decided by the International Conference in 1936, decisions which have not been changed or modified by the Conference of 1938, he remains completely outside the unified French section.
- (5) As affiliated members of the P.O.I., the present members of the P.C.I. shall have full right to participate in the coming Convention of the P.O.I. and in the preparation and discussions which precede it.
- (6) The organizational details of the fusion should be arranged by the enlarged Central Committee of the P.O.I. (including the representation of the present members of the P.C.I.), under the control of the International Secretariat.
- (7) All other questions of political or organizational divergences should be solved within the framework of the unified French section, in accordance with the normal rules which apply therein.

(Resolution adopted by the I.S. at the session of September 16, 1938)

6. In the first formal meeting of the delegation of the I.S. with representatives of the P.C.I., the latter expressed fears of reprisals against their members in the unified French section. To provide assurances on this question the delegation of the I.S. expressed in writing its readiness to add an eighth point to the resolution, as follows:

- (8) Once the resolution of the I.S. is accepted by the P.C.I., the I.S. declares itself opposed to the taking of disciplinary measures against any comrade on the basis of past disputes.

Trent, Legrand, Lebrun, Busson.  
Sept. 18, 1938.

7. In the subsequent discussion it became perfectly clear that point 4 (the elimination of R. Molinier) was the only real point at issue. A request was made by the P.C.I. delegation for official assurances regarding his possible future re-admission. This was categorically refused on the ground that the I.S. is without power to alter a decision of the International Conference, and that the exclusion of R. Molinier is unconditional.

(American comrades of the I.S. delegation stated on their own responsibility that if R. Molinier loyally accepted the decision in his case, withdrew himself from all participation, directly or indirectly, in the affairs of the French Section and made a radical change in his personal activities and conduct—under these conditions they would personally support a future re-examination of his personal case by the International organization and personally aid his eventual rehabilitation. It was emphasized by the American comrades that their declaration expressed a personal sentiment which they would ordinarily display toward any comrade sincerely striving to rectify his conduct, but that their declaration had and could have no official character.)

8. The negotiations foundered on this point. The delegation of the P.C.I. refused to give a categorical answer to the resolution of the I.S. and proposed merely to accept it as a "basis for discussion." Thereupon negotiations, which manifestly offered no prospects of fruitful results, were broken off. It is clearer than ever that the whole question of the P.C.I. and the journal "La Commune" has no political significance, but is purely and simply the personal question of R. Molinier and his financial affairs. Now as before, the door of the Fourth International remains open, with full assurance of normal democratic rights, to the rank and file members of the P.C.I. who are ready to accept the resolutions and decisions of its international conference and accept discipline. The door is closed to R. Molinier.

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## Resolution On the Work of the Canadian Section

1. The All-America and Pacific Pre-Conference, having heard the report of the Canadian delegates, welcomes the successful fusion of the majority comrades with the active nucleus of the minority, on the basis of the program of action agreed upon during the Chicago Convention.

2. The Pre-Conference endorses the action taken by the Canadian comrades in forming an open Socialist Policy Group in the C.C.F. on the basis of a declaration on the war question.

3. The Pre-Conference, after discussion with the Canadian delegates, suggests the following plan of action for the immediate future:

(a) The Canadian comrades should continue to concentrate their main efforts on work within the C.C.F., with a view to climaxing their activities by a complete programmatic and political fight at or around the national Fall convention of the C.C.F., with a perspective of completing the experience within this declining reformist organization and re-establishing the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

The declining membership and activity of the C.C.F. has increased the specific weight of the petty bourgeois elements and the corresponding entrenchment of a right-wing bureaucracy. While our general line is oriented toward an early establishment of an independent Canadian section of the Fourth International, this does not preclude the possibility of continued concerted work in the C.C.F., in provinces where the objective conditions are more favorable than in Ontario.

