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The New Imperialist "Peace"

and the

Building of the Parties of the Fourth International

## The New Imperialist "Peace" and the Building of the Parties of the Fourth International

Report for an International Discussion Approved by the European Secretariat

The initial months of the period following the second imperialist world war already show clearly that the profound changes brought about by the latter have far from eliminated the difficulties and the contradictions which have convulsed the capitalist world, especially since the war of 1914-1918. Despite certain existing weaknesses of the revolutionary workers' movement, there is no reason whatever to assume that we are facing a new epoch of capitalist stabilization and development.

On the contrary, the war has acted only to aggravate the disproportion between the increased productivity of capitalist economy and the capacity of the world market to absorb it. The war has aggravated the disorganization of capitalist economy and has destroyed the last possibilities of a relatively stable equilibrium in social and international relations.

By its total and world-wide character, by its duration, by the havoc it wrought owing to technical discoveries up to such a terrifying explosive force as that of atomic energy, this war has done more than any other historical event to wreck the economic and political structure of the entire planet. In the economic field, the impressive development of the productive forces of certain countries, first and foremost the United States, stands in sharp contrast with the almost total destruction of the productive apparatus of other countries, and with the stagnation and decay reigning on the world market. On the social plane, the war has accelerated, on one hand, the concentration of property in the hands of finance capital, and, on the other, the proletarianization of large layers of the petty bourgeoisie, either through the increased demand for factory workers, or through the economic ruination of these layers, resulting from famine and inflation.

Finally, on the plane of international relations, the war

has brought about the collapse and the complete disintegration of German, Japanese, and Italian imperialisms, the crisis and partial disintegration of French imperialism, the weakening and serious decline of English imperialism.

Conversely, it has spurred the hypertrophic development of American imperialism and, on the other hand, the territorial expansion of the USSR and the growth of its effective influence upon large sectors of Europe and Asia.

### The World Economic Situation

The evolution of world economy during the war is characterized by two contradictory processes:

The productive apparatus has grown and has become concentrated in a number of countries, and new countries have undergone industrialization, while in other countries the economy has been weakened, disintegrated or destroyed.

It is the United States that has profited the most from the role conferred upon it by the circumstances of the war. As the creditor and supplier for all the "United Nations," the US has developed its industrial apparatus, increased its productivity and doubled its production in relation to 1939.

Canada, whose economy is integrally linked with America's, has made a similar leap forward, doubling her industrial production in relation to 1940 and becoming the third commercial nation in the world, next only to the United States and England.

The autarchy in which the South American countries, primarily Brazil and Argentina, were forced to live during the war impelled them to speed up their industrialization. The same more or less marked process is to be observed in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, India, Egypt and to a lesser extent certain areas of China and Indo-China.

On the other hand, the war has led to the destruction of European economy, above all that of Germany, which constituted its main base.

The European industrial apparatus has been destroyed or remains paralyzed by lack of power (coal, electricity), lack of raw materials, and by the decline in the productivity of labor owing to the deterioration of industrial equipment.

A great number of ports lie in ruins, together with the bulk of the land and maritime system of transportation.

Despite an apparent enrichment of the peasantry, the condition of European agriculture has not improved.

Agricultural production is declining for lack of fertilizer, machinery and labor.

The middle and well-to-do peasantry, despite the hoarding of depreciated currency, has been unable either to improve or replace their equipment, their livestock, or their buildings.

The utter financial ruin is illustrated by the colossal debts of all the European states, their unbalanced budgets and inflation. The colossal war expenditures were financed through the abnormal lowering of the living standards of the masses, subjected to hunger rations, and through the capitalist state's absorbing (through taxes, loans) the income of the petty bourgeois rentiers, and through growing deficits.

The increasing disproportion between the scarcity of mass consumption goods and unproductive expenditures for war needs, has culminated in a catastrophic depreciation of paper money and in a staggering rise of the cost of living in every European country.

Thus for Europe the balance sheet of the war adds up to unprecedented impoverishment, a colossal drop of her specific weight in world economy, which accentuates in the extreme her economic dependence upon other continents, America in particular.

Europe is not the lone sufferer from the war havoc.

The economies of Japan, Netherlands Indies and China have likewise suffered more or less profound shocks.

On the other hand, the disruption of trade relations during the war and the immense need for raw materials and capital, have led to an abnormal decline in the living standard of the colonial masses through food scarcities, famine and inflation.

Thus, the war facilitated the development and the concentration of the productive apparatus of certain countries, and above all of the United States, raising the productive capacity of world economy as a whole to levels above those of 1939, but simultaneously it created the universal impoverishment illustrated: by the colossal national debts in all countries including the United States by inflation, by the crisis of agricultural production, and the resulting drop in the absorptive capacity of the world market.

The war has not only failed to resolve the crisis of markets but, on the contrary, has enormously aggravated it.

Before American imperialism can exploit the financial-industrial potential it accumulated during the war on the world market and before it can attenuate the dangers flowing from the crisis and its social struggles, it must first establish its domination over this market by placing all capitalist countries—not only in Europe, but throughout the world—on suitable rations.

Conversely, the purchasing power of these countries already greatly reduced by unremitting wartime impoverishment cannot be restored without reconstructing their economy and without their regaining at least their former markets.

Under these conditions the most probable perspectives of the evolution of world economy may be outlined as follows:

The revival of economic activity in capitalist countries weakened by the war, and in particular continental European countries, will be characterized by an especially slow tempo which will keep their economy at levels bordering on stagnation and decay.

American economy will soon experience a relative boom, since it is the only country capable of satisfying the immediate needs of the world market. This fact will facilitate the full functioning of its productive apparatus.

However, this increased production will in a short while run up against the limited capacities of the domestic and world markets.

The United States will then head for the next economic crisis which will be more deep-going and widespread than that of 1929-1933, with far more devastating repercussions on world economy.

The relations between the USSR and the capitalist world are not such as to favor and promote an economic revival on a capitalist basis. By striving to build its own economic zone, embracing those countries which are at present under its control, the USSR aggravates the commercial crisis of imperialism.

## International Relations

The world situation is dominated by the power conferred by the war upon the United States and the USSR, and by their reciprocal relations.

## The United States

The unlimited expansion of Yankee imperialism lies at the root of the prevailing disequilibrium and its further inevitable aggravation. Thanks to the circumstances of the war, American imperialism has effected a penetration throughout the world on a scale never before attained by any other imperialism, and it has actually become the principal manufacturer and banker of the capitalist world.\*

The United States has left all its imperialist rivals far behind. Thanks to the development and efficiency of its industrial apparatus, thanks to a monopoly of the principal raw materials, the means of transport and the abundance of capital at its command, it possesses an economic power which no capitalist market can long resist.

Moreover, the United States has become the world's foremost military power upon which crushing superiority is conferred by its new weapons, and especially those employing atomic explosives.

The pacifist and "liberal" mask previously assumed by Yankee imperialism in order to accomplish and facilitate its economic expansion no longer corresponds to the conditions of its present world expansion. In order to achieve and consolidate its domination of the world market, Yankee imperialism will be more and more often obliged to resort to open force, either to overawe or, if need be, to attack and crush anyone opposing its plans. Toward rival bourgeoisies and toward the USSR, American imperialism pursues a policy combining economic blackmail and military pressure.

\*Industrial production has doubled in relation to 1939. The growth in the value of production is as follows:

1929	\$99.4 billion	1939	\$ 88.6 billion
1933	\$54.8 billion	1944	\$198.7 billion

According to official estimates, automobile production will increase from 500,000 units in 1945 to 3.7 million in 1946 and to 5 million in 1947. In 1947 building construction will absorb \$6.5 billion, or a 44 percent increase over 1945, of which \$1 billion will go into the construction of new factories (the largest annual peacetime expenditure in the history of the United States).

Net profits after taxes of American corporations between 1939 and 1945 total \$49 billion, while their capital has increased during the same period from \$54.6 billion to \$98 billion. American shipping, which before the war comprised a total tonnage of 9,300,000 tons, has today taken first place in world marine with US tonnage of 34,000,000 tons.

