

DOWN WITH WAR!

***Declaration on the Outbreak of War by
the Socialist Labor Party of America***

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Introduction to the Third Edition

Since this declaration on the European war was first published, developments of world-shaking character have taken place, resulting primarily from the sequences of the Nazi-Soviet pact. In violation of every Marxian principle, those at the helm in the Soviet Union extended the unholy alliance with the bloody anti-working class Nazi dictatorship, founding a partnership on the ruins of conquered Poland, dividing that nation with the Nazi gangsters—sharing, indeed, the iniquity of the Nazi gangster tactics, as well as the “glory” and the spoils of war, exulting, in so doing, in joint ruthlessness of self and murderous partner. As Molotov brutally put it: “One swift blow to Poland, first by the German army, and then by the Red army, and nothing was left...” And this without the formality of a war declaration, in keeping with the international gangster tactics of Japan, Italy and Nazi Germany! Truly, an “unholy alliance,” indeed, if one continues to think of Soviet Russia as a “Socialist fatherland”!

And going further in imitation of the Nazi bandits, the Soviet politicians have applied the familiar “bloodless warfare” in subjecting neighboring small nations to their will, Finland so far being the only country which has offered any resistance, with the danger of forcible subjection of that bourgeois democratic republic by the vaunted might of Soviet Russia. In shameless fashion the Soviet politicians offer no grounds for this new venture into imperialist warfare better than those offered by the gangster governments of Japan, Italy and Germany—no excuse which varies essentially from the ancient principle that might makes right.

Molotov, in his speech of October 31, 1939, boasted of the “friendly relations” into which Soviet Russia had entered with Hitler’s bandit government. “Friendly relations” with the bloody mass-murderers of innocent men, women and children—murderers of people who happened to be Jews, German Socialist workers, murderers of working people in territory invaded by the Nazi monster! “Friendly relations” between the supposed champions of the proletariat and the assassins of the proletarian movement. “Friendly relations” between would-be Marxism and the foulest, the most contemptible enemies of Marxism! Certainly, either Molotov was guilty of the most corrupt hypocrisy and flagrant double-dealing imaginable, or he acknowledged himself and fellow-Soviet politicians to be of the same caliber, and on

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the same level, as the Nazi bandits. By hailing the Nazi bandits as friends, by conceding that the Hitler coterie are peace-loving, innocent victims of British imperialism, the Soviet politicians embraced the “profession” of governmental gangsterism, and repudiated the noble ideals of Marxism.

In boasting further, of the treasonable Soviet partnership with Nazi Germany—that partnership which so profoundly affected (adversely from the Marxian standpoint) the European situation—Molotov dropped entirely the pretense to Marxian classconsciousness when he discarded the principle of class solidarity for that of racial solidarity. For in part justification of dividing the Polish spoils with the Nazis, he hailed the Russian army as liberators of what he called “our brothers [on a previous occasion it was “blood brothers”!] in western Ukraine and western Byelo-Russia...” This was the identical cry uttered by Hitler when he had made up his mind to invade Czechoslovakia and Poland. Our ears were then filled with plaintive cries about “our German brothers in Sudetenland,” “our racial brothers in Danzig and western Poland,” and so on and so forth. The tactics are the same, the language almost identical.

But what causes one to marvel at the mental acrobatics of the Soviet politicians in justifying their “unholy” and altogether immoral alliance with the Nazi bandits is Molotov’s declaration that “We [Soviet Russia] have always held that a strong Germany is an indispensable condition for a durable peace in Europe.” This is an amazing statement coming from the official representative of what is supposed to be a Socialist Republic! If Molotov speaks the truth, why, then, did Soviet Russia encourage Communist agitation in Germany? For by saying “a strong Germany,” he obviously means a strong capitalist Germany, since no other kind makes sense in this connection. Why did Soviet Russia oppose Germany during these years, and encourage anti-German propaganda from without? Moreover, since when have Marxists admitted that a “durable peace” is possible anywhere under capitalism—and especially where such “lawless” and treaty-breaking gangster nations as Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan are concerned? Molotov’s statement is pure humbug, whether viewed from the Marxist or capitalist standpoint.

