

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

Following is the full text of the central thesis adopted by the World Congress of the Fourth International which met in Switzerland in September, 1938.

## The Objective Prerequisites for a Socialist Revolution

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

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

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

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

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

## The Proletariat and Its Leadership

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

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

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

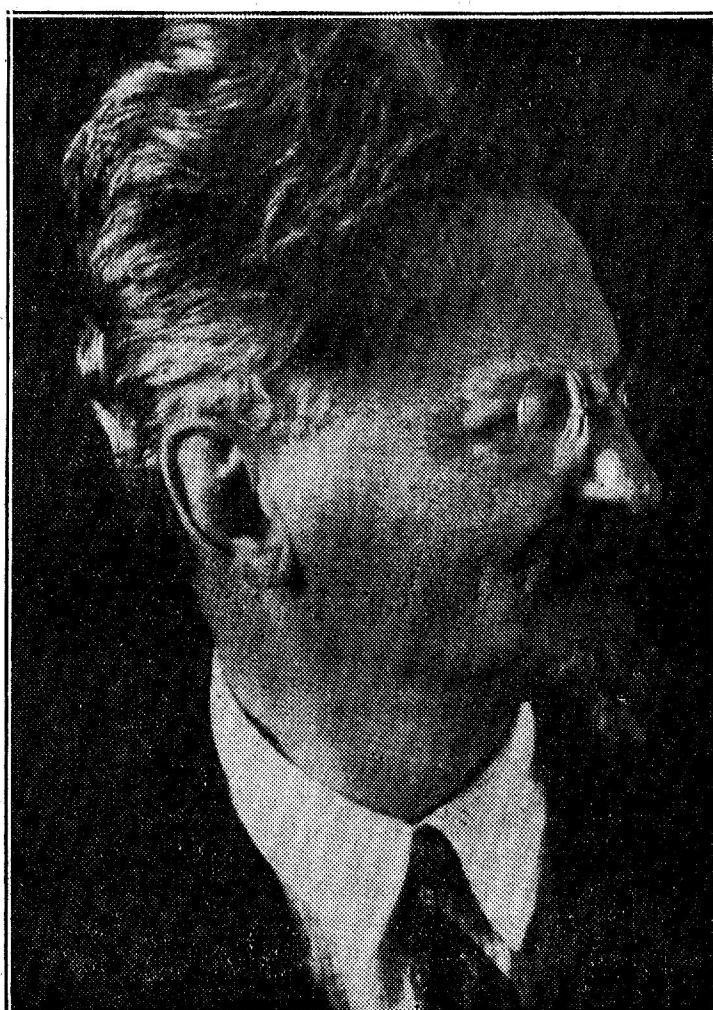
In France, the great wave of "sit-down" strikes, particularly during June, 1936, revealed the whole-hearted readiness of the proletariat to overthrow the capitalist system. However, the leading organizations (Socialists, Stalinists, Syndicalists) under the label of the Popular Front succeeded in canalizing and damning, at least temporarily, the revolutionary stream.

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

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

"People's Fronts" on the one hand—fascism on the other;

## World Congress Greetings to Leon Trotsky



Dear Comrade:

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

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

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

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

These are the last political resources of imperialism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution. From the historical point of view, however, both these resources are stop-gaps. The decay of capitalism continues under the sign of the Phrygian cap in France as under the sign of the swastika in Germany. Nothing short of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie can open a road out.

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

## The Minimum Program and a Transitional Program

The strategic task of the next period—a pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organization—consists in overcoming the contradiction between the maturity of the objective revolutionary conditions and the immaturity of the proletariat and

its vanguard (the confusion and disappointment of the older generation; the inexperience of the younger generation). It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of transitional demands, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and inalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat.

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

The strategic task of the Fourth International lies not in reforming capitalism but in its overthrow. The political aim: the

## Manifesto of the Congress

# Against Imperialist War!

The following manifesto was issued by the conference during the height of the war crisis over the issue of Czechoslovakia.

Unite against exploitation, oppression, war and fascism!  
Forward for the class struggle, international socialism, and freedom!  
Workers, exploited, and colonial peoples of all countries!