On the other hand, the war has cost the United States \$341 billion, or 11 times the cost of the First World War and double the total expenditures of the Federal Government in its 151 years of existence between 1789 and 1940. The national debt has soared to \$300 billion, or \$2,100 per capita, requiring \$6 billion interest annually.

Furthermore, American imperialism has become the most conscious and formidable counter-revolutionary capitalist power and the main prop of political and social conservatism. The authoritarian and reactionary tendencies are taking shape and are being strengthened within the United States itself as well as in the rest of the world.

The ostensibly temporary anti-labor legislation enforced in the US during the war (anti-union and anti-strike laws, wage freeze) is tending to become entrenched as a permanent rule over the labor market.

In China, American imperialism supports militarily and openly the struggle of the reactionary bourgeois government of Chungking to crush the revolutionary movement of the Chinese masses and to bring the whole country under its control.

In Japan and Germany, American imperialism manipulates the old reactionary and fascist apparatus as well as using the reactionary gangs of the Center and the Right.

In Italy at the moment it supports liberals and Catholics, financing at the same time the neo-fascist movement of "The Common Man" (l'Uomo Qualunque).

In Spain it tries to retain Franco as long as possible while preparing for his eventual replacement by the monarchy or an "authoritarian" democracy.

In all South American countries it patronizes and lends its support for the most part to military dictatorships and in general to Bonapartist regimes. It assumes a "liberal" mask only in those colonial countries where it is endeavoring to supplant its imperialist competitors.

The "peace" plans of American imperialism consist in the consummation and consolidation of its conquest of the world market.

The United States has already begun to imprison the world through a network of politico-economic organizations, such as: UNRRA, "The Food Agriculture Organization," the Stabilization Fund, the World Bank for Reconstruction, the UNO Economic Council set up at San Francisco, with its auxiliaries, the Export and Import Bank and so on, backed by a permanent army and a system of land, naval and air bases, which wrest from every nation a part of its sovereignty and which has the long-range aim of establishing the world hegemony of Yankee imperialism.

Nevertheless this tendency to turn the world into an American colony runs up against obstacles, both at home and abroad.

At home, the reconversion from war to peacetime economy, accompanied by lay-offs and wage cuts, gives rise to social struggles which in their turn impede economic recovery.

Abroad, American pressure provokes more or less vigorous resistance from the other imperialisms and above all from British imperialism, impelling the latter to intrench themselves within autarchic blocs and to resume economic warfare.

Moreover the struggle of the proletariat in the metropolitan centers, the national liberation movements of the colonial peoples, the USSR and the zone it controls, are additional factors serving to thwart the plans of the Yankee imperialists, and which contribute to the maturing of the crisis of American imperialism.

Thus the world expansion of the United States offers it only in the abstract the advantages of imperialist exploitation, capable of unchecked and unlimited development. In reality it encompasses at the same time all of the contradictions characterizing the economic, social and political structure of world capitalism, and all this serves to subject the United States to the gravest convulsions, and render it susceptible to every shock and crisis arising in any part of the world.

## The Soviet Union

Facing the United States stands the USSR, which has victoriously met the test of the war thanks to the inter-imperialist antagonisms and thanks to the superiorities of its social system.

Nevertheless despite its territorial conquests the war has brought the following consequences to the USSR:\*

1. The war has enormously weakened the country's economy by "checking its development" (Molotov's speech on the Twenty-Eighth Anniversary of the October Revolution), by decimating the economy of the Ukraine, by wiping out one-sixth of the active population.

2. The war has aggravated social differentiation by strengthening the bourgeoisified nationalist and reactionary elements, especially among the peasantry (millionaire peasants), the military caste, and the governmental summits of the bureaucracy.

On the other hand the war (1) has facilitated the industrialization of other regions of the USSR; and (2) has roused broad layers of the population and lifted them from the rut of passivity and conservatism toward the bureaucratic regime, acquainting them with other ways of life and other ideas (Red Army fighters, war prisoners, soldiers in the armies of occupation in the different European countries) thus sharpening their critical faculties and stimulating tendencies toward self-assertion. (Speech of Kalinin.)

The war has marked for the USSR the abysmal debacle of the nationalist policy of self-sufficiency formulated by the theory of "socialism in one country," and at the same time it marks the beginning of a period in which the fate of the regime established by the October Revolution will be definitively and finally decided.

The Stalinist bureaucracy has sacrificed both the interests of the world revolution and the progressive improvement of the living standards of the Russian proletariat for the sake of a policy which it presents to the masses as a gradual and peaceful construction of a planned and state-ized economy in the midst of a capitalist world. In reality, however, this policy corresponds only to the Kremlin's own interests as a privileged, bureaucratic caste.

The war has brought this disastrous experience to a close. The USSR was inflicted with the imperialist war despite the retreats, the concessions, and the betrayals of the revolution, whereby Stalin believed it possible to neutralize the world bourgeoisie.

The war has destroyed in large measure the gains so arduously achieved over a period of years by the Soviet masses in the economic construction of the USSR and has violently hurled back the latter.

In order that Soviet economy rise again, in order that this revival be accomplished without resorting to the exclusive or principal aid of American imperialism, which would take

\*The USSR has suffered 17,000,000 dead and 3,000,000 disabled or 1/4 of the total Soviet population, and 1/6 of the active population. The territories which have to be rebuilt comprise approximately an area of 2,000,000,000 square miles, and the havoc caused by the war amounts to about \$130,000,000,000 or six times the highest pre-war annual income (1938). The German advance deprived the USSR of approximately 60 percent of its coal output, 50 percent of its total steel capacity, and altogether around 60 percent of its industrial potential. Destroyed in addition were 65,000 kilometers of railroad lines, 4,100 railway stations and about 7,000 bridges and structures. In 1943 two-thirds of the urban population consumed only one-third as many goods as in 1940, a year in which consumption had already been curtailed. It is expected that by the end of this year consumption will be 70 percent of the 1940 levels. Expenditures for equipment declined sharply in the course of the war, and industrial expansion fell off to one-half its pre-war report. According to Commissar Zverev's report made in 1944:

Year	Expenditures for national equipment in billions of rubles	Percentage of total budget
1940	57.1	32.7
1941	73.2	33.9
1942	—	—
1943	31.1	14.
1944	44.7	18.
1945	59.5	20.

American credits to the USSR rose to 1 1/2 billion dollars.

advantage of this opportunity to destroy its independence, in order that the USSR gain a certain protective cover against the pressure of world imperialism, the Soviet bureaucracy finds it necessary to extend its strategic zone and to draw on the economic resources of other countries, in Europe and Asia alike.

Inasmuch as imperialism has succeeded in maintaining a favorable relationship of forces throughout the whole war and up to the present time, the Soviet bureaucracy is seeking to counteract this pressure as well as the reactionary attempts from within by the following means:

(a) By accelerating the reconstruction of Soviet planned economy (the new Five Year Super-Plan, 1946-1950).

(b) By territorial expansion of the USSR.

(c) By bringing into its economic orbit a number of countries under its political and military control.

And (d) by the activities of the Communist parties designed to neutralize the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries and to prevent their being completely enslaved to American and British imperialism.

In its defense against both the external pressure of imperialism and of the internal reactionary elements, and in its effort to rapidly revive the Soviet economy, the bureaucracy's best chances for success lie in the economic contribution of the countries now under Soviet control.

The rapacious nature and the conservative, cowardly and reactionary policy of the Soviet bureaucracy, were revealed from the first by its activity in these countries.

Instead of actively aiding the mass movement for the rapid accomplishment of the socialist revolution, the free unification of these countries with the USSR, the development and the harmonious collaboration of their economy with Soviet economy, the bureaucracy has utilized this mass movement only as a reserve threat against the bourgeoisie and the reactionary cliques to which it has, in the first place, entrusted the power.

Its initial attempts to introduce its economic control — agrarian reform, expropriation of foreign capital, more or less extensive nationalization of industry, housebreaking capitalism bureaucratically from above, without calling for the conquest of power by the proletariat—in all this it has met with reverses.