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The most recent event in Europe, the Munich explosion, is likely to have far-

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reaching repercussions. The attempted assassination of Hitler and his associates on the occasion of the Nazi celebration of the 1923 Munich “Beer Hall putsch” on the evening of November 8, 1939, will unquestionably affect the progress of the extraordinary war in Europe. But of far greater importance than the effect on the war of this attempt to rid the earth of the Nazi mass murderers are the clear implications of the event with respect to the internal situation in Nazi Germany. The incident proves overwhelmingly that the bloody Nazi dictatorship rests on a volcano which may erupt any moment. It confirms previous hints of a strong, well organized underground movement in Germany, aiming at the overthrow of the Nazi mobsters. The boldness of the attempt, its almost successful conclusion, and the fact that so far not a trace of the conspirators has been found, certifies to the inner anarchy, the complete rottenness, of the Nazi regime.

It has been suggested that the explosion was another “Reichstag fire.” While this possibility is not precluded, considering the unfathomable depth of the depraved Nazi mind, there are good reasons to doubt that this was actually the work of the organized mobsters at present directing the destinies of Germany, although they will most certainly use the incident exactly as they used the Reichstag fire. In any case, so long as the Nazi bandit chiefs escaped, the Nazi propaganda bureau must certainly consider the explosion a godsend, for it is likely to unify, for the time being at least, the German masses whose spirits have been drooping since the war commenced.

Considering the explosion, then, as the work of a well organized underground movement inside Germany, it is reasonable to assume that this first attempt will be followed by successive attempts, with the reasonable certainty that one will prove successful. The mere elimination of a Hitler cannot, of course, materially affect the European situation, nor essentially affect the deadlock in which capitalist imperialism finds itself. And yet, the evidence presented of a collapsing Nazi regime is bound to alter the course of events—events that are rapidly leading to a blow—up of capitalism. It is at such a time that the presence of a strong, clear, Socialist republic in Europe would have been of incalculable value. A truly Socialist—*Marxian Socialist*—Russia, guided by the spirit of the class struggle, uncompromising, inspiring, morally and intellectually fit for leadership of the world proletariat, such a Socialist center of light, inspiration and leadership would

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unquestionably prove determining in the world crisis that almost certainly would result from the violent termination of Nazi Germany, a termination engineered from within Germany. With such a Socialist Russia, following such a crisis, the result could well be, almost certainly would be, the end of capitalism, and the establishment of the world-wide Socialist commonwealth of the toilers.

But the “unholy alliance” between Soviet Russia and the Nazi butchers must give Marxists pause. We can but hope—and labor as never before while we wait.

ARNOLD PETERSEN.

November 11, 1939

I.

The inevitable has happened—the inevitable in the capitalist premises: the second world war has at last commenced.

When a year ago Franco-British imperialism capitulated before the Nazi bandit dictatorship, and agreed at Munich to the surrender of Czechoslovakia to German feudo-capitalism, there was jubilation in both camps, a few discordant notes being heard from the bourgeois sentimentalists who insist on preserving and cultivating the upas tree of capitalism, but object strenuously to its inevitable poison fruit. The Western “democracies,” in honor pledged to support their Czech sister “democracy,” were delighted that they were able to purchase permanent peace (as they thought or proclaimed) for the paltry price of a bit of base treachery and double-dealing, while the Nazi feudo-capitalist gangsters jubilantly celebrated their victory over their hated Western rivals and competitors in the imperialist robber game.

For a while the representative of British imperialism, Neville Chamberlain, enjoyed his “triumph.” Had he not secured “peace in our time”? Had he not shaken the bloody paw of the Nazi ape at Munich, and signed a “pact” wherein he and his erstwhile pal, Hitler, over their signatures, agreed that it was “the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again [!]”? And had not these two representatives of capitalist gangsterism further agreed that “the method of consultation shall be the method adopted to deal with any other questions that may concern our two countries”? They had, and they did! Being at heart in complete sympathy with the principle and aim (if not methods) of Nazi capitalism, Chamberlain felt secure for the moment, and undoubtedly looked forward to a prolonged “friendly” collaboration with the Nazi Beast to the end of sharing “peacefully” with the Beast the control of the world of capitalism, and the continued fleecing of the workers by the capitalist exploiters. He had found Hitler a reasonable and honorable person after all (or, at least, so he said), as he assured a member of Parliament who questioned him on the point: “I don’t want the honorable member to think,” he eagerly exclaimed, “he [Hitler] was deliberately deceiving me. I don’t think so for a minute.” So palpably fraudulent was this assurance that the eminently respectable and conservative Dorothy Thompson at the time said in her column: “Either Mr. Chamberlain is...the unwitting tool of a powerful conspiracy, or