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

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

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

It is a lie to say that the war will take place for the national independence or freedom of Czechoslovakia. That is a

cruel falsehood in which Czechoslovakia is playing the same role as "poor Belgium" in 1914.

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

The capitalist world is mortally wounded. In its agony it exhales the poisons of fascism and totalitarian war, which threatens to subject the workers and farmers everywhere once more to a new and horrible servitude, and to unleash the forces of destruction which will shatter modern civilization.

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

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

Capitalism is utterly incapable of assuring the well-being

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

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

## Sliding Scale of Wages and Sliding Scale of Hours

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

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

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

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

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

## Trade Unions in the Transitional Epoch

In the struggle for partial and transitional demands, the workers, now more than ever before, need mass organizations; principally, trade unions. The powerful growth of trade unionism in France and the United States is the best refutation to the preachments of those ultra-left doctrinaires, who have been teaching that trade unions have "outlived their usefulness."

The Bolshevik-Leninist stands in the front-line trenches of



# Transitional Demands Will Mobilize the Masses

## Program Will Lay Basis For Regime of Dual Power

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

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

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

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

(c) As organizations expressive of the top layers of the proletariat, trade unions, as witnessed by all past historical experience, including the fresh experience of the anarcho-syndicalist unions in Spain, developed powerful tendencies toward compromise with the bourgeois-democratic regime. In periods of acute class struggle, the leading functionaries of the trade unions aim to become masters of the mass movement in order to render it harmless. This is already occurring during the period of simple strikes; especially in the case of the mass sit-down strikes which shake the principle of bourgeois property. In time of war or revolution, when the bourgeoisie is plunged into exceptional difficulties, trade union leaders usually become bourgeois ministers.

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

## Factory Committees

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

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

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

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

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

From the moment that the committee makes its appearance, a factual dual power is established in the factory. By its very essence, it represents the transitional state because it includes in itself two irreconcilable regimes: the capitalist and the proletariat. The fundamental significance of factory committees is precisely contained in the fact that they open the doors if not to a direct revolutionary, then to a pre-revolutionary period—between the bourgeois and the proletarian regimes. That the propagation of the factory committee idea is neither premature nor artificial is amply attested to by the waves of sit-down strikes spreading

through several countries. New waves of this type will be inevitable in the immediate future. It is necessary to begin a campaign in favor of factory committees in time in order not to be caught unawares.

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

Liberal capitalism, based upon competition and free trade, has completely receded into the past. Its successor, monopolistic capitalism not only does not mitigate the anarchy of the market but on the contrary imparts to it a particularly convulsive character. The necessity of "controlling" economy, of placing state "guidance" over industry and of "planning" is today recognized—at least in words—by almost all current bourgeois and petty bourgeois tendencies, from fascist to social-democratic. With the fascists, it is mainly a question of "planned" plundering of the people for military purposes. The social-democrats prepare to drain the ocean of anarchy with spoonfuls of bureaucratic "planning." Engineers and professors write articles about "technocracy." In their cowardly experiments in "regulation," democratic governments run head into the invincible sabotage of big capital.

The actual relationship existing between the exploiters and the democratic "controllers" is best characterized by the fact that the gentlemen "reformers" stop short in pious trepidation before the threshold of the trusts and their business "secrets." Here the

control becomes a school for planned economy. On the basis of the experience of control, the proletariat will prepare itself for direct management of nationalized industry when the hour for that eventuality will strike.

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

## Expropriation of Separate Groups of Capitalists

The socialist program of expropriation, i.e., of political overthrow of the bourgeoisie and liquidation of its economic domination, should in no case during the present transitional period hinder us from advancing, when the occasion warrants, the de-

## Greetings to the Fighters in Spain

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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

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

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

No office-holder of the bourgeois state is in a position to carry out this work, no matter with how great authority one would wish to endow him. All the world was witness to the impotence of President Roosevelt and Premier Blum against the plottings of the "60" or "200 families" of their respective nations. To break the resistance of the exploiters, the mass pressure of the proletariat is necessary. Only factory committees can bring about real control of production calling in—as consultants but not as "technocrats"—specialists sincerely devoted to the people; accountants, statisticians, engineers, scientists, etc.