The Soviet occupation and control have given an impetus, although in varying degrees, to civil war and the development of a regime of dual power.

Held in check on one side by the pressure of imperialism and by its own fear of the extension of the proletarian revolution, and driven by the necessities of the social regime upon which it rests, the Soviet bureaucracy pursues in the countries it controls an opportunist policy which, even while tending toward their structural assimilation, realizes the latter only slowly and partially, through a series of advances, retreats, and hesitations, convulsions, and political and military crises, conditioned above all by the evolution of the relationship of forces between imperialism and itself.

Up to now the Soviet bureaucracy appears determined to defend in its own way its economic basis in the USSR and its maintenance of control over those countries which it regards as belonging to its own zone of influence. In the USSR itself this tendency is manifested in the strengthening of the dominant position of the center, personified by Stalin-Molotov and the leading fraction of the Communist Party (Zhdanov, Andreyev, Malenkov, Voroshilov, Beria, etc.), through the latter's reinforcement of its control in the government, the administrative organs, and the army; it is also manifested in the attempt to renew its ties with the masses through the decoy of a new left turn directed against the right. In the countries under Soviet control, this tendency manifests itself by the seizure of governmental levers by Communist party leaders, independently of their real strength in the given country; in the elimination of oppositional elements, the expropriation of foreign concessions, the acceleration of economic reforms, and the promotion of organs of dual power (committees for the

control of production and trade, committees of poor peasants to carry out the agrarian reforms).

Finally, on the international plane, the resistance of the Soviet bureaucracy is manifested in its unyielding attitude toward imperialist pressure, at the diplomatic meetings (London Conference), in a certain note of firmness in its press and in the speeches of its leaders (Molotov on the occasion of the Twenty-Eighth Anniversary of the October Revolution), and in the decoy of a slight left turn by some of the Communist parties (American, British, Greek, and colonial parties).

Meanwhile, this defense, as long as it devolves upon the bureaucracy, will remain deprived of the only force which can effectively thwart the designs of imperialism, counteract its anti-Soviet pressure, permit the reconstruction of the USSR, and banish the threat of the Third World War, namely: the active support of the world revolutionary movement and the conquest of power by the proletariat. The action of the bureaucracy in the USSR and in the zone under its control, like that of the Communist parties in capitalist countries, instead of advancing the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, only obstructs and demoralizes it. Thus the best defense of the USSR becomes more than ever a question of the struggle for the immediate overthrow of the Bonapartist Stalinist clique and the spread of the proletarian revolution.

Failing a mass movement capable of coming actively rallying to its support, the USSR incurs the risk of being destroyed in the near future even without direct military intervention, but simply through the combined economic, political and diplomatic pressure and the military threats of American and British imperialism.

Despite its territorial expansion, its economic retreat and, above all, the weakness of the labor movement demoralized by the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy, divest the USSR of its most effective weapons against the sustained pressure of imperialism. In the test of strength which characterizes the present relations between imperialism and the USSR, only the intervention of the proletarian revolution can save the Soviet Union from an early and fatal end.

Behind the appearance of power never before attained, there lurks the reality that the USSR and the Soviet bureaucracy have entered the critical phase of their existence.

## England

British imperialism issues out of the war as the third strongest world power next to the USA and the USSR.

Nevertheless, its specific weight in the world has once again considerably diminished, and it has been so weakened by the war that it actually faces the most critical situation in its history.\*

The colossal unproductive expenditures of the war were met by indebtedness to the US and the colonies (India, Egypt) and the Dominions, and the super-exploitation of the proletariat at home and of the colonial masses.

England is today the greatest debtor country in the world. The equilibrium in its balance of payments has been definitively disrupted by the loss of a large part of its foreign investments and by the maritime, commercial and financial supremacy of the US which has brought about the diminution in England's revenues from her fleet and from her former role as the world's broker. Moreover, the dislocation of the Empire has been accentuated during the war.

The industrial and financial development of the colonies (India, Egypt) and of the Dominions (Canada, Australia, New

\*The budgetary deficit has increased 22.3 times between 1938 and 1944. The national debt exceeds 24 billion, including 4 billion of foreign credits. The deficit in the foreign trade was covered before the war by exports, which have fallen from £471 million in 1938 (volume index 100) to £272 million in 1945 (volume index 42); by revenues from capital investments abroad, which have fallen to one-half of 1937; and by the income from the merchant marine, reduced during the war from 20,200,000 tons to 15,000,000 tons. From 1938 to 1944 coal mining, on which the industrial might of the country is based, fell from 226 million to 185 million tons.

Zealand, South Africa) has given rise to centrifugal tendencies, gravitating in large part to the United States.

To check its decline and to effect its recovery, British imperialism resorts to the brutal extension of its colonial rule at the expense of positions belonging to defeated imperialist countries (Japan, Italy) or those which have been greatly weakened (France, Holland); it resorts to the intensified exploitation of the metropolitan and colonial proletariat, and to economic warfare. The recourse to economic warfare, the maintenance of the Empire preference system based on customs barriers and the Sterling Pool, the building of other autarchical blocs—these are the only weapons available to British imperialism for the purpose of making a stand against the pressure of the US and bargaining with the latter for a share, however sharply limited, in the exploitation of the world market. The policy of the "Western Bloc" is highly symptomatic of British imperialism's means of self-defense.

In order to resist both the economic pressure of American imperialism and the extension of the political and economic control of the USSR over a large part of Europe, England has outlined a blueprint to construct under its control a closed economic sphere, encompassing the countries of western Europe, from Norway to Greece and including Germany. The conclusion of the compromise with Washington can modify the anti-American economic orientation of the "Western Bloc" while leaving intact, above all, its anti-Soviet political character.

But the needs of American imperialism for world-wide expansion, needs which will make themselves most strongly felt at the outbreak of depression and crisis, can only reveal that the definitive abandonment by Great Britain of the weapon of economic warfare is an illusion.

The Washington agreement, a veritable "economic Dunkerque" for British imperialism, has been accepted by the latter only in the hope of resuming at a later stage the struggle for the preservation of its positions in the world market.

## France

French imperialism, although listed among the "victors" of the war, no longer occupies any place in the international lineup beyond that of a second-rate power.

The war has consummated its definitive decay. The destruction it has suffered has enormously weakened the productive potential of the country.

Its unproductive expenditures, conjoined with the general impoverishment, the decline of production and the scarcity of commodities, have acted to unbalance the budget, to debase the currency, and to raise the cost of living. The economic revival proceeds only very sluggishly and without perspective, hindered by the lack of raw materials, capital, and machinery.

The colonies which have not as yet fallen into the grip of English and American imperialism, far from contributing to the recovery of the metropolis, are at the height of a crisis of their own, and in the midst of convulsions brought about by the developing national liberation movements.

In order to escape, at least in part, the catastrophic consequence of its own balance sheet of the war, French imperialism attempts to play on the reciprocal antagonisms between the United States, England and the USSR. But its hopes have proved to be illusory of thus ultimately preserving the unity of its empire and its economic independence, and of wresting from conquered Germany a large part of the resources of the Saar and Ruhr territories. The needs of English and American imperialism for expansion leave no latitude for French imperialism. The settlement of accounts between the "Big Three" invariably operates, in the final analysis, at its expense, as well as at the expense of all other secondary powers.

## China

China emerges from the war and the defeat of Japanese imperialism apparently as the fifth great world power. In

reality, in its present economic, social and political structure, it is almost as incapable as ever of conquering genuine national independence and playing an independent role in world politics.

The Chinese bourgeoisie, constrained by its fear of the independent activity of the poor peasantry and the proletariat, and shackled by its economic ties with imperialism, concerns itself above all with consolidating its regime of exploitation against the attacks of the masses, by allying itself with the feudal elements and appealing to Yankee imperialism for material and military aid. The Chinese market, with its 400 million inhabitants, its enormous natural resources, its unlimited supply of exceptionally cheap labor power, constitutes for the US one of the principal outlets for its over-abundant production, a source of raw materials and a market for the export of capital; and, in addition, provides the key to its hegemony over the whole of the Far East and the Pacific. The Chinese bourgeoisie is all the more disposed to favor the expansion of Yankee imperialism, since the latter provides it with substantial aid in its armed struggle against the masses, against the Yanan regime, against the threat of the expanding influence of the USSR, while still leaving it the appearance of independence and national unity.

The completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in China, and the full development of its productive forces, are impossible without the struggle of the worker and peasant masses, led by the revolutionary party of the proletariat, for the regime of Soviets, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The line of democratization of the Kuomintang recently adopted by the Stalinist leaders of Yanan can end only in inevitable defeat and a new demoralization of the Chinese masses.

China is destined, moreover, to serve in Asia and in the Pacific as the principal arena for the conflict between Yankee imperialism and the USSR, and to become in case of open hostilities one of the most important anti-Soviet bulwarks. Any repetition of the Stalinist policy of 1925-1927, the policy of liquidating the independent movement of the masses and subordinating it to the bourgeois leadership of the Kuomintang, will have the effect of destroying irretrievably the new Chinese revolution and of throwing away one of the best opportunities for defense of the USSR.

## Germany—Italy—Japan

The imperialist conflict has enormously reduced, and almost eliminated from the world market and from the international scene, three of the greatest powers: Germany, Italy and Japan.

German imperialism has suffered a debacle without precedent in the history of any capitalist nation.

Its productive apparatus has been largely reduced to ashes. Its biggest cities, its ports, its means of transportation, have been demolished. In addition to the enormous mortalities caused by the war, military defeat and the occupation have brought about the imprisonment of virtually the entire active male population. The pillage and destruction which the American, English, French and Russian occupying forces have carried on, have accentuated the economic disintegration of the country's economy. On the day after the military defeat, the material and human premises for all important revolutionary activity by the masses in Germany were already lacking.

The rebuilding of the German labor movement will henceforth reflect the progress of the revival of the country's economic life, of the integration of the proletariat into production, and the amelioration of the new repressive regime of the occupying forces.

The occupying powers, the USSR and the various imperialisms, are each following with regard to Germany a policy conforming to their own interests.

The United States has sought and achieved through the war the elimination of German economy as a competitor on the world market. The occupation of Germany now serves the following two purposes:

First to keep Germany's potential at levels which permit

a limited reconstruction of its economy as a producer of raw materials and consumer of American products. Second, to exert by means of military occupation of Central Europe, constant pressure against the USSR and its zone, and to exercise an effective counter-revolutionary control over the rest of the continent.

British imperialism has by far the greatest interest in the economic reconstruction of Germany and its unification under its control.

German economy, deprived of its power of expansion, represents the most important European market for London. Brought with other countries of western Europe into a system of finance and customs preferences under England's aegis, Germany could contribute more than any other European nation to the formation of a bloc which would eventually be capable of resisting the economic pressure of the United States, and serving as an anti-Soviet bulwark. French imperialism follows in Germany a policy of pillage in order to make up for the deficiency in its own anemic economy, and carries on intrigues aimed to prevent at any price the unification of the country and to provoke its dismemberment.

Finally, the USSR veers between a policy tending to maintain and aggravate Germany's weakness, in dread lest it again become the principal anti-Soviet bulwark of imperialism in Europe; and a policy tending to win and include in its own zone of influence the greatest part of Germany and Austria.

Italian imperialism, already in the throes of a profound crisis before the war, has—as a result of the defeat, the virtual loss of her colonies, her financial ruin and material devastation—retrogressed to the rank of a second-rate power which is already decisively in the economic grip of British and American imperialism.

Japanese imperialism has suffered a disaster in many respects comparable to that of Hitler Germany.

Its economic potential has been seriously affected by the devastation, the loss of the colonies, its reduction to strictly metropolitan territories and the costs of the war and of the occupation.

Military defeat has shattered the social regime, dominated by the complex alliance of feudalists and capitalists, and characterized by class relationships of great explosive force.

Despite the atomization of the masses by the terror exercised for several years by the possessing class against the proletariat and the peasantry, there is taking place since the defeat a slow but sure ripening of the revolution. Yankee imperialism, which has reserved exclusively for itself the actual control of Japan, with the object of strengthening and consolidating its grip over the whole of the Far East and the Pacific, has maintained in power the old reactionary repressive apparatus beginning with the institution of the monarchy, the pillar of the social regime.

Its intention is to retard, reduce, and finally crush any revolutionary explosion, and to make only secondary and unimportant concessions to the masses, while introducing changes which, although depriving the Japanese economy in the immediate future of its power of expansion, will not bring about any profound modification of the reactionary social structure.

In Japan the task of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, which has never taken place, devolves henceforth upon the proletariat. It alone will know how to combine the former with its own socialist aims, under the regime of its dictatorship resting on workers' and peasants' soviets.

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The general situation of world economy, the ruin of Europe, the exacerbation of all the inter-imperialist contradictions, the eruption of all the latent antagonisms partially camouflaged during the war by a facade of common struggle of "the United Nations against fascism," the tense relations between imperialism and the USSR—all these determine a lengthy period of grave economic difficulties, convulsions, and partial and general crises.

The hypertrophic development of American imperialism,

amid universal economic exhaustion, the weakening, the retreat and collapse of other imperialisms, has essentially modified the conditions for the reestablishment of capitalist equilibrium, which can take no form other than that of an almost exclusive imperialist domination of the United States.

To the extent that the revolutionary movement of the masses fails to grow stronger, but on the contrary weakens or becomes demoralized, the contradictions of the international economic and political situation, and above all the antagonism between the United States and the USSR will goad imperialism into once more attempting to bring, within a briefer interval than in the past, the issue to a head through the outbreak of a new world conflict.

The factor determining whether humanity will evolve toward barbarism and annihilation or toward its emancipation through socialism, is thus lodged in the development of revolutionary movements, which are in their turn conditioned by the consolidation of a genuine revolutionary leadership, in the course of that long series of social convulsions which must inevitably accompany the new imperialist armed "peace."

### The Tension of Social Antagonisms and Revolutionary Perspectives

The war, which exacted enormous sacrifices from the masses and drove down their standard of living to new lows, has also placed a mortgage on the current period of "Peace."

A tremendous creation of new capital is the essential prerequisite for restoring world economy, which has been paralyzed by the destruction of its productive apparatus, by colossal state debts, and by inflation.

This would be possible only if the proletariat were willing to continue to work under far worse living conditions than those existing before the war. That is precisely what the capitalists demand. The treacherous reformist leaders so advise the workers, as do, but even more vociferously, the Stalinists. First help in reestablishing and strengthening capitalism, and then demand and fight for improving the lot of the workers and other tolling strata.

The war has brought to all countries an enormous growth of fictitious capital, in the form of paper money and State obligations (Treasury Bonds, etc.) while productive capital has at the same time undergone a real decline.

The consequences of this are the skyrocketing of prices, an unbalanced budget and the breakdown of exchange. Inflation is wildly rampant in every country in Europe, and is also brewing although in more benign forms in England and the United States.

The bourgeoisie and the capitalist State attempt to meet this situation by resorting to devaluation, increasing taxes, freezing wages and raising domestic prices, all of which adds up to a reduction in the income of workers and all other tolling strata. Involved here is a real attempt to proceed to a new redistribution of the national income, in which the regeneration of capital will be achieved by further driving down the living standards of the masses. This attempt of the bourgeoisie inevitably provokes violent reactions on the part of the masses, as can already be seen everywhere; it disturbs class equilibrium more and more every day; and it gives a powerful impetus to the workers' struggles. The problem of ascertaining whether capitalism can again achieve a relative stabilization cannot be resolved without taking into account this determining factor: the resistance of the proletariat, demanding an improvement in its living conditions, an improvement which is incompatible with the possibility of reviving capitalism.