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he is a fellow-conspirator.” It matters little (except to Mr. Chamberlain) in the final result whether history will adjudge him a fool or a scoundrel. What does matter is that Chamberlain, Daladier & Co. established conclusive proof of the charge of the Marxian Socialist Labor Party that there is no essential difference between Franco-British imperialism and German-Italian feudo-capitalism; no essential difference between present-day “bourgeois democracy” and the Nazi-Fascist dictatorship; no difference in principle between a Chamberlain and a Hitler—that, in fact, a Chamberlain is but an unripe Hitler, or a Hitler but an overripe Chamberlain. In September, 1938, the Socialist Labor Party said (in commenting on the Hitler-Chamberlain Munich pact):

“That the ‘settlement’ effected has settled absolutely nothing, no thinking person doubts. War impends as much as before—even more so—though its actual declaration may for the moment be postponed. A ‘truce’ is in effect called, during which the ‘noble democracies’ may succeed in strengthening their positions, and attempt to meet the challenge of Nazi capitalism...in the final analysis the struggle over the mastery of the globe must be fought to a finish—if the working class meanwhile does not put *finis* to the capitalist game of exploitation and organized mass murder....Nazi capitalism (with or without the madman Hitler at the helm) *must* move eastward if it is to survive as a capitalist entity—that, or become absorbed in the British-United States section of world capitalism. Until conquered and dismembered, however, Nazi capitalism will relentlessly pursue the eastward trend, and there will be no excuse wanting for ‘justifying’ a Hitler in invading Rumania, Yugoslavia, even Hungary and Poland, after all of Czechoslovakia has been gobbled up.”

And we added at the time:

“...war is put off again. Only fools...will believe it is put off permanently or for long.”

II.

Not for long, indeed! Only a few months later the Nazi wolf swallowed the Czech “lamb” entirely; Hitler’s fellow-mobster, Mussolini, grabbed Albania, and the two bandits jointly prepared the ground for new and richer hauls, until, after the usual theatricals had been gone through with, the Nazi hordes invaded Poland (which a year ago sat at the robbers’ table sharing in the partitioning of

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Czechoslovakia!), and the monstrous slaughter is on, while the propaganda machines are grinding out the claims and counter-claims, the pleas and the alibis, which history will pronounce shameless lies and corrupt falsehoods.

For just as was done twenty-five years ago, each side is blaming the other for the awful responsibility of having started the war. The eagerness with which this is done is practically the only tribute rendered those higher standards of civilization which all the belligerents are trampling under their bloody boots. And now as then each is telling substantial truths about the other. The bloody bandit Hitler is right when he charges British imperialism (“the capitalist warmongers of Britain and its satellite”) with the desire to rule the world, though he lies corruptly and brazenly when he charges that Poland and her allies were guilty of the *immediate* provocation. Chamberlain is right when he accuses Hitler of trickery, double-dealing and of manufacturing pretexts for starting operations against Poland, but he speaks falsely when he says that “We [Great Britain and Chamberlain] have a clear conscience”! Not only does Chamberlain share the guilt with Hitler for the immediate causes of the war, which is but the logical sequence to “Munich” for which Chamberlain bears a heavy personal responsibility, but the interests which he represents (Franco-British imperialism) share an equal responsibility with the so-called Axis powers for the war which (if fought to a finish) may lay waste the greater part of Europe, and cause the slaughter of millions of men, women and children, combatants and noncombatants alike. For both imperialist camps uphold the system of wage slavery, the capitalist system, which is the real and basic cause of the war, as it was the basic cause of the first world war in which nearly 10,000,000 were killed, 6,300,000 seriously wounded, and 14,000,000 suffering more or less permanent injuries and ills, the cost in dollars of the four-year war being estimated at \$330,000,000,000! Nazi feudo-capitalism, as well as “democratic” capitalism, having improved the art of mass murder to an extent which the human mind can scarcely grasp, we may expect the balance sheet of the present war to cause that of the first war to look like the result of the operations of a petty business concern!

