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# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION

# International News

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## Uncensored Reports of The I.C.C. From Europe

RED FRONT LETTER ON THE WAR TO  
THE GREEK ARCHIO-MARXISTS

### Stalinists Support Metaxas, Stooge of British Imperialism

**Editor's Note:** The following material is from the Correspondence Bulletin of the Red Front, issued twice a month. For obvious reasons, other information cannot be published. (R.F.A.B. is the abbreviation for **Red Front Foreign Bureau**).

**GREECE** — R.F.A.B. — The R.F.A.B. sent the following letter to the Central Committee of the Greek Archio-Marxists as soon as the attack of Italy on Greece broke out; we will endeavor to publicize the letter with the aid of our comrades in the Near East.

"The Fascist aggression against Greece now draws your country into the sphere of the imperialist war.

"Reformists and Stalinists with their united appeal 'Metaxas, we await your commands' have clearly revealed their social-patriotic, pro-imperialist position. They will defend Greece 'democratic freedom' together with General Metaxas and the Greek capitalists under British Imperialism. (This is the very same Metaxas who six years ago established a dictatorship with the aid of the Germans and Italians, and with no opposition from England.) The Stalinist leaders, including Zachariadis, will march out of their prisons, in which they have been confined through the 'democracy and

freedom' of Metaxas, all for the defence of Greece. They will carry on to the death, or until contrary orders are received from Moscow.

"You comrades have a very unpopular but very heroic and imposing task. You must appeal against the betrayers of your country, as did our comrades in Germany and Italy. You must endeavor to stretch your hand over the trenches and machine gun emplacements; you must extend your hand to your fighting brothers in Germany and Italy, and together with them you must build the **THIRD FRONT** which stands not for 'freedom' of the capitalists and imperialists, and not for their 'democracy' — but for defeat of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a new world in the place of the old.

"Rest assured, you do not stand alone in this fight — the revolutionary Greek proletariat will follow you; we, in Germany and Italy, and the revolutionary working class of the whole world, stand at your side. You must fight along with us so that at the end of this war there will exist not 'freedom and democracy' as the bourgeoisie and their agents mean it, but the revolution, the freeing of the working class, and the building of the Soviet State."

The Comrades of the Red Front.

## IMPORTANT CENTRAL CONFERENCE IN GERMANY

**GERMANY** — R.F.A.B. — A few weeks ago the illegal Conference of representatives of the most important Red Front organizations and their branches took place somewhere in Germany. Since the war's beginning, this was the first central Conference in which representatives of almost all the more important groups of the Red Front could participate. Representatives of the Central Committee, of the Austrian Red Front, the German groups, the newly organized cells in Sudeten and Czech localities, as well as representatives of the Red Youth Stormers, Red Youth Front, and of the illegal revolutionary trade union movement also took part.

"The chief topics of the Conference were:

(1) Analysis of the political work of the German Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Socialist Workers Groups (S.A.P., New Beginning, Austrian Revolutionary Socialists) and various other groups; (2) Position of the Red Front in the further war developments; (3) Organization, activity and goal of struggle of the Red Front; (4) Work of the foreign organizations, and the Foreign Bureau of the Red Front; (5) International collaboration and the **International Contact Commission**.

The difficulty of postal contact and sharpening of the censorship are the best indications for us that in Germany, even now, everything is not going as the rulers want it... The campaign of hate against the Soviet Union which was re-instituted a few months ago, has been discarded since Russia passively accepts everything Hitler wants in all affairs of the Axis. The C. P. is again issuing **legal** propaganda in Germany. For example, a leaflet of Molotov's speech of August 1, 1940, where it is stated that Friendship between Germany and Russia is not based upon temporary conditions of a transient character, but on the fundamental interests of the states of both Russia and Germany...

After the recent development in which the Revolutionary Trade Union Committee entered the Red Front, there are indications that other significant sections of the illegal, free trade unions will also come over to the Red Front..

For Molotov's last visit, entirely unheard-of and unusual protective measures were taken, such as have never even been taken for Hitler. Against whom does Molotov have to be protected?

## FEAR OF REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

**FRANCE** — R.F.A.B. — Colonel Guzet presented one of the strongest arguments why France has not today entered on the side of Germany in the war against England. He was speaking at the Military Casino in Toulon: "Hunger, crisis, unemployment and misery such as has never been known in France will bring us enough of disturbance and unrest in this winter of hunger... we could not possibly dare to put arms in the hands of the people again"...