(b) The comrades should endeavor to strengthen further our own fraction within the C.C.F. and the Group by systematic education and concerted and disciplined action in every field of their activity. The Socialist Policy Group will undoubtedly attract some confused centrist elements who, in a later stage, especially at the moment of split, may oppose our program. Consequently it is of great importance to combine educative work upon our new recruits with revolutionary vigilance against centrism.

(c) The comrades should make immediate attempts to extend the Socialist Policy Group into a national tendency within the C.C.F., by establishing the cooperation of our comrades in Vancouver, Winnipeg and elsewhere.

(d) The comrades should elaborate the political documents of the S.P.G. so as to create a thorough line of demarcation between the reformists, the centrists, and themselves on every important national and international problem.

(e) The Conference expresses the firm belief that this activity should be expressed through a regular mimeographed or printed organ (appearing weekly or fortnightly) rather than through casual bulletins. A name should be chosen for the organ which can also be used later for the organ of an independent organization, so as to continue the tradition of our revolutionary fight within the C.C.F. The Vancouver comrades should be invited to collaborate in the creation of such an organ.

(f) In view of a possible premature organizational attack by the C.C.F. bureaucracy, our comrades should be ready to answer every organizational maneuver by energetic politicizing of the issues in order that a full principled record of our position may be established. The experience of our French, Belgian and American comrades can be studied in this connection.

4. It is most likely that the re-establishment of our comrades in an independent organization will not occur with sufficient forces to make possible the immediate creation of a party, but rather only a broadened propaganda group. Preparatory steps for the new activity of this group should be taken even now.

(a) By systematizing and extending our trade union work, to be carried out with firm democratic centralism and comradely collaboration between the executive and the trade-union activists.

(b) In view of the existing ferment within the Stalinist ranks, efforts should be made to establish contacts within their organization for the purposes of information and, if possible, organizational fraction work. The new organ of the S.P.G. should carry on a steady and vigorous campaign against Stalinism both as it appears within the C.C.F. and without. The possibilities of public meetings against the Stalinists should also be considered, in exploiting the "democracy" of the C.C.F. constitution to its absolute limits.

(c) Concerning the Field group, the Pre-Conference considers that any political negotiations with this group should take place only on the basis of an uncompromising stand on the

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principles and platform of the Fourth International. While our political discussions with the C.C.F. members need be conducted in a spirit of patient education, the purpose of any action concerning the fossilized sectarian Field group should be that of splitting away progressive elements and rendering the group powerless. The progress of our work within the C.C.F., and the subsequent re-establishment of an independent group, together with the formal foundation of the Fourth International at the coming European conference, will establish our comrades on firm ground for gaining any progressive elements in the Field group through an energetic political attack against their sterility and international isolation. While the necessity of occasional united front action is not precluded, it should not be extended to a degree where the leadership of this stagnating group gains fictitious prestige.

5. Concerning the possible development of the Labor Relations Association, the Pre-Conference suggests that further information be prepared and that discussions be held in Canada as well as in New York, so that a definite position may be taken. The same procedure should be followed in estimating the possibilities of applying to Canadian conditions a program of action arising out of the international thesis (Death Agony of Capitalism) adopted by the American section at its last (April) National Committee plenum.

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## On Unification of the British Section

For a long time the adherents of the Fourth International in Great Britain have been divided into small separate groups. The importance and necessity of organizational unity of all militants standing on a common platform of principle were sadly underestimated. This light-minded attitude on the organizational question led not only to ill-considered splits over tactical differences but even to splits over purely personal disputes having no discernible political basis (the Lee group). In this latter manifestation the warning signals of political degeneration were clearly to be seen. If the International Secretariat erred in delaying too long before calling a halt to this untenable situation, its decisive intervention on the eve of the world conference became all the more imperatively necessary.

It must be quite obvious to all genuine adherents of the Fourth International in all parts of the world that the present representative world conference, summoned together in spite of the greatest and most unprecedented difficulties and obstacles, and participated in by delegates from many countries and from great distances, must be the occasion for a definite roll-call of our forces. This roll-call puts an end to all ambiguity of relations between our international organization and those who hitherto have maintained, or professed to maintain, a loyalty to its principles, its methods, and its discipline.