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

The working out of even the most elementary economic plan—from the point of view of the exploited, not the exploiters—is impossible without workers' control, that is, without the penetration of the workers' eye into all open and concealed springs of capitalist economy. Committees representing individual business enterprises should meet at conferences to choose corresponding committees of trusts, whole branches of industry, economic regions and finally, of national industry as a whole. Thus, workers

mand for the expropriation of several key branches of industry vital for national existence or of the most parasitic group of the bourgeoisie.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The sharpening of the proletariat's struggle means the sharp-

## Provides for Active Defense of Working Class Rights

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

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

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

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

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

Only with the help of such systematic, persistent, indefatigable, courageous agitational and organizational work, always on the basis of the experience of the masses themselves, is it possible to root out from their consciousness the traditions of submissiveness and passivity; to train detachments of heroic fighters capable of setting an example to all toilers; to inflict a series of tactical defeats upon the armed thugs of counter-revolution; to raise the self-confidence of the exploited and oppressed; to compromise fascism in the eyes of the petty-bourgeois and pave the road for the conquest of power by the proletariat.

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

## The Alliance of the Workers and Farmers

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

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

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

While the farmer remains an "independent" petty producer, he is in need of cheap credit, of agricultural machines and fertilizer at prices he can afford to pay, favorable conditions of transport, and conscientious organization of the market for his agricultural products. But the banks, the trusts, the merchants rob the farmer from every side. Only the farmers themselves, with the help of the workers, can curb this robbery. Committees elected by small farmers should make their appearance on the national scene and jointly with workers' committees and committees of bank employees take into their hands control of transport, credit, and mercantile operations affecting agriculture.

By falsely citing the "excessive" demands of the workers, the big bourgeoisie skillfully transforms the question of commodity



# For Revolutionary Resistance To Imperialist War

## The Main Enemy Is Still Our Own Capitalist Class

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

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

The expropriation of the expropriators likewise does not signify forcible confiscation of the property of artisans and shopkeepers. On the contrary, workers' control of banks and trusts—even more, the nationalization of these concerns, can create for the urban petty bourgeoisie incomparably more favorable conditions of credit, purchase, and sale than is possible under the unchecked domination of the monopolies. Dependence upon private capital will be replaced by dependence upon the State, which will be the more attentive to the needs of its small co-workers and agents the stronger the toilers themselves will keep control of the State in their hands.

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

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

## The Struggle Against Imperialism and War

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

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

The Bolshevik-Leninist policy regarding this question, formulated in the thesis of the International Secretariat (*War and the Fourth International*, 1934) preserves all of its force today. In the next period a revolutionary party will depend for success primarily on its policy on the question of war. A correct policy is composed of two elements: an uncompromising attitude on imperialism and its wars and the ability to base one's program on the experience of the masses themselves.

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

### CONCRETIZING A FEW ABSTRACTIONS

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

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

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

"Defense of the Fatherland?"—But by this abstraction, the bourgeoisie understands the defense of its profits and plunder. We stand ready to defend the fatherland from foreign capitalists, if we first bind our own (capitalists) hand and foot and

## SALUTE TO OUR LIVING MARTYRS AND OUR HEROIC DEAD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

hinder them from attacking foreign fatherlands; if the workers and the farmers of our country become its real masters; if the wealth of the country be transferred from the hands of a tiny minority to the hands of the people; if the army becomes a weapon of the exploited instead of the exploiters.

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

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

### A REFERENDUM ON WAR

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

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

Light must be shed upon the problem of war from all angles, hinging upon the side from which it will confront the masses at a given moment.

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

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

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

simply abandon them to the paid agents of Stalin.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In accordance with this we demand:

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

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

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

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

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

The imperialist bourgeoisie dominates the world. In its basic character the approaching war will therefore be an imperialist war. The fundamental content of the politics of the international proletariat will consequently be a struggle against imperialism and its war. In this struggle the basic principle is: "the chief enemy is in your own country," or "the defeat of your own (imperialist) government is the lesser evil."