The activity of the Communist Party in both sections of France is exceptionally great. Their slogan is "Peace and bread", "establishment of good relations with our neighbors to guarantee the rebuilding of France" (the neighbors are: Franco Spain, Mussolini Italy, Hitler Ger-

many and the Republic of Andora with 4,000 inhabitants,) ...From everyone in unoccupied France, we receive letters on the starvation of comrades, who are for the most part interned; and they state the fear that all of France will soon be occupied by the Germans since the Petain regime establishes no concrete and clear-cut policies...

By decree of the Vichy regime the last remnants of the trade unions (C.G.T.) were dissolved. New organizations of employment offices and of employers and employees which will work in very close collaboration are to be established, and thus the class struggle in France will be sidetracked.

## REPORTS ON SPAIN, SWEDEN, DENMARK.

**SPAIN**—R.F.A.B. (via Lisbon—Over 8,000 men (reg. troops and Guardia Civil) have been mobilized to make one more attempt to put an end to the guerilla war of the Asturian and Galician workers and peasants, who since the defeat of the Republicans have been maintaining the struggle in the hills of Galicia and all the way to the Sierra Culebra on the Portuguese border... it must be made clear that in Franco Spain many of the betrayals of workers to the hangman are carried out by known Stalinists. ...Our comrade X, who fought through the entire Civil War in the International Brigade and had since been interned in France, was delivered to Franco at Port Bou together with more than 80 other Spanish fighters, Socialists, Anarchists and Opposition Communists. Nothing is known of their subsequent fate... The Franco-regime has adopted strong anti-Semitic measures in Spain, in order to please Hitler and Mussolini. The carrying out of these measures will be a very heavy burden on the Spanish authorities, since Jews had to be exported from foreign countries to Spain just a while back. In all Spain there cannot be 100 Jews at present.

**SWEDEN** — R.F.A.B. — As a result of the social-patriotic, chauvinist position of the party leadership, especially of Nils Flyg and the editorship of the "Folkets Dagbladets", a split within the Swedish Socialist Party has taken place; in particular the left fraction around Albert Strom and the majority of the Goteborg Circle, united and established their split-off group under the name "Vanstersocialistisk Oppositionen" and later as the "Socialistisk Arbetarpartiet", with the weekly periodical "Arbetar Posten" in Goteborg as its National organ; and they united in the "Front Against War" despite the will of a significant section of the new party.

The minority of the organization did not, at the time, choose to insist upon their standpoint that no proletarian revolutionary and internationalist policy could be adopted through the

apparently revolutionary phrases of the "Front Against War", and that a "revolutionary" party without a revolutionary program has no right to exist and inevitably must land in the Social Democratic swamp. After scarcely half a year of existence the predicted development has taken place.

The organization stands today in a centrist position... it is mildly pacifist and in fundamental agreement with that famous patriotic brother organization, the overwhelmingly social-patriotic Labor Party in Sweden; the revolutionary comrades who are in the party again find themselves confronted with the task of quitting the organization and building a cadre and revolutionary vanguard on the foundation of a revolutionary program.

**NORWAY & DENMARK** — R.F.A.B. — The organ of the German Communists "die Welt" which has been printed in Stockholm, comes out quite openly and is sent with no press censorship by the German Government Post Office to Denmark and Norway. The contents of this noble organ of the K. P. D. is of such a nature that it can do no damage to the National Socialists, the Lords of these two countries .... unemployment in Norway has increased about 50% since Nazi occupation .... "Arbeideren", the organ of the Oslo Stalinists, is the only workers paper in Norway, which up to now, under Nazi occupation, appears with the same editors as before .... among the Swedish journalists who were taken by the German Government on a visit to Denmark, Norway, and now through occupied Paris, there was included the correspondent of "Ny Dag" the central organ of the Swedish Stalinists.

**NORWAY** (via Stockholm) — R.F.A.B. — With regard to the alleged Communist conspiracy uncovered by German police in Oslo, Bergen, Trondhjem, Kristiansund and other Norwegian cities, it now becomes clear that various organizations of Norwegian students, workers and peasants have been carrying on

acts of sabotage and terroristic assaults against the German occupation troops. So far as their names have been published, those arrested belong to every sort of Norwegian party. Only two parties are not included among those arrested: the Norwegian Fascists and the Stalinists. The CP of Norway hailed the occupation of Norway and the Fascist terror as liberation from English imperialistic intervention in Norway, and it offers no opposition to the powers of the German Nazis and the Gestapo.