The present conference signifies a conclusive *delimitation* between those who are really *in* the Fourth International and fighting every day under its revolutionary banner, and those who are merely "*for*" the Fourth International, i. e., the dubious elements who have sought to keep one foot in our camp and one foot in the camp of our enemies.

The unification of the British groups (as that of the hitherto divided Greek groups) of the Fourth International on the eve of the World Conference coincides with the final departure of such alien elements as Sneevliet and Vereeken. Both these occurrences, each in its own way, are equally symbolic of a great progressive step forward in the reorganization of the revolutionary vanguard on the tested foundations of Bolshevism. They sig-

nify at one and the same time the *unification* of the genuine and sincere adherents of the Fourth International and their organizational *separation* from pretenders, sabotegers, and hidden enemies.

The British and Greek groups came to the conference with unification programs drawn up with the assistance of the International Secretariat because they had a firm determination to be enrolled under the banner of the Fourth International. Sneevliet and Vereeken, who over too long a period of time utilized their formal membership in the movement of the Fourth International to flout its principles, sabotage its discipline, and give aid and comfort to its enemies, lacked the courage at the last moment even to appear at the International Conference. That is only because they realized that the time had arrived for a showdown. They feared to give an account of their policies and actions before an international tribunal.

The world conference considers the unity agreement entered into between the three previously separated British groups as an adequate basis for the development of the work of the united British organization in the ensuing period. It endorses the unity agreement and recognizes the organization based on it as the only British section of the Fourth International. All Bolshevik-Leninists, all revolutionary workers in Great Britain who desire to be enrolled under the banner of the Fourth International, are invited and urged to join the British Section—the Revolutionary Socialist League.

The conference notes with great satisfaction that the leaders of a new group of revolutionary workers in Scotland, not previously connected with our international organization—the Revolutionary Socialist Party—have signed the unification agreement and the R.S.P. has been represented at the world conference by its own delegate. The approach of this organization to the Fourth International is a matter of great and symptomatic significance. Serious workers who seek the truth and want to fight for Socialism cannot and will not find any other way than the way of Bolshevism, nor any other organization than the Fourth International. The world conference extends a hearty welcome to the Revolutionary Socialist Party and expresses the confidence that the recommendation of its leading committee for organizational fusion with the British Section of the Fourth International will be adopted in the pending party referendum.

As far as the Lee group is concerned, it is necessary to point out:

(1) This group came into existence some months ago as the result of purely personal grievances which impelled Lee and his friends to an organizational split. There was not then and there is not now any justifiable political basis for the separate maintenance of this group.

(2) The leaders of this group resisted all attempts of the delegation of the International Secretariat to include it in the general unification.

(3) The invitation of the I.S. delegation to this group to be represented and present its point of view at the world conference, either by delegate or letter, was disregarded; all we have is a statement, apparently addressed to the world at large, rejecting in advance any decision of the world conference not in accord with their untenable demands.

Under these circumstances it is necessary to warn the comrades associated with the Lee group that they are being led on a path of unprincipled clique politics which can only land them in the mire. It is possible to maintain and develop a revolutionary political grouping of serious importance only on the basis of great principles. The Fourth International alone embodies and represents these principles. It is possible for a national group to maintain a constant revolutionary course only if it is firmly connected in one organization with co-thinkers throughout the world and maintains a constant political and theoretical collaboration with them. The Fourth International alone is such an organization. All purely national groupings, all those who reject international organization, control, and discipline, are in their essence reactionary.

All adherents of the Fourth International in a single country must be united in a single section of the Fourth International. Those who reject this elementary organizational rule of the Fourth International put themselves in the position of irresponsible splitters and clique-fighters.