### AIDING NON-IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES

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

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

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

At the beginning of the war the sections of the Fourth International will inevitably feel themselves isolated: every war takes the national masses unawares and impels them to the

## Our Only War Is The War For A Workers' Revolution

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

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

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

## Workers and Farmers Government

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

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

### THE RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE

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

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

The central task of the Fourth International consists in freeing the proletariat from the old leadership, whose conservatism is in complete contradiction to the catastrophic eruptions of disintegrating capitalism and represents the chief obstacle to historical progress. The chief accusation which the Fourth International advances against the traditional organizations of the proletariat is the fact that they do not wish to tear themselves away from the political semi-corpse of the bourgeoisie. Under these conditions the demand, systematically addressed to the old leadership: "Break with the bourgeoisie, take the power!" is an extremely important weapon for exposing the treacherous character of the parties and organizations of the Second, Third and Amsterdam Internationals. The slogan "Workers and Farmers Governments," is thus acceptable to us only in the sense that it had in 1917 with the Bolsheviks, i. e., as an anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist slogan, but in no case in that "democratic" sense which later the epigones gave it, transforming it from a bridge to socialist revolution into the chief barrier upon its path.

### PERSPECTIVES OF THE SLOGAN

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

Is the creation of such a government by the traditional workers organizations possible? Past experience shows, as has already been stated, that this is to say the least highly improbable. However, one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.) the petty bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie. In any case one thing is not to be doubted:



# Toward a Workers' and Farmers' Government

even if this highly improbably variant somewhere at some time becomes a reality and the "Workers and Farmers Government," in the above mentioned sense, is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat.

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

It is impossible in advance to foresee what will be the concrete stages of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses. The sections of the Fourth International should critically orient themselves at each new stage and advance such slogans as will aid the striving of the workers for independent politics, deepen the class character of these politics, destroy reformist and pacifist illusions, strengthen the connection of the vanguard with the masses, and prepare the revolutionary conquest of power.

## Soviets

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

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

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

Soviets can arise only at the time when the mass movement

## Militant Action By Workers In Advanced Countries Will Arouse Colonial Masses

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

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

## Backward Countries and the Program of Transitional Demands

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

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

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

the democratic revolution to a conclusion and likewise opening an era of socialist revolution.

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

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

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

## The Program of Transitional Demands in Fascist Countries

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

Not the least reason exists for explaining these failures by reference to the power of fascist ideology. (Essentially, Mussolini never advanced any sort of ideology.) Hitler's "ideology" never

seriously gripped the workers. Those layers of the population which at one time were intoxicated with fascism, i. e., chiefly the middle classes, have had enough time in which to sober up. The fact that a somewhat perceptible opposition is limited to Protestant and Catholic church circles is not explained by the might of the semi-delirious and semi-charlatan theories of "race" and "blood," but by the terrific collapse of the ideologies of democracy, social-democracy and the Comintern.

The collapse of the Paris Commune paralyzed the French workers for nearly eight years. After the defeat of the 1905 Russian revolution, the toiling masses remained in a stupor for almost as long a period. But in both instances the phenomenon was only one of physical defeat, conditioned by the relationship of forces. In Russia, in addition, it concerned an almost virgin proletariat. The Bolshevik fraction had at that time not celebrated even its third birthday. It is completely otherwise in Germany where the leadership came from powerful parties, one of which had existed for seventy years, the other—almost fifteen. Both these parties, with millions of voters behind them, were morally paralyzed before the battle and capitulated without a battle. (History has recorded no parallel catastrophe. The German proletariat was not smashed by the enemy in battle.) It was crushed by the cowardice, baseness, perfidy of its own parties. Small wonder then that it has lost faith in everything in which it had been accustomed to believe for almost three generations. Hitler's victory in turn strengthened Mussolini.

## FRESH FORCES ARE NEEDED

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

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

At the same time, the class antagonisms which brought about the victory of fascism, continuing their work under fascism, too, are gradually undermining it. The masses are more dissatisfied than ever. Hundreds and thousands of self-sacrificing workers, in spite of everything, continue to carry on revolutionary mole-work. A new generation, which has not directly experienced the shattering of old traditions and high hopes, has come to the fore. Irresistibly, the molecular preparation of the proletarian revolution proceeds beneath the heavy totalitarian tombstone. But for concealed energy to flare into open revolt, it is necessary that the vanguard of the proletariat find new perspectives, a new program and a new unblemished banner.