**RED FRONT FOREIGN BUREAU** — We have decided to give up the issuance of a paper and theoretical organ in view of technical and financial difficulties, which are too great at present. The organ of the **International Contact Commission**, now appearing in a German edition, will be an invaluable and satisfactory substitute. This correspondence from the Foreign Bureau will, of course, continue to appear twice a month, and every now and then, material of the German organization and reports will appear.

## The Imperialist War Furthers Economic Dislocation

Far too many people do not as yet understand the effect of the war on capitalist economy. **The war has caused the greatest destruction of wealth and retirement of useful means of production in all history.** Even though in certain nations, production as a whole — both useful commodities that go to satisfy men's needs, and destructive, useless commodities that go to satisfy capitalist war greed — have increased; nevertheless, taking the figures for capitalism as a whole, especially in the smaller countries, world production has undoubtedly declined.

Figures on war costs are very revealing. According to the figures released this month by the U. S. Government, the United Kingdom is spending fully 85% of its total national income for war purposes; Germany is spending 58% of its national income. The U. S., according to these figures, is spending only 7%. Obviously this is a gigantic understatement. The real figure for U. S. is probably closer to 18 or 20%. But these figures already indicate to what extent the forces of production are being destroyed or used up by capitalist powers in waging this war.

This does not, of course, include the billions of dollars in damages throughout all of Europe caused by the bombing parades of the two opponent imperialist groups. To take a small example, in one borough in London alone at least 14,000 out of 22,000 homes have been partially damaged or destroyed as a result of German air raids. Recurring air raids in Coventry, Birmingham, London, Hamburg, etc. have undoubtedly taken a toll which staggers the imagination, and has doomed Europe to a period of reconstruction which will be infinitely more costly than even the costly reconstruction period of the last world carnage.

But even these figures of destruction and of war costs do not in themselves tell the real story of the undermining of capitalist economy during the war. There are still many more factors that have to be taken into account.

### FACTORS OF DISLOCATION

Let us enumerate some of the main ones:

1—The reduction of conquered areas or of small colonial countries to the status of producers only of raw materials to supply the

"big" "super"-imperialist power.

2—The dislocation of the export-import relationship as a result of the blockade and its effects on economy.

3—The lopsided and absolutely uneconomic relationship during the war between light and heavy industry.

4—The breakdown of the financial structure of the world and the imminency of inflation.

German Imperialism has already indicated that the conquered countries will increasingly be reduced to small raw material producers dependent on the Reich for finished materials. The military venture for "living space" thus is really a venture for the mass retirement of the means of production of the rest of Europe outside of the Reich itself.

Under imperialism in the present decay stage this process is inevitable. The war, which drains the resources of all the powers to an unprecedented degree, merely accelerates and intensifies this process. Victory on the part of American imperialism (the role of Britain is doomed to a secondary role no matter what happens) can only have the same effect.

### EXPORT — IMPORT UPSETS

Another dislocation of economy results out of the present export and import relationship, due to the blockade. All the nations on the earth are being forced to alter their production, not on the basis of that which they can produce most economically or that which they have the facilities to produce, but purely on the negative basis of that which it is necessary to produce in order to get some of the remaining **valuta** which still remains in the world trade. In other words, the war has accelerated all moves for a **hemmed in** economy. The various small nations of Latin America, China, Africa, and even Europe are striving with all their power to develop domestic industry so as to become more than raw material producers. Certain countries, like Australia, have had a great deal of success in this respect. This too lays the basis for a further dislocation of world

capitalist economy. For, in face of the need of the large imperialist powers, to reduce the small powers to a **lower** colonial status and to force them to retire the means of production, just the opposite process is occurring: the colonies are forced to develop their own industry because of the war — but not industry based upon a world division of labor; rather industry based upon a negation of a sane economic division of labor.

### INDUSTRIAL DISPROPORTIONMENT

Another of the lopsided effects of war economy is in the relationship between light industry and heavy industry in each country. It is not that no need for consumers goods exists amongst the masses. On the contrary, the masses of humanity are increasingly more ill-fed, ill-housed, and ill-clothed than before. The tremendous "sacrifices" which capitalism has to undergo to finance the cost of its destructive war must be paid for somehow by some one. And of course the natural reaction of the bourgeoisie is to take it out of the hide of the proletariat. According to the Foreign Policy Association, total production during war-time never is higher. It is merely that the shuffle takes place between the products of light industry which are increasingly curtailed, and the destructive products of heavy industry which are increasingly augmented. Quite obviously, such a process cannot go on indefinitely.