The members of the Lee group are invited by the World Conference to reconsider their decisions, to come into the unified British Section and consequently into the Fourth International, and to take their place in the common work, with fair representation in its leading bodies and without reprisals of any kind. The Unified British Section is assured by the Conference of the full support and collaboration of the international organization in its historic revolutionary task.

## On the Greek Question

On the basis of the December, 1937, resolution of the I.S. and of previous resolutions concerning the movement of the Fourth International in Greece, the International Conference states:

1. That the unification of the United International Communist Organization with the International Communist League is necessary because the divergences which at present separate these two groups (the present situation in Greece, the question of Archiomarxism), while they require a serious discussion before the international organization, do not justify continuing the separation.

2. The unification should be brought about on the basis of acceptance of the Transitional Program of the Fourth International, and of its statutes.

3. The two groups shall fuse immediately, combining themselves in a new organization under the name "Revolutionary Socialist Organization (Greek Section of the Fourth International)."

4. The new organization will have a new newspaper under a new title.

5. A provisional leadership, on a basis of parity, shall be formed, its composition to be sanctioned by the I.S.

6. Those members of the two groups who are abroad shall constitute a commission whose role shall be to aid the Greek section politically and materially.

7. This commission, together with the leadership in Greece, shall prepare, with the least possible delay, a convention of the new organization, preceded by a discussion before the international organization. This convention will draw up the political line of the organization within the framework of the principles of the Fourth International, and shall elect the new leadership on a proportional basis.

8. Until the National Convention, in case of divergences about what policy to support, the I.S. shall decide.

9. An International Bulletin on the Greek question shall be brought out by the Greek Commission abroad, with all the documents of both tendencies.

This resolution, presented by the representatives of the two organizations after a preliminary agreement between them, and after the labors of the Greek Commission, was unanimously adopted by the International Conference.

## Resolution on the Situation in Poland

1. The dissolution of the Polish Communist Party will dissipate the last illusions kept by the workers toward the party which in their eyes personified the heroic past of Bolshevism. The traditions of internationalism, born with the party of Louis Varynski; the resultant traditions of class struggle, linked to the names of Rosa Luxemburg and Tyschko—these inheritances now pass to the Bolshevik-Leninists.

Although we must take into account a temporary deepening of depression and discouragement in Polish working-class quarters, and although we must also take into account the Stalinist efforts to rebuild an apparatus under the control of the Kremlin bureaucracy, there is no doubt of the renewal of the revolutionary movement. The new revolutionary generation will flock together under the banner and on the foundation of the Bolshevik-Leninist programme.

2. The entry of our Bolshevik-Leninist comrades in the Bund could produce positive results only in the event of the success of our work within the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). The special character of the Bund, which is a Jewish workers' organization, and hence limited to small-scale industries; the atmosphere of ideological petrification and nationalist limitation; the purely indirect contact of the Bund with the political problems of the country, upon the solution of which the Bund has only a minimum of influence—all this renders impossible an ideological differentiation within the Bund and assured the failure of the Bolshevik-Leninists.

The Conference considers the principal tasks of the Polish section to be:

- a) to give up fruitless membership in the Bund;
- b) to form an independent organization;
- c) to develop a political platform containing the slogans and the tasks which the Polish Bolshevik-Leninists propose for their work in Poland.

3. Considering that the collaboration of the International Secretariat with the Polish section has been inadequate, the Conference pronounces in favor of tightening up the organization links with it.

## On the Mexican Question

The International Conference, having read the documents and statements of the former I.C.L. (Galicia group), and the decision of the Pan-American Pre-Conference at New York, and having heard the report of the U.S. delegation to Mexico, declares:

That it endorses the recommendation of the All-American Conference regarding the reorganization of the group formerly led by Galicia and Fernández (I.C.L. of Mexico) and takes no responsibility for the previous policy and attitude of this group.