Herein, lies the chief handicap. It is extremely difficult for workers in fascist countries to make a choice of a new program. A program is verified by experience. And it is precisely experience in mass movements which is lacking in countries of totalitarian

# World Congress Manifesto Against Imperialist War

(Continued from page 7)

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

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

## A Bandit War

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

It will not be a war in the interests of the workers, since the attacks on the social conquests of the French workers of June, 1936, especially the 40-hour week, show that the defense of the most elementary economic and social interests of the masses—their daily bread and their freedom—is incompatible with the defense of the fatherland of the bourgeoisie.

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

## Betrayers of the Toilers

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

menaces it only under the leadership of the revolutionary working class, historic champion and ally of the landless and debt-ridden farmers, and of the millions of black, brown and yellow colonial slaves.

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

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

Instead of hastening the dispatch of the putrified corpse of capitalism into the limbo of history, social democracy and Stalinism unite to patch it up and preserve it. They have long since abandoned the class struggle. They concentrate all their efforts toward bringing the working class into the service of capitalism in the name of a falsified "democracy" or a "People's Front" instead of destroying the monster. They support the domination of colonial peoples by their respective imperialists and offer their military aid to the same end.

## Impotent Against Fascism

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

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

No less traitorous is the role played by the social democracy and Stalinism in the face of the imminent war danger. More cyn-

ically than the Second International before the last war—when it at least formally took an anti-war position—the two Internationals now demand for themselves the responsibility of leading the masses to the butchery.

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

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

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

We, the Fourth International, loyal defenders of the U. S. S. R. against all its enemies, within and without, accuse Stalinism of having subjected the economic life of the country to the interests of the bureaucratic clique at the top. Partisans of real proletarian democracy, we accuse Stalinism of having deprived the Soviet masses of all the great liberties they won arms in hand.

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

\* \* \*

## Break the Chains!

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

It is only by restoring the great traditions of revolutionary

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

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

## The Fourth International

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Long live the Fourth International!

Long live the International Socialist Revolution!

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

Sept. 15, 1938



# The Fourth International Defends the Soviet Union

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

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

## TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Atop this system of mounting antagonisms, trespassing ever more on the social equilibrium, the Thermidorian oligarchy, to-

## Preservation of the Conquests of 1917 Depends on the Overthrow of Stalinist Dictatorship

day reduced mainly to Stalin's Bonapartist clique, hangs on by terroristic methods. The latest judicial frame-ups were aimed as a blow against the left. This is true also of the mopping up of the leaders of the Right Opposition, because the right group of the old Bolshevik Party, seen from the viewpoint of the bureaucracy's interests and tendencies, represented a left danger. The fact that the Bonapartist clique, likewise in fear of its own right allies of the type of Butenko, is forced in the interests of self-preservation to execute the generation of Old Bolsheviks almost to a man, offers indisputable testimony of the vitality of revolutionary traditions among the masses as well as of their growing discontent.

### "TROTSKYISM" IN THE U.S.S.R.

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

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

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

### THE CHIEF TASK

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

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

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

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

The bureaucracy replaced the soviets as class organs with the fiction of universal electoral rights—in the style of Hitler-Goebbels. It is necessary to return to the soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bourgeoisie and kulaks were not permitted to enter the soviets, so now it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the soviets. In the soviets there is room only for representatives of the workers, rank and file kolkhoists, peasants and Red Army men.

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

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

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

The reactionary *international policy* of the bureaucracy should be replaced by the policy of proletarian internationalism.

The complete diplomatic correspondence of the Kremlin to be published. *Down with secret diplomacy!*

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

Down with the bureaucratic gang of Cain-Stalin!

Long live Soviet Democracy!

Long live the international socialist revolution!