If any reconstruction is to come after the war, all the forces of production which are now being retired in the sphere of light industry will have to be put in use again in order to build new homes, new clothing, new shelters, etc., while heavy industry will find itself almost completely done for, as after the last war. The big rub in the present war, however, is that the disparity is infinitely greater than it was in 1914-1918. For instance the rationing of consumers goods began only in the late stages of the first world war.

The rationing of consumers goods in our period began **before** the war even began. The part of national income allotted to war produc-

tion is obviously far greater than it was in the first world war and as an added factor the resources of the imperialists are less. If one could visualize over again ruination such as the 1923 crisis in Germany, the 1917 crisis in Russia, and the 1920 crisis in America, etc., then the present dislocation of recent capitalist economy already augurs crises so tremendously more intense that it is difficult to visualize them.

Take an example of what has been happening to American industry. 1917 represents the peak of steel production in the U. S. — brought of course by war orders. 1932 represents the low point of steel production primarily because of the readjustment of the war economy to peace economy; in other words the inexorable capitalist over-production, the retirement of the means of production, especially in the heavy goods industry. But now in 1940 production of steel has already broken the 1917 all time record and before many months or years go by that figure may be even doubled. By a parallel process of the 1917 — 1932 epoch America will thus inevitably come to a crisis where for greater steel facilities will be put out of use than was the case even in 1932. New machines, new plants, new facilities hastily built and brought into play today will by the "orderly" processes of capitalism remain to rot while the masses live in broken down homes without any of the necessities of life.

#### CHAOS IN FINANCES

The reflection of all the chaos in the productive sphere of capitalism is manifest in the financial circles. There too everything is chaos, everything points to complete breakdown. Take for instance the story of gold within the last ten or fifteen years.

Gold always has been used primarily as a medium of exchange, as a guarantee for the various currencies of the various nations; but with the "orderly" economic conquest of one nation by another, gold tends to move from the economically conquered country to the conqueror. The lack of gold in a country

thus reflects the weak position of its productive forces and curtailment of its economy, in a word its uneconomic mode of production. The cornering of the world gold supply by American imperialism reflects this unhealthy process on a world scale. Later on we shall examine the advantages and disadvantages to Uncle Sam of this gold supply. Nevertheless this great storing of gold in Kentucky vaults and the relinquishment of the fixed standard by all the nations in the world, represents a world surplus that is not marketable at the present price level. It reflects a gigantic overproduction, stored in the form of gold. The fact that the resources of so many nations have been depleted almost to the vanishing point — as indicated by the flight of gold — is barometer of the deep going crisis of world capitalism. Even in the worst days of the world war nothing like it occurred.

In other words, world capitalism now has a tremendous "resource" owned mostly by the Goliath of imperialist powers, the United States, for which there are no real avenues of investment. Investment of capital must show profit; but the already existent overproduction of the means of production forces them to store up more liquid capital without any chance of profits. But Uncle Sam will use this, for the most part, during and after the war as a weapon with which to buy out the markets of its competitors and the spheres of influence of its rivals powers; and if possible he will use the dollar to prevent the extension of the October Revolution. In return for either outright subsidies or "loans" in the form of gold, America expects to receive spheres of influence for profitable investment at the expense of the various powers which do not have gold.

We thus come back to the old theme — the gold resources of the United States in the last analysis play the same role that the military legions of German Imperialism play — they serve as a weapon for reducing the total world means of production to the advantage of the "winning" nation, which hopes to gain thereby a primary advantage within this gloomy world set-up. What the imperialists are fighting for is a bigger share of **less** rather than a bigger

share of **more**. For the **total** economy of the world has been and will be curtailed to unheard of proportions. That is inevitable.