The Conference is obliged to adopt this resolution in view of the false policy of the leadership of the former I.C.L. of Mexico. This policy, for which the principal responsibility falls on Comrades Galicia and Fernández, brought the greatest discredit upon the Fourth International in Mexico and prevented a healthy development.

Under the guidance of its former leaders, the organization pursued a "third-period" policy in the trade-union field, which resulted in the split in the building-trades union movement, and the creation of an "independent" and "red" trade union composed merely of League members isolated from the masses.

In the struggle against the high cost of living, the League issued irresponsible and adventuristic slogans, not only calling for a "general strike" but also for "sabotage" and "direct action."

In the struggle against foreign imperialism in Mexico, the leadership of the I.C.L. (Galicia group), instead of emphasizing above all in its agitation the struggle against the American and British bandits, emphasized rather the bourgeois-nationalist Cardenas régime, attacking it in a way that was one-sided, sectarian, and, in the given circumstances, objectively reactionary.

The clinching proof of the irresponsibility of the Galicia leadership was given several days prior to the arrival of the U.S. delegation in Mexico, when this leadership induced the members

of the organization to vote the dissolution of the League, thus liquidating the Mexican section of the International. The subsequent decision—no less frivolous than the first—to reconstitute the League, can be regarded not as a responsible decision, but rather as a maneuver aimed at preventing criticism and serious efforts to reconstruct the movement of the Fourth International in Mexico on a healthy and solid basis.

With the above-indicated purpose in mind, the International Conference mandates Comrades C— to continue his efforts, under the direct supervision of the International Sub-Secretariat, to facilitate the reorganization of the Mexican Section of the Fourth International.

The International Conference cordially invites all former and present comrades of the I.C.L. to tighten up their ranks in the Fourth International and its reorganized Mexican section, on the basis of accepting the decisions of the Conference and the discipline of the Fourth International.

The International Conference further declares that, regarding the factional struggle, devoid of principle and of political significance—carried on between Comrades Galicia and O. Fernández, these two comrades may be admitted to membership in the ranks of the reorganized section only on condition that for a period of one year they shall not occupy any leading post in the organization. The new executive committee of the organization should be composed, above all, of serious and experienced proletarian elements.

Concerning the case of Comrade Diego Rivera, the International Conference further declares that in view of the difficulties that have arisen in the past with this comrade in the internal relationships of the Mexican section, he shall not form part of the reconstituted organization, but that his work and activity for the Fourth International shall remain under the direct control of the International Sub-Secretariat.

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## On Organizing Defense and Relief For Persecuted Revolutionists

The advance of Fascism in many countries, the international Stalinist campaign of persecution, frame-up, and assassination, and the increasing encroachments on the rights of the workers in the countries of democratic capitalism—the world-sweep of reaction in various forms raises the question of relief and defense for persecuted revolutionists in the most imperative manner. Never in modern history have revolutionary workers faced such persecution, and never have they stood upon such a narrow ground of democratic and legal rights.

In addition to the heavy blows of the outright bourgeois and Stalinist reaction, the revolutionists—who are always the most persecuted—face systematic exclusion and discrimination by the various Stalinist, Social-Democratic, and liberal-bourgeois relief and defense agencies. In order to provide a minimum of aid and protection to the persecuted revolutionary fighters—and especially to the refugees from totalitarian states—it is necessary for all sections of the Fourth International to bestir themselves. They must take the initiative all along the line for the creation of relief and defense organizations which can be relied upon to give timely moral, financial, and legal aid to those who need it most.

It is permissible to cooperate in this work with sincere elements of other political tendencies, but in no case should the formation of national defense and relief bodies be deferred or put aside because of the inability to secure the cooperation of this or that organization or individual. The need is absolutely urgent and unpostponable, and an energetic and devoted committee, even of modest size and composed in the main or altogether of the advanced revolutionary elements is infinitely better than none at all or an “imposing” facade of many organizations and “big names” that does little or nothing and gives no real assistance to the victims in most desperate and immediate cases.