If the war did not immediately create in Europe a revolutionary upsurge of the scope and tempo we anticipated, it is nonetheless undeniable that it destroyed capitalist equilibrium on a world scale, thus opening up a long revolutionary period. All self-criticism which we can and should make today on the perspectives which we developed during the war, wherein we foresaw mass activity, particularly in Europe, of far greater scope and depth than has been the case to this date, all such

criticism limits itself essentially to the tempo and not to the fundamental character of the period which follows the imperialist war.

Only the superficial and cowardly petty-bourgeois mind can see a refutation of our revolutionary perspective in these facts: that war did not, either during its course or immediately thereafter, bring about the revolution in Europe; that the German revolution has not taken place; that the traditional organizations, and foremost among them, the Stalinist parties, have experienced a new and powerful rise. While recognizing that all of these facts represent so many defeats for the revolutionary proletariat, the IVth International cannot for one moment forget that the mortal crisis of capitalism, the destruction of its equilibrium, the sharpening of all of its fundamental contradictions, constitute far more important facts, and upon them rest our revolutionary perspective and our vastly increased opportunities for building the Revolutionary Party.

The economic and political conditions under which capitalism is currently trying to achieve its revival presage a rising revolutionary curve, despite temporary declines and fluctuations which can tend to disappear only in proportion as the new revolutionary leadership asserts itself in the course of struggle.

Although we have, until now, witnessed only the first battles waged by the masses against the will of capitalism to restore its economic power by intensifying exploitation, these struggles already demonstrate clearly that the proletariat is far from having consumed its revolutionary potential.

In Continental Europe, which is not under the control of the USSR, the economic conditions under which capitalism is compelled to undertake its reconstruction impel the worker and petty-bourgeois masses into action.

The curve of strikes, which have as their driving force the will of the workers to defend themselves against the increasing cost of living, which is debasing their wages, is on the rise everywhere, despite the systematic opposition of the reformist and Stalinist leaderships. For the same reasons, petty officials and white collar workers often enter the struggle even before the workers. Other layers of the urban and peasant petty bourgeoisie, ruined by inflation and crushed by taxes, are becoming a revolutionary ferment which is destroying bourgeois social equilibrium and intensifying the crisis of the regime.

Under these conditions, a prolonged and relatively full and stable development of the forces of political democracy seems more problematic than ever.

The few democratic concessions which the bourgeoisie has granted since the end of the war are the result, on the one hand, of the pressure of the masses, and on the other, of the conciliationist and capitulatory policy of the reformist and Stalinist parties.

But let the slightest struggle or the least little crisis break out and that is all that is necessary to demonstrate the incompatibility of the elementary demands of the masses with the possibilities inherent in capitalist reconstruction, and the whole fragile character of social "peace." In fact, the "democratic" possibilities of the bourgeoisie are more limited than they ever were, given the extreme deterioration of the objective conditions of European capitalism and its necessity to restore its economic power by keeping the super-exploited masses under an iron discipline. These conditions make it necessary for European finance capitalism, which utilized the war to strengthen its concentration and power as well as to grasp the State in an increasingly totalitarian vise, to seek new authoritarian regimes. This evolution is taking place, for the time being, under a "parliamentary" and "democratic" cover, given the weakness of the bourgeoisie and its State, resulting from the war and the radicalization of the masses.

While the European bourgeoisie now exploits to the hilt the "parliamentary legality" and "social truce" granted it by the workers' parties, it profits from them above all by strengthening the Executive power and freeing it more and more from parliamentary control, as well as by restoring and consolidating

the police, military and bureaucratic apparatus of the State.

On the other hand, although the movement of the petty-bourgeois masses of town and country continues to be channeled in the working class parties and the democratic center parties, the interminable prolongation of the crisis of capitalism, the economic ruin, the proletarianization and lumpen-proletarianization of these strata, can only, in the long run, reproduce the social causes for the appearance of the fascist movement. Already in Italy, for example, the impotent and demoralizing policy of the working class parties is provoking the polarization of large petty-bourgeois layers around neo-fascist leaders of the "Common Man" (l'Uomo Qualunque) movement.

Only the rapid construction of Revolutionary Parties of the Fourth International, driving the revolutionary proletarian movement ahead, can definitively prevent these ruined strata and these declassed and exasperated elements from again becoming the active supporters of Bonapartist and fascist regimes.

In the part of Europe controlled by the USSR, the working class movement has in several places attained the level of dual power, but it has experienced at the same time the bureaucratic straitjacket and the demoralization which are provoked by the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

In Germany, the disintegration of the working class movement has reached a very advanced stage, following upon its previous defeats, the atomization of the proletariat under the repressive Nazi regime, the chauvinist policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy during the war, the destruction of property, the loss of life, and the present imperialist and Soviet occupation. This fact already weighs heavily on the collective situation of the working class movement in Europe; it conditions the slow tempo of the revolutionary movement, its irregular rhythm, the temporary restraint upon its dynamics. We cannot count on the revolutionary activity of the German proletariat until the material basis for existence has been reorganized in Germany and until the millions of German war prisoners have been reintegrated into the economy of the country.

In the meantime, other revolutionary fires are starting and are growing in importance, in Continental Europe, in Italy and in France, as well as outside the Continent, in England, the United States and in the colonies.

The accelerated decline of British imperialism, the contradiction of its economic base, its impoverishment, as well as its need for resisting the pressure of Yankee imperialism by concentration and modernization of its productive apparatus and the reduction of its net costs, are now inspiring a furious offensive by the bourgeoisie and the capitalist State against the standard of living of the English proletariat. The latter's reply is powerful 1944 has already proved to be the year marked by the greatest number of strikes registered since the previous war, with the exception of the general strike of 1926. 1945 has seen the electoral victory of the Labor Party, which reflects the first stage of radicalization of the worker and petty-bourgeois masses. The strike movement, despite the temporary braking action of this victory, continues to manifest itself. Inherent in it is a direct conflict between the masses and the bureaucratic apparatus of the trade unions and the Labor Party (dockworkers' strikes), and by virtue of this, serious perspectives for the building of the Revolutionary Party are opening up.

In the United States, reconversion, which is accompanied by great unemployment, by the reduction of workers' incomes due to the elimination of overtime, is unleashing the most powerful movement of workers' demands ever recorded in that country.

By becoming the best defender of the immediate economic interests of the American proletariat, the revolutionary vanguard has the greatest possibilities of building a powerful revolutionary party in the course of the long crisis which faces American imperialism as a consequence of its expansion in the world market—a market which is more out of balance and more disorganized than it has ever been.

The movements for emancipation by the colonial peoples have now reached heights which have never been attained in the past.

This is the result of the growth in consciousness of the colonial masses and of the weakening of the imperialist Empire resulting from the war.

The development of imperialism determined the industrialization of the colonies and the war accelerated this trend, particularly in Egypt, in the Near East, in India, and in certain parts of China, Indo-China and the Netherlands Indies. This economic evolution has favored the birth of an agricultural and industrial proletariat and certain urban petty-bourgeois strata, merchants, functionaries, and intellectuals, together with a national bourgeoisie of varying importance.

On the other hand, the war intensified the super-exploitation of the colonial masses and drove their living standard down to incredible new lows. These facts, together with the weakening of all the imperialist powers as a result of their own struggles and antagonisms, have, particularly on the morrow of the defeat of Japanese imperialism, accelerated the maturing of the national and revolutionary consciousness of the colonial masses and fortified their will to conquer their independence by force of arms.

The absence of a proletarian revolutionary party and the repetition by the Stalinists of the Menshevik policy applied to the Chinese revolution of 1925-1927 are the contributing factors for the predominance of nationalist and Stalinist petty-bourgeois intellectual elements in the leadership of these national movements for emancipation. Despite this fact and despite the real dangers which this leadership means for the development of the colonial revolution, these movements already constitute an integral part of the world revolutionary upsurge insofar as they aggravate the crisis of imperialism and give a mighty impetus to the proletariat in the metropolitan centers.

Especially in China and in India, where we find a well developed bourgeoisie and consequently an advanced industrial proletariat as well, the joint exploitation of the masses by the national bourgeoisie, the feudal remnants and foreign imperialism, is already creating the conditions in which the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, drawing behind it the peasant masses, can surge to great heights and become one of the principal revolutionary centers in the world.