The legal or technical pretext of Great Britain in declaring war is as hypocritical as was the pretext twenty-five years ago. Then it was the violation of Belgian neutrality which furnished the excuse, while the invasion of Poland is the

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excuse for Great Britain's entering this war, with the usual trimmings, to be sure, of "fighting for democracy" and "maintenance of international law," etc. The Polish autocracy is essentially as oppressive and anti-democratic as is the Nazi regime. Certainly, if the principle involved in the war declaration of British imperialism was the determining consideration, far stronger reasons for going to war existed a year ago in the Czechoslovakian crisis. Power, world domination, the ultimate destruction of remaining popular rights, the complete subjugation of the working class, and the crushing of the Proletarian Revolution—these, and related ones, are the desiderata in the case of British imperialism unleashing the dogs of war.

However much one may look upon the impending mass butchery and orgy of wealth—destruction as the logical result of capitalism, and however certain one was that the war, given capitalism, was inevitable, its actuality fills one with a sickening sense of nameless horror, and with passionate resentment and indignation over its utter futility—nay, worse! For whatever may be the outcome (barring an international working class revolution), when the millions upon millions of dead and wounded have been counted; when the countless billions in loss of wealth have been estimated; and when the moral, intellectual and cultural destruction has been assayed, the best that the victor of either camp can offer, and in fact does already offer, is a resumption of wage slavery in one form or another, with the probability of complete economic (industrial), as well as political, absolutism. The civilized mind shrinks in horror from such a prospect. For if Socialism does not emerge after the war as the ruling principle in production, distribution and governmental administration, that which we call civilization will completely vanish, with a "dark age," blacker than medievalism, descending upon mankind—a "black-out" of culture and civilization, indeed! And one's sense of the futility of the savage and bloody slaughter is deepened by realization of the fact that even if Socialism does result from the war, the awful price need not have been paid, since even now it lies within the power of the working class (and particularly at this time, within the power of the American workers) to establish Socialism, the social system realizable NOW, wherein exploitation of man by man will have ended, while the causes of deadly rivalry among nations will have been forever removed.

The awful prospect of the war now raging, its certain destructive results, and the unquestioned capacity of the working class to end it even now and to institute

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the reign of the Socialist brotherhood of man on earth, lays upon the Marxian Socialist Labor Party a heavy duty and a grave responsibility which in the dark days that lie ahead we pledge ourselves to discharge to the utmost of our ability and power. For there is, at this dreary and solemn moment, no other agency capable and willing to do that which may yet result in shortening the war, and establishing the working class rule of freedom, peace and plenty.

III.

The role which the United States will be called upon to play in the war will be a most important one. In the capitalist premises it is almost inevitable that this country will be drawn into the war. This may result from deliberate plottings and propaganda, but even without these it is difficult to see how in the capitalist premises the pressure of economic forces and events could be overcome. The President of the United States has assured the people that every effort of the government will be exerted to keep the country out of war, and that so long as it remains within his power to prevent it, “there will be no black-out of peace in the United States.” It is no impeachment of the President’s integrity, nor a doubting of his good intentions, to question seriously that it is possible for him to do so. He will find, as Lincoln found and admitted, that he will be ruled by events, rather than his ruling these. Mr. Roosevelt will find himself subject to a terrific pressure—emotional, economic, political, as well as such resulting from his bourgeois misconceptions as to the ultimate causes of war, and the ultimate probabilities of war’s outcome. Only a few days before Mr. Roosevelt gave his assurances, his War Department made elaborate preparations for the eventuality of war. An Associated Press despatch under a Washington date line (August 30 reports that the government is taking elaborate steps to find out “how many trained workers would be available for industry and the armed forces” of the country in war. Twenty thousand industrial plants have been surveyed, and 10,000 have been “earmarked” for war-time assignments. “A Selective Service Committee,” the A.P. despatch states, “has in constant readiness a draft system to meet the needs of the armed services.” And we read further: “The first step would be to register all men between 21 to 30, numbering some 10,000,000.”