It is necessary for all sections of the Fourth International to take up this question with the utmost seriousness and to begin work at once. Qualified comrades should devote themselves to this work and specialize in it. Legal assistance must be arranged for. The most effective methods of raising funds must be worked out. All the laws and regulations relating to immigration in the various countries must be studied by comrades specializing in this field of work. In short, the adherents of the Fourth International, especially in the democratic countries which offer the greatest facilities, must concentrate their attention on the task of developing the most effective relief and defense mechanism possible in the shortest possible time.

An international committee, composed of responsible and known people of the greatest moral authority should eventually coordinate and direct the work of the various national defense organizations, provide a center for the assistance to refugees, and arrange for the exchange of information and experience between the various national bodies.

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# Resolution on the Youth

## The Capitalist Impasse

1) Capitalism, whether it be authoritarian or liberal, admits the inability to bring the slightest relief to the misery and sufferings of working-class youth. *The young want a trade*, and when (rarely enough!) it consents to give them one, it is only to chain them the better to a machine which tomorrow will stop and let them starve beside the very riches they have produced. *The young want to work*, to produce with their hands, to use their strength, and capitalism offers them the perspective of unemployment or of "the execution of work in conditions other than the normal conditions of production," according to the excellent hypocritical definition of labor-camps by the League of Nations, or of armament production, which engenders destruction rather than improvement. *The young want to learn*, and the way to culture is barred to them. *The young want to live*, and the only future offered them is that of dying of hunger or of rotting on the barbed wire of a new imperialist war. *The young want to create a new world*, and they are permitted only to maintain or to consolidate a rotting world that is falling to pieces. *The young want to know what tomorrow will be*, and capitalism's only reply to them is: "Today you've got to tighten your belt another notch; tomorrow, we'll see. . . . In any case, perhaps you're not going to have any tomorrow."

## Give Youth a Future — Give the World a Future

2) That is why youth will rally under the flag of those who bring it a future. *Only the Fourth International*, because it represents the historical interests of the only class which can reorganize the world upon new bases, *only the Bolshevik-Leninists* can promise youth a future in which it can put its abilities to full use. Only they can say to the youth: "*Together with you, we want to make a new world, where everyone works and is proud to work well, to know his job down to the smallest details; a world where*

*everyone will eat according to his hunger, for production will be regulated according to the needs of the workers and not those of profit; a world where one must constantly learn, in order the better to subordinate the forces of nature to the will of man; a world where, by ceaselessly extending the domain of the application of science, humanity's theoretic knowledge will be daily increased; a new world; a new man who can make real all the hopes and powers he bears within him."* It is under the ensign of a new world and a new humanity that the Fourth International and its youth organizations must go on to win the working-class youth; it is under that ensign that they *will* win that youth.

## **The Struggle for a Future — the Struggle for Bread**

3) The promise of a better future would be only demagogy if the Bolshevik-Leninists were not fighting for an immediate improvement in the situation of working-class youth, if they were not formulating youth's immediate demands, if they were not spreading word of the necessity for working-class youth to fight by class-struggle methods for the satisfaction of these demands, and if, through this struggle and on the basis of the experience gained therein, they were not demonstrating to exploited youth that its demands could be finally satisfied only by establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, that the struggle for these demands must be transformed into a struggle for power by means of a struggle for the control and management of the economic system.

## **We Demand the Right to Work!**

4) For the young workers engaged in production the Bolshevik-Leninists put forward slogans with the aim of *a)* measuring the work done by the young not according to the desire to drag as much profit as possible out of it, but on the contrary according to their degree of physical development; *b)* assuring them of a standard of living equal to that of adults, by that very fact assuring them of economic independence; *c)* raising their technical qualifications as far as possible; *d)* against the equal opportunity for young and old to be exploited by capitalism, setting up their equal rights.