Thus it is impossible to draw conclusions about the real dynamics of the revolutionary upsurge when limiting ourselves to the European scene and simply noting the absence, for a certain time, of the German revolution, however important this absence may be.

What confronts us now is a world-wide crisis transcending anything known in the past, and a world-wide revolutionary upsurge, it is true, developing at unequal tempos in different parts of the world, but unceasingly exercising reciprocal influences from one center to another, and thus determining a long revolutionary perspective.

## **The Building of Our Parties and Our Political Tasks**

The masses are already furnishing such proof of their energy, their readiness for struggle, and their spirit of sacrifice, that we can exclude any question of exhaustion of the revolutionary potential of the proletariat and of its will and capacity for overthrowing the capitalist regime, given a genuine international revolutionary leadership, well prepared and strongly centralized, at its head.

The problem of building the revolutionary leadership remains as always the key problem. The IV International is fully conscious of the role of the Revolutionary Party, not only in making the proletarian revolution victorious, but in accelerating the revolutionary ripening of the objective situation. Objectively, revolutionary situations have existed, exist now, and will exist, independently of the presence of the Revolu-

tionary Party. But in the absence of the latter, they have ended, are ending, and will end, in retreat, demoralization and defeat for the masses.

In the pre-war period, however, the objective possibilities for building the revolutionary leadership were restricted, whereas at the present time it is impossible to blame the objective situation for the stagnation or slow rhythm of the formation of the revolutionary leadership.

Current events in all countries prove that the objective possibilities for creating the parties of the IV International have never been as great and are increasing all the time. In a whole series of countries, among them England, the United States, Canada, the South American countries, Australia, South Africa, and several colonial countries, the obstacles of Stalinism and of reformism do not have a determining importance.

On the other hand, the swelling of the ranks of the traditional organizations in Europe, above all of the Stalinist parties, reflected the first stage of radicalization of the masses, and this has now reached its peak almost everywhere. **The phase of decline is beginning.**

The reformist parties have undergone a change in their social base with the sharpening of the crisis of European capitalism, losing their hold upon the working class, and winning over the radicalized petty bourgeoisie, which is leaving the old bourgeois center parties.

The Stalinist parties have won over the worker elements of the Socialist parties, at the same time gaining the most radicalized layers of the urban and peasant petty bourgeoisie.

But the reformist program on which the "Socialists" and "Communists" are at present in agreement is more than ever incompatible with the possibilities of European capitalism; their inability to find a way out of the crisis will become more and more obvious to the masses. A further growth of these parties, or even the retention of their present positions, must be considered as rather problematic, since these parties, in order to maintain their collaboration with the bourgeoisie, will be obliged to put brakes upon and at times even oppose, the struggles of the masses for their demands, and will make themselves responsible in the eyes of the masses for the inevitable failure of all the experiments with so-called "structural reforms."

The Stalinist parties are, in addition, handicapped by the development of the international situation and the tension of relations between imperialism and the USSR, which forces them to push their opportunist policies to the limit and makes these more uncertain and contradictory than ever.

On the other hand, in the countries controlled by the USSR, and particularly in Germany, Austria, Finland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, and even in Rumania and Poland, concrete experiences with the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy are tending to become the best and most definitive remedy against the contamination of the masses by Stalinist ideology.

The essential precondition for harnessing ourselves with enthusiasm and faith to the task of building the parties of the Fourth International is that we first acquire the firm conviction that great possibilities now exist in this sphere.

The greatest threat to the accomplishment of this primary task is the development in our ranks of defeatist tendencies which, impressed by the relative slowness of the ripening of a revolutionary situation in Europe, as well as by the slowness of our own progress, advocate more or less openly a policy of wholesale or even total "entry" into the reformist and centrist parties in Europe. This is due to the fact that these tendencies, which in general were the ones which correctly criticized the leftist exaggerations in evaluating the tempo of events during the war and in the first phase of the period succeeding the war, proceed in reality from a different and false general perspective as regards the nature of the period which we are entering.

In a general way, the road for the construction of our

parties, particularly in Europe, leads through the combination of our independent work, guaranteed by our organizational and political autonomy, with patient, systematic and sustained fraction work in reformist, centrist and Stalinist organizations. Every national leadership must prepare to set up the orientation and concrete organization of its work after the most careful analysis of the general situation of the country and of the condition of the working class movement, its organizations, their internal atmosphere, etc., and to proceed to the best division of its forces for the independent sphere and for the sphere of fraction work.

As against the conditions which characterized the pre-war situation, we now find that independent work by our European sections and their autonomous existence separate and apart from the traditional organizations, are in general acquiring greater importance than fraction work, and can serve as the only attracting pole for vanguard worker elements who want to struggle, and who, shocked or disappointed, break with the traditional organizations.

But we cannot ascertain our real opportunities to influence these elements, we cannot correctly evaluate our genuine possibilities for development, as long as we continue to hope that in some way the masses will spontaneously discover our existence and the correctness of our program, and that the militant workers will spontaneously pour into our ranks.

Large sections of workers want to struggle, are suspicious of and even breaking with the treacherous "Socialist" and "Communist" leaderships, are searching for another banner, but we do not adequately show ourselves to them.

In order to win them over, we must, in action and in struggle, be an effective Revolutionary Party, possessing a serious organization, with concrete policies, a regular press, and above all, taking an active part in their daily struggles. It is in action that we will show that we aim to be and that we can be the pole for regrouping the revolutionary forces, and it is in action that we will really attain that objective.

The problem is to build the Revolutionary Party by patient systematic work, under favorable objective conditions, counting on a long period, and not one of discovering, thanks to new "ingenious formulas," the secrets of the spontaneous generation of "Mass Parties."

## Our Tasks in Continental Europe

In the current stage, the political tasks of all the European sections must be defined as a function first, of the occupation of Europe by the American and English armies and by the Red Army; second, of the importance of reformist and above all Stalinist influence in the working class movement; and third of the youthful and limited forces of our organizations.

In most of the European countries occupied by the Anglo-American armies, this occupation constitutes at the present time the principal support for capitalist "Order."

The bourgeoisie of these countries, with the exception, at any rate for the present, of the French bourgeoisie, is incapable of seriously opposing the increasingly decisive hold of foreign imperialism on the country; on the contrary, it is even forced to accept it and lean upon it, conscious of the fact that only foreign imperialism can at this time guarantee its own exploiting.

Our sections must struggle with all their might to accelerate the disappearance of the illusions which still mask the reactionary character of the Anglo-American occupation. They must make the masses more and more aware of the fact that this occupation can only sharpen the decay of Europe's economy, threaten in time the independence of viable countries, and has as its aim the systematic strangling of the socialist revolution.

Like the German occupation, the present occupation of Europe by the Anglo-American, French, and Russian armies is also the cause of a certain national oppression. Given the perspective of a definite decline in the revolutionary movement, the prolongation for several years of this occupation could

throw certain nations back to the level of colonial countries and open a new era of national struggles and wars.

But just as during the war, so now, it is not for us a question of proceeding with a perspective of decline and decisive defeat for the revolutionary movement, but rather with the perspective of revolution which continues to remain open.

The vicissitudes of the imperialist war which brought about the temporary occupation by the German armies of certain capitalist and imperialist nations (France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, etc.) did not at all throw them back into the category of oppressed nations and thereby justify the struggle conducted by the bourgeoisie of these countries against German imperialism as "national wars."

The war remained imperialist on both sides and the task of the proletariat was to safeguard its political and organizational independence and to advance its anti-capitalist, internationalist and revolutionary program.

It was the duty of the revolutionary proletariat to fight the bourgeois leadership and ideology of the resistance organizations, which exploited the just indignation of the masses against the imperialist occupiers and the collaborating layers of the national bourgeoisie in order to mask the imperialist character of the war and divert the class struggles towards "national" goals.