Classifications have been prepared, and if the 10,000,000 should prove

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insufficient, the draft list would be extended to include those between the ages of 18 to 45, which would bring the total to 26,000,000! Evidently Mr. Roosevelt's Secretary of War does not share his chief's expectations—or does he?

Another significant factor is Canada's entrance into the war. According to a special despatch to the *New York Times* of September 4, "Canada automatically entered the struggle against Hitlerism at 6 o'clock this morning [September 3] when the British ultimatum to Berlin expired." This opens up possibilities of invasion of Canada by the Nazi gangsters, particularly through the air. And if or when that happens, the United States stands pledged to come to the aid of Canada. In his Kingston, Ontario, speech of August 18, 1938, President Roosevelt said:

"The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. *I give you assurance that the People of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire.*"

But heaviest of all in the scales of war will weigh the economic and financial factors. Considering the tremendous war business this country will eventually do with the allied powers, and the risks United States merchant ships run of being sunk by Nazi submarine pirates, it is not difficult to visualize the quickly succeeding steps that would lead this country to war with Germany, especially if the experience of 1914–1917 is remembered. The sinister shadow of the House of Morgan is already cast upon the stage. Returning from Europe (where he has been engaged in his favorite pastime of warring against the grouse of Scotland!), John Pierpont Morgan intimated that the Morgan banking house might again (as in 1914–1918) act as the fiscal and commercial agent of Franco-British imperialism. Although (according to press reports) he was "somewhat vexed when asked if he was going to act as commercial agent for Great Britain," he nevertheless observed that "it would be the natural thing for the British to call on us if they wanted an American to do that job"! Perfectly natural, indeed, and a prospect that should fill with dread forebodings those who entertain the slightest hope that America may be kept out of the war.

The hope that this country may be spared direct participation in the slaughter must, nonetheless, be maintained, but a sense of realism, and our duty to inform and warn the working class, impel us to point to the imminent dangers and

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possibilities ever present that the United States will be forced into the war on the side of “Western democratic” capitalism, despite Mr. Roosevelt’s hopes and assurances.

IV.

The reform elements, and the so-called liberals, have already lined up in support of Franco—British imperialism in the war. There are, to be sure, honorable exceptions, though few in number. The would-be liberals (ever faithful to the maxim that a liberal is one who expects peaches to grow on a upas tree!) are repeating their performances of twenty-five years ago, as are the Social Democratic reformers, “left-wing” Thomas followers and “Old Guard” Rooseveltian Social Democrats alike. The fatuous and theatrical ex-Reverend Norman Thomas (soon reaching the stage where he can bemoan his lack of a rostrum as he may have bemoaned his lack of a pulpit in the past) rails against war, acclaiming enthusiastically the non-resistant tactic of Mahatma Gandhi as a suitable method of meeting the threat, and actual fact, of war with particular reference to the world war and, of course, without offering a single concrete measure which can prevent war, while, for the rest, pursuing the traditional Social Democratic policies which in Europe plunged the workers, first into war, and then into the dictatorship of feudo-capitalism. At no time do these reformers take a stand essentially different from that of the professional bourgeois pacifists. If they speak of post-war plans at all, it is the familiar drivel which implies a continuation of political government, with its inescapable class-division and class-struggle, and their corollary, wage slavery and working class exploitation. For whether the master is the individual employer or groups of employers that exploit labor, or whether this is done through the *collective capitalist* (the State, by whatever supposed qualification), exploitation and robbery of the workers it remains. Never do these liberals and Social Democrats concern themselves with the only thing that is of importance to the working class, namely, *the question of organizing the power of the workers for the imperative change from capitalism to Socialism*. They will urge the workers to protest, to parade, to vote and to salute, but never to organize on the basis of their exclusive *Class* interests, never to organize into Socialist Industrial Unions as the only means of preventing and stopping wars, and to insure a permanently peaceful, just and universally affluent society.