For the young under 20, they also formulate the following demands:

*Reduced working week*, with schedules allowing young workers to engage in sports in the open air;

*At least one month's paid vacation per year;*

*The organizing, by factories or groups of factories, of training courses, at the bosses' expense and under workers' control;*

*Hours of craft training taken out of the working week, and paid for at regular rates;*

*Application of the principle "for equal work, equal pay;" under workers' control;*

*The fixing of a minimum living wage for young workers; fixing of the wages of young workers under the control of all the workers taken as a whole;*

*Prohibition of night-work, of over-laborious, unhealthy, or unwholesome tasks; workers' control over the use of young labor.*

## **Equality for Youth in Social Legislation All Together for the Struggle!**

5) In order to take the defense of their demands into their own hands, the young workers should have the right to choose *their own delegates*, whose task is above all to draw the attention of the adult delegates and of the workers in general to youth's specific demands, to tie up the struggle for these particular demands with the struggle for the general demands of the working class. In the same way, in all branches of trade-union organizations, these must be created, and imposed upon the trade-union bureaucracy, union *youth commissions*, whose task shall be to study the demands of the youth, and to recruit and educate young workers. The task of the Bolshevik-Leninists is to take the lead in the organization of such commissions.

In order to throw trade-union doors wide open to exploited youth, the Bolshevik-Leninists demand the establishment of *reduced dues* for young workers.

## **We Want a Trade!**

6) In the fight against unemployment the slogans, *raise the school age, organize apprenticeship*, make sense only to the extent that the weight of this must be borne, not by the working-class, but by the big capitalists. Hence the Bolshevik-Leninists owe it to themselves to formulate the demands of working-class youth in this field as follows:

*Prolongation of the school age to 16, with a grant for family support* in working-class and small farmer families.

*Reorganization of the school in coöperation with the factory:* the school should prepare children for life and work; it should weld the youth to the older generations; hence the demand for control by workers' organizations over technical education.

*Reduction of the period of apprenticeship* to a maximum of two years.

Forbidding of all work not connected with the actual apprenticeship.

The setting up, at the expense of the bosses, in connection with every business or group of businesses engaged in manufacturing, mining, or trade, of *apprentice schools*, with an attendance of at least 3% of the personnel employed in the business or group of businesses.

Choosing of the instructors by the labor unions.

Control of these schools by a mixed commission of workers' delegates and delegates of the apprentices themselves.

## **We Demand Our Right to Live!**

7) The task of saving the unemployed youth from misery, despair, and fascist demagogy, of working them back into production and thereby binding them closely to the working class is a vital task for the future of the proletariat. Revolutionaries must struggle to force capitalism (*a*) to undertake to work the unemployed youth back into production through the organization of technical education and guidance; (*b*) to put the unemployed youth back immediately into productive activity; (*c*) to organize such work not according to semi-military methods but on the basis of regular wages: *Down with labor-camps*, either voluntary or obligatory!; (*d*) to furnish youth, which it is throwing into misery, the wherewithal to live. Hence the Bolsheviki-Leninists put forward the following demands:

*Unemployment benefits on the adult scale* for all young unemployed, manual or intellectual, immediately upon their finishing school;

Forcing the big bosses to open technical re-education centers under workers' control;

Technical re-education organized according to the needs of production, under the general control of the trade unions and the congresses of workers' delegates;

*Reopening of the shut-down factories;*

*Commencement of large-scale public works* (hospitals,

schools, low-cost housing projects, sports fields, stadia, swimming-pools, electric power-stations), paid at trade-union scales and under workers' control from top to bottom.

## For Our Brothers on the Farms!

8) The misery of the farm youth is no less than that of the industrial youth. For farm youth the Bolshevik-Leninists formulate the following general demands:

*Strict application of all the above-named laws and social measures in the country just as in the city;*

*Suppression of the domestic exploitation of young children;*  
Particularly strict application of the principle: "For equal work, equal pay."

District organization of technical education at the expense of the big finance-capital farm-owners;

Healthy food and lodging for young farm workers living in their bosses' houses;

Cheap credit for small-scale farmers, and especially for small-scale farmers with family responsibilities.