The revolutionary proletariat responded to the desire and will of the national masses for struggle against the consequences of occupation and for the reconquest of national independence, by making these preoccupations of the masses its own, by declaring that it inscribed the struggle for independence in its own program but by its own methods: by fighting within Germany itself for the revolutionary overthrow of the Nazi regime and the withdrawal of the German armies from the occupied countries; and by advocating in the latter countries mass opposition, conducted in a class and internationalist spirit, against the occupiers and against the national bourgeoisie.

The duty of the revolutionary proletariat was first and foremost to combat the prostration of the working class movement, brought about by the chauvinist ideology and "class peace" policy of its traditional organizations.

Today also the Fourth International supports the slogan of the right of each people to self-determination and for struggle in the oppressor countries for recognition of the right to independence of the occupied nations and for the immediate withdrawal of occupation troops.

In the occupied countries we stress above all: the necessity for conducting the opposition to the occupier in a class and internationalist spirit; for safeguarding the independence of the proletarian movement; for fighting against "national" combinations with the bourgeoisie; as well as for the idea that real independence is unobtainable without the overthrow of imperialism and the free federation of European countries in the Socialist United States of Europe.

The Fourth International consequently rejects as it did during the war the idea of a "democratic national" revolution through which the struggle of the revolutionary proletariat must first pass, drawing behind it the national masses, before it can develop on the basis of its own socialist program and finally wind up with the proletarian revolution.

## Democratic Tasks

With the goal of speeding up the revolutionary mobilization of the masses in the countries occupied by the Anglo-American armies, our sections must advance a series of transitional slogans primarily democratic in character.

The evolution of the situation in each European country may emphasize one, in particular, or several, simultaneously, of these slogans. On the other hand, the character of the present period is such that abrupt changes are not only entirely possible, but are inevitable, in the direction of a marked speeding up of the revolutionary development of the situation; changes which can make these slogans more or less

secondary in importance or even completely obsolete. But the very agitation for these slogans implies an uninterrupted propaganda for Committees and Soviets, a propaganda of clarification directed against the parliamentary illusions of the masses.

1. The right of each people to self-determination.  
The immediate departure of occupation troops.

2. Immediate election of a **Constituent Assembly** by universal secret suffrage for all men and women over 18 years of age, including soldiers.

Complete liberty of propaganda guaranteed by free and gratuitous distribution of paper stocks, presses, radio, meeting halls, etc. . . . for all parties.

3. Abolition of the monarchy in all European countries where it still exists.

4. The setting up in accordance with the experience in North Italy of **Popular Purge Committees** having as objective to ferret out the fascist and reactionary agents in administration, police, army and in economic bodies, and to put them up before popular tribunals, democratically elected.

Disarming of reactionary and fascist bands and of the paid police. Against the disarming of partisans and other popular formations. For the rebuilding of the workers' militias.

5. Complete restoration of all democratic and workers' liberties, freedom of the press regarding the State and the large capitalists, freedom of assembly, of speech, of unionization, right to strike, elimination of every form of censorship.

A ban against the reappearance of all reactionary and fascist organizations, open or camouflaged, as well as their press. Struggle against every form of compulsion, binding workers to a place of work or to any given branch of industry; against every form of state control over the trade unions, the press and working class organizations.

6. Exposure of all "peace" plans of the imperialists. Against annexations and reparations, against the Balkanization of Europe, for fraternization of occupation troops with the popular masses of each country, including German prisoners of war. For suppression of secret diplomacy and for the publication of all secret treaties.

7. Against the military government, the occupation, the dismemberment and the looting of Germany. Against the deportation and forced labor of German workers.

For the fraternization of occupation troops with the German laboring masses.

For the fraternization of workers of other countries with deported German workers. For their integration into the workers' trade unions of these countries. For the same conditions of work and living and the same rights as the workers of these countries.

For the cleaning out and punishment of the Nazis in Germany by the German workers themselves. For complete liberty for the working class movement in Germany.

8. For dissolving the standing army; for arming the people.

9. For the **Socialist United States of Europe**, through the complete freedom and independence of every European nation, and their free federation.

On the other hand we must particularly call the attention of all national leaderships of our European sections to the necessity of immediately tying up the struggle for these slogans with the struggle for the following transitional slogans which remain valid for the whole present period, and whose goal is not the reconsolidation of the tottering capitalist system, but its overthrow.

### **Transitional Demands**

1. The dominant problem in all countries at present is the growing disproportion between wages, which have been more or less stabilized, and the cost of living, which is continually increasing.

Our sections will demand the **Immediate Unfreezing of Wages**, and setting up a **Sliding Scale**, based on the price

index, as established by the trade unions; and the fixing of a minimum standard of living.

2. Against the high cost of living, our sections will launch the slogan for **Price and Market Control by Committees of Housekeepers**, poor peasants, and small merchants, who will also organize, on an increasingly enlarged scale, a fair distribution of all goods.

3. The rise in prices of foodstuffs has definitely been profitable only to the middlemen and to the trusts in transportation, in retail and in wholesale dealings. There is an enormous spread between the sale price to consumer and the price received by the grower. To unite the producers of city and country in a bloc, our sections will launch the slogan of **Price Control Committees**, composed of elected worker and peasant delegates. They will demand the complete suppression of all large middlemen and the creation of peasant selling cooperatives and working class associations for purchasing and transportation.

4. The general atrophy of economy translates itself into a new rise in unemployment. Our sections will demand the realization in practice of the "right to work" and will launch the slogan of a **Sliding Scale of Hours of Work**, demanding a division of the available work among all available hands, and the compulsory reopening of factories under workers' control.

5. Against the inefficiency and sabotage of the bourgeoisie, which demonstrates its incapacity to raise economy from its ruins, our sections will defend the idea of a **General Rebuilding Plan** for the country, to be developed by the trade unions and carried out under workers' control. They will expose the demagogic and lying character of those planning promises which are based on non-intervention by the workers and are under the complete control of the bourgeoisie. They will summon the "Socialists" and "Communists" to carry out their promises of planning by the only possible effective method: by **Workers' Control of factory management, of supply, of hiring and firing, and over-all production, through the medium of Factory Committees**; as well as by control of banking operations through committees of qualified employees. This concept of workers' control is radically opposed to the bureaucratic set-up for organization of the national economy under capitalist control by mixed committees, with a worker minority, as proposed by the treacherous leaders of the traditional organizations.

Our sections will also explain the need for tying these plans on the national scale to the idea of cooperative, planned economic cooperation of all European countries within the framework of a **Federation of the Socialist United States of Europe**. They will insist on the fact that in the absence of this perspective, every serious attempt to restore national economy is doomed to certain failure, and will expose the reactionary and demagogic character of the "national" and chauvinistic policy of the Socialist and Communist parties.

6. They will demand the immediate confiscation of all war profits. Against the fraudulent activities of the bourgeoisie, they will demand the **Elimination of All Business Secrets**; they will urge the workers to force the capitalists to show their real books. In this way their parasitic character, wastefulness and economic sabotage will appear in full daylight before the eyes of the masses.

7. The most decisive step on the road of economic planning will be the **Nationalization without Compensation or Right of Redemption and Under Workers' Control** of the banks, mines and key industries. Our sections will expose the "nationalization plans" of the liberal bourgeoisie as well as those of the "Socialists" and "Communists," who wish to burden an economy, already paralyzed, with indemnities; and who wish to give to the capitalist State the task of "managing" and "controlling" "nationalized" credit.

8. As regards the transitional demands of the small and middle peasantry, we must stress the point of eliminating the middlemen and revising wholesale prices; we must struggle

against the trusts in fertilizers; we must fight for cheap credit, for a fair distribution of agricultural equipment among the small and middle farmers, for the slogan of **Land to Those Who Work It**, and for the cancellation of all their debts.

9. As regards the demands of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and particularly of the new middle classes (functionaries, technicians, white collar workers) the general demands of all wage earners are valid. As for the small craftsmen and business men, whose situation varies from one country to another but is deteriorating everywhere, the struggle against the fraudulent monetary maneuvers of finance capital, against the domination of the large retailers and trusts, is of special importance.