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The Communists, caught in the cleft stick of their Jesuitical duplicity, do not as yet know whether they are going to be for or against war, and they will not know until Stalin's mind has been revealed to them. In England and France thus far the leading and most loud-mouthed Communists have already flocked to the standards of Franco-British imperialism, these traitors to Marxian Socialism presumably professing to see a difference between the *first* imperialist war of 1914 and the *second* imperialist world war now taking shape and gaining momentum. There is no such difference—quite to the contrary. Those who did twenty-five years ago what the communists are doing now they denounced as traitors, social-patriots and supporters of the imperialist war. How, then, do they now expect to escape being thus properly and justly designated? The Communist Browders and Thorezes of all countries are today even greater traitors to the working class than were the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys (so bitterly denounced by Lenin and all true Marxists) of twenty-five years ago. And all their squirmings, their brazen lying, and their double-dealing, Machiavellian casuistry, will not save them from the stamp of “traitor” now placed upon their brows!

The role of Soviet Russia is as inconsistent as it is pivotal. If Soviet Russia had merely declared her intention of remaining aloof in the conflict between the imperialist bandits, her attitude would be consistent and logical from her supposed Marxian premises. Instead of doing this, Soviet Russia has without question lined up on the side of the most reactionary, the most repulsive, of all capitalist autocracies, thereby throwing into consternation her foreign satellites and camp followers generally. With true Machiavellian unscrupulousness, and in contemptuous disregard of their would-be Marxian Socialist premises, Stalin & Co. have made a so-called non-aggression pact (soon, perhaps, to be broadened into a military alliance) which enabled the bandit Hitler to take the final steps which precipitated the world into war. It is, indeed, doubtful that Nazi Germany would have taken the fatal step of war without the double assurance that Soviet Russia would remain neutral (or pro-Nazi), and that she would act as Germany's “merchant of death,” and supply her with the essentials of war—raw material, food, etc. In this respect the Stalin bureaucracy repeats its performance in the bandit raid of Mussolini upon helpless Ethiopia. While the Communists hysterically were calling for a “united front” with the Ethiopians against Italy, and denouncing Mussolini for his attempt “to subdue a free people,” Russia was blithely supplying

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the “Bandito” with oil so that he could continue his marauding expedition in Africa! The same disgusting, hypocritical performance is apparently about to be repeated in the case of Poland and her imperialist allies. When pressed for reasons for the Soviet-Nazi pact, and the decision to supply Germany with the means she needs to carry on the war, Soviet representatives (according to Moscow despatches to the *New York Times* of September 4, 1939) said that “during the Chinese-Japanese war and the Spanish civil war the United States sold munitions and other goods to both parties. So why shouldn’t Russia sell to both sides? they asked.”

From capitalist premises the question is logical, and the conduct of Soviet Russia unimpeachable. But by the same token, the action of Soviet Russia, from Socialist premises, constitutes an indictment so damning as to remove any lingering doubt one might have entertained with respect to the quantity and quality of Marxism possessed by Stalin & Co. Besides the Machiavellian duplicity, there is the element of hypocrisy in the action of Soviet Russia concluding a “non-aggression” pact with the murderous and barbarian Nazi gangsters. In his speech before the 18th congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin underscored the following as among the outstanding features of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union:

“WE STAND FOR THE SUPPORT OF NATIONS WHICH ARE THE
VICTIMS OF AGGRESSION AND ARE FIGHTING FOR THE
INDEPENDENCE OF THEIR COUNTRY.”

Are we to conclude, then, that Poland is guilty of acts of aggression against Nazi Germany, and that the latter is “fighting for the independence of their country”? Obviously, if Stalin & Co. are sincere, that is precisely what they would claim—and that is also what the bandit Hitler claims! We are not here concerned with the question of national defense *per se*, but solely with the avowed position of Stalin & Co., and the manner in which they lie, deceive and double-cross their own friends and camp followers. Only last May the clownish Browder pointed with pride to this particular point in the foreign policy of Soviet Russia, and where are Browder and his dupes now? They are left holding the bag, trying desperately to square their pretended policy of anti-fascism with the cruel “facts of life” as presented through the latest act of double-dealing and crafty Jesuitism of the Stalinists.