## Against Opportunism and Unprincipled Revisionism

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Against Sectarianism

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

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

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

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

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

## The Road to the Woman-worker The Road to the Youth

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

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

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

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

### THE ROOTS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Sceptics ask: but has the moment for the creation of the Fourth International yet arrived? It is impossible, they say, to create an International "artificially;" it can only arise out of great events, etc., etc. All of these objections merely show that



the sceptics are not good for the building of a new International. They are good for scarcely anything at all.

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

But has the time yet arrived to proclaim its creation? . . . the sceptics are not quieted down. The Fourth International, we answer, has no need of being "proclaimed." It exists and it fights. Is it weak? Yes, its ranks are not numerous because it is still young. They are as yet chiefly cadres. But these cadres are pledges for the future. Outside of these cadres there does not exist a single revolutionary current on this planet really meriting the name. If our International be still weak in numbers, it is strong in doctrine, program, tradition, in the incomparable tempering of its cadres. Who does not perceive this today, let him in the meantime stand aside. Tomorrow it will become more evident.

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

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

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

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

### Statement of the I.S.

## On the Molinier Group

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. In the subsequent discussion it became perfectly clear that point 4 (the elimination of R. Molinier) was the only real point

## On Organizing Defense and Relief For Persecuted Revolutionists

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

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

It is permissible to cooperate in this work with sincere elements of other political tendencies, but in no case should the formation of national defense and relief bodies be deferred or put aside because of the inability to secure the cooperation of this or that organization or individual. The need is absolutely urgent and

unpostponable, and an energetic and devoted committee, even of modest size and composed in the main or altogether of the advanced revolutionary elements is infinitely better than none at all or an "imposing" facade of many organizations and "big names" that does little or nothing and gives no real assistance to the victims in most desperate and immediate cases.

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

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

## On Unification of the British Section

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

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

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

The unification of the British groups (as that of the hitherto divided Greek groups) of the Fourth International on the eve of the World Conference coincides with the final departure of such alien elements as Sneevliet and Vereeken. Both these occurrences, each in its own way, are equally symbolic of a great progressive step forward in the reorganization of the revolutionary vanguard on the tested foundations of Bolshevism. They signify at one and the same time the unification of the genuine and sincere adherents of the Fourth International and their organizational separation from pretenders, saboteurs, and hidden enemies.

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

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

at issue. A request was made by the P.C.I. delegation for official assurances regarding his possible future re-admission. This was categorically refused on the ground that the I.S. is without power to alter a decision of the International Conference, and that the exclusion of R. Molinier is unconditional.

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

8. The negotiations foundered on this point. The delegation of the P.C.I. refused to give a categorical answer to the resolution of the I.S. and proposed merely to accept it as a "basis for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thereupon negotiations, which manifestly offered no prospects of fruitful results, were broken off. It is clearer than ever that the whole question of the P.C.I. and the journal "La Commune" has no political significance, but is purely and simply the personal question of R. Molinier and his financial affairs. Now as before, the door of the Fourth International remains open, with full assurance of normal democratic rights, to the rank and file members of the P.C.I. who are ready to accept the resolutions and decisions of its international conference and accept discipline. The door is closed to R. Molinier.

### OTHER CONGRESS DOCUMENTS

Because of their length, it was impossible to include here other theses and resolutions of the World Congress including the Thesis on the War in the Far East, Thesis on American Imperialism, Resolution on the Situation in France and the Tasks of the P.O.I. (French section of the Fourth International), Resolution on the Youth Movement, and the Statutes of the Fourth International.

These will all be included in a pamphlet shortly to be issued containing all the documents of the World Congress.

## On the Mexican Question

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

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

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

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

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

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

The clinching proof of the irresponsibility of the Galicia leadership was given several days prior to the arrival of the U.S. delegation in Mexico, when this leadership induced the members of the organization to vote the dissolution of the League, thus liquidating the Mexican section of the International. The subsequent decision—no less frivolous than the first—to reconstitute the League, can be regarded not as a responsible decision, but rather as a maneuver aimed at preventing criticism and serious efforts to reconstruct the movement of the Fourth International in Mexico on a healthy and solid basis.

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

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

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

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

## On the Greek Question

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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