10. The central slogan of the present period, indispensable precondition for the realization of all others, is that of a **Workers' and Peasants' Government**. Our sections will everywhere wage their campaign for this government, demanding that the working class parties definitely break their coalition with the bourgeoisie, take the power, all the power, and apply their program under the control and protection of the masses organized in trade unions, in factory, neighborhood and village committees, and in militias.

### Tasks in the Countries Occupied by the USSR

In the European zone occupied by the Red Army, our sections, while taking first place in the struggle for completing the agrarian reform and for state-ization of large industry, banks, transportation, as well as for the realization of our democratic slogans, numbered 2 to 5 inclusive, also demand the right of each people to self-determination and the defense of national minorities. They oppose the forced integration and federation of other peoples with the peoples of the USSR, as well as the forced transfers of populations, and every measure of national oppression.

They demand the right for free development of the workers' movement in these countries, guaranteed by the free constitution and free functioning of workers' parties, trade unions and soviets. They tolerate the presence of the Red Army only to the extent that it is a friendly proletarian armed force having as its objective to guarantee the fulfillment of agrarian reform and the state-ization of the means of production against imperialism and against national reactionary elements, without hindering in any way whatsoever the free development of the working class movement.

In all cases where the Red Army, obeying the reactionary orders of the Soviet bureaucracy, opposes insurrectionary movements of the masses and their struggles for the overthrow of capitalism and the installation of the proletarian dictatorship, our sections will be for the defeat of the Red Army and the victory of the workers. They will work for this defeat by resorting simultaneously to military means and to propaganda for fraternization addressed to the soldiers of the Red Army, inviting them to revolt against every executant of the reactionary orders of the Soviet bureaucracy and to join the masses struggling for the proletarian revolution.

### Organizational Tasks

Our European sections, having for a long time prior to the war lived on a general political basis, and then during the war, having lived isolated from the masses, inexperienced and in the strictest illegality, are today finding it difficult to break with obsolete ideas and methods of organization and activity. We must insist on the necessity for all European sections to adapt themselves as rapidly as possible to the new conditions which now characterize the working class movement in Europe, and with this as our objective, the following recommendations are valid:

1. All our European sections must in the present stage hang on with the greatest tenacity to the legal positions which they have already acquired and must avoid any kind of blunder which would permit or help the bourgeoisie to drive them back into complete illegality.

The sections which have not yet achieved a legal position must immediately undertake an energetic, intelligent, seriously thought-out campaign to win independence from the bourgeoisie.

2. Special attention must be given to the question of the press. Our sections must struggle to secure the legal publication of their central, regional and local organs, and in the event that these attempts fail, they must not hesitate to go over to the publication of local organs, not signed by the party, for conveying to the masses the essence of our propaganda and our program.

3. On the other hand, in the case where the bourgeoisie systematically bans our political meetings, our sections must pass over to other types of meetings such as conferences, private meetings, artistic and cultural affairs, sport excursions, etc., in order to maintain contact with our sympathizers and to increase our influence. Comrades who are influential in their factories or neighborhoods must in general appear before the masses as spokesmen for our organizations and our program and must abandon their political anonymity.

4. Our sections must devote the greatest attention to the trade union movement which is experiencing a tremendous upsurge in all European countries at the present time. Our militants must appear as the best organizers for the trade unions and of the struggles by the masses for their demands, and must there defend our program.

In a general way, they must in all countries be the best fighters for trade union unity, for the reorganization of the unions on an industrial basis, for working class democracy, for international proletarian solidarity, for a concrete program of action having for its goal the organization and mobilization of the masses in the struggle against the high cost of living, against the danger of unemployment, for starting up production and against bourgeois reaction and police repression.

Our sections will everywhere strive to confide the over-all trade union work to a commission consisting of the comrades most qualified for this work. The main task is to organize an opposition movement within the trade unions on the basis of the program defined above.

5. Our sections must strive to create and consolidate, in all political, cultural and sport working class organizations, points of support and fractions, having as their objective to win over to our program the progressive tendencies which appear in these organizations, by patient, systematic and persistent work.

Particularly attention should be paid to the youth organizations.

6. The activity of the reformist, and especially of the Stalinist leaders, in systematically destroying all socialist traditions and education in the working class cadres, makes it an urgent task for the sections to conduct Marxist educational work in their own ranks (cadre schools) as well as in the working class itself (Marxist circles, publication of Marxist works, libraries, etc.).

7. The passage from illegality to legal work must be accompanied by a radical transformation of the methods and organizational forms of illegal work, with the objective of increasing our efficiency and avoiding useless delays.

Nevertheless, this passage from illegality to legal work must in no case cause our sections to lose sight of the fact that they may at any moment again be driven into complete illegality. The structure of each section, and we imply thereby the maintenance of Bolshevik organizational forms (factory and neighborhood cells, branches, etc.), must be placed under the strictest rules of democratic centralism. The national leaderships of our European sections must take all necessary measures to safeguard, complete and strengthen the Bolshevik structure of their organizations and must resolutely oppose all syndicalist, social-democratic, dilettante, and petty-bourgeois conceptions of organization and activity.

## Our Tasks in England

The coming to power of the Labor Party requires the reorientation of the agitation and propaganda of our English section. Up to the 1945 elections, their central slogan was: **"The Labor Party to Power."**

The present stage necessitates the formulation of a precise and clear program of transitional demands which corresponds to the interests of the masses and shakes the power of capitalism; it requires that we demand of the Laborites that they carry out this program; that we criticize their activity in a way that will be profitable for the actions of the masses, and that we push to the maximum their movement and organization into dual power forms (Workers' Control Committees).

Our British section must, on the other hand, intensify its struggle against English imperialism, must actively support the national movements for emancipation by the colonial peoples and especially in India, and must conduct a systematic campaign for the withdrawal of British troops from the occupied countries of Europe.

## Our Tasks in the United States

The power of the movement for workers' demands which is accompanying the passing over of American economy from war to "peace," and the definitive exit of American capitalism from its state of equilibrium, determining a long perspective of crises and convulsions, creates more favorable conditions than ever for our central slogan: **For an Independent Labor Party**, of the English Labor Party type, with the objective of accelerating the political awakening of the American working class. Our American section must mobilize the proletariat of its country against Yankee imperialist policy, against military intervention in China, and against the maintenance of American occupation troops in Japan, Germany, and other Asiatic and European territories.

## Our Tasks in the Colonies

The revolutionary ferment which is now seething in the colonies supplies a favorable terrain for the creation of revolutionary parties. The proletariat of these countries, by

placing itself in the democratic and national sphere, can become the real revolutionary leader of all exploited layers, and can combine the task of accomplishing the agrarian reform and national independence, with its own socialist objectives. The primary conditions for its success are safeguarding the organizational and political autonomy of its party, the flexibility of its tactics, its ability to draw the peasant layers under its leadership, and to combine wisely, in accordance with the dynamics of the struggle and the degree of maturity of mass consciousness, those slogans which are essentially democratic and national with the transitional slogans and the struggle for Soviets.

Our colonial sections, while safeguarding their political independence and their own revolutionary physiognomy, must not hesitate to engage in practical alliances with national revolutionary movements of the urban and peasant petty bourgeoisie which are fighting effectively against imperialism.

The objective of these alliances is to deal joint blows with these tendencies against a common enemy, while all the time reserving for our sections the right of criticism, and the right to explain their complete program. Our sections must on the other hand undertake systematic and patient fraction work within the revolutionary national organizations of these countries, with the goal of creating a Marxist-revolutionary tendency within them, to facilitate the leftward development of the revolutionary national elements, and to foil and combat the designs of consciously reactionary national bourgeois elements and agents of foreign imperialism, to lock them and their organizations in an ideological vise.

Our sections in the imperialist mother countries, and in all capitalist countries, have the duty to defend actively the struggle of the colonial people for their emancipation from imperialism, even in those cases where this struggle is led by nationalist and bourgeois-democratic elements. They will claim the rights of colonial peoples to immediate self-determination, without any limitations, and by appealing to the international working class for solidarity in action, will energetically oppose all shipments of troops and arms to the colonies to crush their revolutions.

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