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It is indeed a cardinal principle that the Proletarian Revolution deals not in double sense. When it does do so, it thereby loses its Proletarian, i.e., Marxian Socialist character. The treason to Marxism by the Stalin bureaucracy is manifested in many ways, but in none more emphatically, or in a manner more spectacular, than during the recent so-called International Youth Day celebration in Moscow, when (to certify their loyalty and devotion to their new, beloved friends) the representatives of the bloody Nazi gangsters stood at attention while the *Internationale* was being played! That the Nazi murderers—the assassins of Marxism in Germany—saluted the *Internationale* obviously did not mean that they had accepted Marxism, or that they had been raised to the lofty level symbolized in the noble revolutionary marching song of the proletariat. Quite to the contrary: it meant that the Soviet (for the nonce, at least) had been dragged down to the level of the Nazi Beast, and that the Stalin bureaucrats had permitted the red banner of International Socialism to be dragged through the reeking gutters of Nazidom. A spectacle, indeed, to cause the blush of shame to mount on the cheeks of every Marxian revolutionist!

V.

While it is of comparatively little importance what happens to the intellectual prostitutes who parade as Communists in this country, it may be noted in passing that in their craven attempt to be all things to all people, and yet remain faithful servitors of their deity, Stalin, the Anarcho-Commumsts have reached the end of the rope. In their wild careening from violent Bakunin Communist anarchism to respectable Jeffersonian democracy, in their adoption and rejection, and further rejection and adoption, of every conceivable capitalist and bourgeois principle (from support of petty exploiters to advocacy of tax reforms, from anti-Nazi, pro-Roosevelt warmongers, to the direct opposite), the Communist swindlers and lunatics will suffer the fate of the chameleon which, in crossing a scotch plaid of seven colors, to which it alternately and desperately attempted to adjust itself, finally died at the cross-roads! The Communists, intellectual bankrupts and intellectual prostitutes that they are, will perish at the “crossroads” of their multifarious, multicolored, and mutually conflicting capitalist reform policies, petty bourgeois tactics, grotesque and burlesque “theses” and “counter-theses”! Having tried to be all things to all men, they end by being nothing to anybody, precisely (only more so) as was the case with

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that other opportunistic reform outfit, the so-called Socialist party, now also lying dead or dying at the cross-roads of opportunism and capitalist reformism! The judgment to be finally passed upon the bourgeois Communists will be the same that was passed upon the Social Democrats, even apart from the obvious intellectual prostitution of the petty communist “fuehrers.” It is the judgment, the appraisal, made by the immortal Karl Marx in his brilliant and profound study, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*: “The essential characteristic of social democracy [and Anarcho-Communism, and other petty bourgeois reformers] is as follows. Democratic republican institutions are demanded as a means, not for the abolition of the two extremes, Capital and Wage Labor, but for the mitigation of their opposition, and for the transformation of their discord into a harmony. Various ways of attaining this harmony may be advocated, and the different proposals may be adorned with a more or less revolutionary trimming but the substance is always the same. The substantial aim of social democracy [and of Anarcho-Communism, bourgeois “radicalism,” etc.] is to transform society upon democratic lines, the transformation being always kept within the boundaries of the petty bourgeoisie.”

And to the symphony of bourgeois pleadings and endeavors there is added the note of utter frustration and futility, the note of professional churchmen to pray and await God’s will! Embellishing this plea still more, the Pope, according to reports, is about to issue a plea to humanize the war! War, the beastly, essentially *inhuman* thing it is, to be humanized! Humanizing the monstrously inhuman! Smug piety was never more perfectly mated to absurd futility than in this pious plea to perform the inhuman act in a humane way.