## For Our Countryside

9) The industrial and farm youth are the most exploited part of all working-class youth. The youth organizations of the Fourth International must draw particular attention to the following demands: Strict application of principle: "For equal work, equal pay!";

An extra day off per month;

The right to voluntary maternity;

A 6-months' leave-of-absence for maternity;

Maternity grants for girl-mothers.

## Open the Schools and Universities!

10) One of the necessary conditions for the progress of humanity is that large sections of working-class youth should have access to culture and science. The Bolshevik-Leninists put forward the following slogans:

Open the schools and universities to all the young who are willing to study.

Free education and support for workers' and farmers' sons and daughters.

## **Bread, Books, and Civil Rights for Coolies!**

11) In colonial and semi-colonial countries, laboring youth is the victim of a double exploitation—capitalist and patriarchal. In these and in imperialist countries the defense of the demands of the young colonial workers and peasants is the first duty in the fight against imperialism. This fight is carried on around the general slogan: *The same rights for colonial youth as for the youth of the imperialist capital-city.*

*Organization of hygiene* and similar care in all villages.

*Organization of homes* for young workers, peasants, and coolies, under the control of labor and nationalist organizations.

Schools for native children; teaching in the native language.

Open the government administration to native language.

Open the government administration to native intellectuals.

Take the necessary financial credits from the war and police budgets and imperialist privileges.

12) The bourgeoisie recognizes working youth's right to be exploited; but refuses it the right to have anything to say about that exploitation, and deprives it of all political rights; in certain countries it even forbids youth under 18 to have any political activity whatever. The working class replies to these measures by saying: Whoever has the right to be exploited has also the right to struggle against the system which exploits him. Full political rights to young workers and peasants!

The right to vote beginning at 18, just as much in legislative and municipal elections as in the election of delegates.

Abolition of special laws forbidding youth to engage in political activity.

## **We Demand Our Right to Happiness!**

13) Working-class youth's need for relaxation is utilized by the bourgeoisie either to stupefy it or to make it submit to an even tighter discipline. The duty of the working class is to help create a youth that is strong and capable of throwing all its physical and mental strength into the fight against capitalism; to aid it in using what leisure capitalism gives it to learn to understand the world better, in order to be better able to change it. Hence the Bolshevik-Leninists demand:

Free access to all sports fields, stadia, museums, libraries, theatres, and cinemas, for all young workers and unemployed;

The ordering of their leisure by the young unemployed themselves;

The using of young unemployed intellectuals for the organization of lectures and discussions, etc. on physics, chemistry, mechanics, mathematics, political economy, history of the labor movement, art, literature, etc.;

The establishment of homes open to the working and unemployed youth, where the young will not only have the opportunity to be amused and instructed, but can also study out for themselves the social problems with which they are faced; these homes to be managed by working-class youth itself under the supervision of the local trade-union organizations.

## The Revolutionary Program

14) *The struggle for these demands cannot be separated from the struggle for the demands of workers as a whole, both employed and unemployed. The final disappearance of unemployment among the youth is closely linked to the disappearance of general unemployment. The struggle for raising the school age and for compulsory technical re-education is closely linked with the struggle for the sliding-scale in wages and in working hours. The struggle to drag out of capitalism those reforms which aim at developing the class-consciousness of working youth is closely linked with the struggle for workers' control of industry and factory committees. The struggle for public works is closely linked with the fight for the expropriation of monopolies, for the nationalization of credit, banks, and key industries. The struggle to smash back all efforts to militarize is closely linked to the struggle against the development of authoritarian state tendencies and against fascism, the struggle for the organization of workers' militias. It is within the framework of the transitional programme of the Fourth International that the present programme should be developed and applied. It is under the ensign of the proletariat fighting for power that the Fourth International will win the demands of exploited youth.*

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
YOUTH OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Lausanne, 11 September 1938



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