The attitude, accordingly, of these various reform elements toward the war, and their expectations of war’s aftermath, and what to do then, is in keeping entirely with the petty bourgeois principle laid bare by Marx in his brilliant analysis. Except for the Socialist Labor Party, there will be one intellectual united front toward, and in behalf of, the war and its problems, especially as it affects the working class. While voice may still be raised, while ink traced on paper may yet be transformed into printed matter, the Socialist Labor Party’s voice and pen will be used to protest the war, to expose its true cause, and to teach the workers the remedy for the horror of war and for the menace of capitalism. We shall repeat the oft-told lessons: That the workers are, to all intents and purposes, commodities under capitalism; that while this inhuman system of capitalism lasts they can never become anything else,

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and can never expect to receive more than the market price for their labor power, or, in other words, they will never receive more than just enough barely to subsist in misery and want; and that unemployment will remain the lot of increasing millions, with ever bigger and ghastlier wars always looming up as imminent possibilities. We shall continue to teach to all who are willing to listen that this system of capitalism (fascist and “democratic,” it matters not) is a robber system, wherein the working class, the sole producers of wealth, are despoiled of all the wealth they have produced, except that pittance which they need, but which millions often do not receive, in order to drag on a miserable existence. We shall continue to point out to the workers that they have at present no country which they can properly call their own and, therefore, in fact, no country of their own to defend. We shall continue to remind the workers that (according to the Federal Trade Commission’s report of 1926) one per cent of the United States population own not less than 59 per cent of the wealth; that 12 per cent own not less than 33 per cent of the wealth; while 87 per cent of the population own only about 8 per cent of the wealth. The 87 per cent of the people (chiefly wage workers) who own only 8 per cent of the country are asked to lay down their lives in defense of the 13 per cent who actually own the country, except the paltry 8 per cent! Truly, Marx was right when he proclaimed: “Workers of the world: Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains—you have a world to gain!”

And it is to gain that world that the Socialist Labor Party summons the working class to action. There is a world of beauty, of freedom, of affluence, of happiness to gain, if you, the workers, will but organize to take it. Instead of organizing for mass-murder, for mutual destruction, to the end that the capitalist robber system may be preserved, organize to retrieve that which is morally yours, but which has been legally stolen from you!

Workers of America, workers exploited, oppressed and swindled—heed the voice of the Socialist Labor Party! We repeat, and shall continue to repeat, until tongue and pen fail us: You and we have no interests in giving our lives, or the lives of our sons, husbands and fathers, in order that this strip of land, that stream of ancient water, shall belong to, or be reserved for, this or that syndicate of national or international capitalist interests. Capitalism, whether it be the Nazi-Fascist brand, or the so-called capitalist democratic variety, is a monstrous crime—the father of present chaos, the author of the foul crime that we call modern war. To

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defend it, in whatever form it manifests itself, is not only to defend the cause of wars, but it is to defend the very chains of slavery that we wear. It makes no material difference to us workers whether we are being robbed and exploited as “democratic” wage slaves, or as Nazi-Fascist wage slaves. Wage slaves we are, and wage slaves we remain, while capitalism, in whatever form, prevails.

Fellow workers, men and women of the only useful class in society, make haste! Let us, while we still have the constitutional right, the time and the opportunity, serve emphatic and final notice on our exploiters—of the “democratic” and “fascist” variety alike—that we refuse to fight their bloody wars! Let us tell the exploiters and warmongers in language they understand that we *will not* go and that we *will not* send our young sons, our fathers and brothers to be slaughtered, or to slaughter our fellow workers in other lands, or *their* young sons or fathers, on the bloody altar of the private property system of the international plutocratic plunderbund! And so we say: Away with fake patriotism! Away with false economics and fraudulent politics! Away with false religion cloaking imperialist robber designs! Away with spurious democracy, and let us unite, NOW, ere it is too late, to achieve real freedom, genuine democracy and the true “religion” of cooperative, productive, affluent and peaceful humanity, the Brotherhood of Man!

DOWN WITH WAR!

Organize for the peaceful, but thoroughgoing revolutionary overthrow of the inhuman system of capitalism. Unite for Freedom! Unite industrially and politically for Socialism, the dream of the ages, the realizable hope of the future! Unite to end the thousand-year horror of slavery and poverty! Unite to establish the thousand-year reign of true Liberty and abundance!

All power to the Socialist Industrial Union!

The land and the workshops to the workers!

Forward to the Socialist Industrial Republic of Labor!

CAPITALISM MUST BE DESTROYED!

National Executive Committee,
Socialist Labor Party of America,
Arnold Petersen,
National Secretary