#### TREND TOWARD INFLATION

Another barometer of the dislocated economy, an effect rather than the cause, is inflation and a lower standard of living. The malignant forms of inflation are already quite apparent. Most of the governments in Europe are attempting to circumvent this plague, this inevitable plague of capitalism in its world crisis. Uneconomic production (and war economy is uneconomic) inevitably must give rise to a higher cost of living. For one thing domestic prices are higher, for another the cost of imports must inevitably be higher because of the blockade, higher insurance rates, far greater shipping rates, etc. The dislocation of transportation in war torn Europe increases costs; the various government red-tape bureaucracy, etc., must quite obviously result in a far higher cost of production. Added to this, many uneconomical substitute commodities must be used that were not used previously, because of the new "hemmed-in" economies. The total cost of production therefore is far higher. The imperialist attempt to circumvent this by regulation of prices; but this regulation only results in many other factors which, in effect, bring the prices up to their real, uneconomic level.

#### PRICE "REGULATION" — LOWER REAL WAGES

"Regulation" of prices can only be successful if it has as a concomitant the **DOWNWARD** regulation of wages (either through longer hours, less **real** pay, inflation, etc.). Whichever method is used the real cost of commodities thus inevitably go up; some of them become so expensive to produce that they go off the market — just like any bankrupt shares on the stock exchange. That is constantly true of an increasing number of consumers commodities throughout Europe. The capitalists have a choice between the regulation of the prices of gold or of the prices of commodities. In "ordinary" times they regulate the price of

gold and thus attempt — with more or less success except in periods of depression — to stabilize prices of commodities.

In war time, however, the crisis is so sharp that they regulate instead the price of commodities and say "to devil with the price of gold". Gold goes completely off the market, along with dozens of other commodities forced off by uneconomic capitalist production, and the medium of exchange constantly loses in value — constantly can buy less and less of the needs of life. The only advantage that "regulation" of prices thus has is a political one: it **conceals** capitalist robbery and bankruptcy more adequately than the other method during war time.

The inevitable result of this process can only be bankruptcy. In order to fight the bankruptcy the capitalist government must again give increasing subsidies to the various capitalists, or it must increase the hours and lower the wages of the workers. But since obviously both processes cannot go on indefinitely, (even with the slave labor existing in Europe today) higher taxes and its concomitant must ensue. Whatever the form of that inflation, the only result can be a still lower standard of living, and of course this too indirectly leads to greater overproduction. Thus we come to a process which can only end in complete bankruptcy; deflation of the currency, withdrawal of coin currency from the market; fiat currency (ask marks, blocked ponds, etc.), and eventually (as in Germany in 1923) completely valueless money.

#### ROLE OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

In this whole giant welter of capitalist disorganization, the U. S. has a peculiar position. It faces the very unprofitable task of either subsidizing the whole world so as to avert complete ruination (and world revolution) or it must fall with the rest after the war. Turn as she may, if she follows the policy of subsidizing — and that seems to be inevitable — the contradiction of American imperialism must increase. Let us consider just a few of the results of such a policy:



1. Giving subsidies to other powers, even though they will take form of loans, will undoubtedly stipulate that the credits must be spent in United States. Subsidies in such a wide scale as will be necessary will again force further uneconomic expansion of the productive forces, forces which will be retired very shortly afterward.

2. In the long run, such subsidies will serve to rebuild nations which, reduced though they may be in the world set-up, can only become new competitors to Uncle Sam (the same process occurred during and after the present World War.).

3. Subsidies to foreign powers can only occur on the basis of higher taxes and inflation here at home. This again means a weakening of American economy.

4. The disparity between light and heavy industry during war will be infinitely more pronounced in America than during the last war because the U. S. is such a gigantic source of arms and munitions; but after the war, if the policy of subsidies occurs, just the other type of production will have to be in force. Even the greatest Goliath in capitalist history cannot possibly meet this quick turn and crisis.

We must remember that the U. S. which won most out of the first world war had more unemployed men and more unemployed capital after the 1929 crisis than the rest of the world put together; and had a crisis of longer duration than the other powers.

Turn where she may, therefore, American Imperialism — richer by far than all other powers—is nevertheless "pressed" with greater contradictions. The sharp crisis in the rest of the world will inevitably pull America down. We may point out, for instance, that as a result of the war, American exports in the first nine months of 1940 have increased by about 37%. The major part of this increase is attributable to war orders from Great Britain. Should Great Britain go under, or should Europe fight a long war, and these orders be not forthcoming, than obviously the U. S. would be in a deep rut.

### CAPITALIST "UNITY"

During the last world war, the capitalist powers confined their plans for recovery primarily to the conquest of markets from their rivals. As a suppressing weapon against the defeated powers, it was thought necessary to establish such political organizations as the League of Nations, etc. But these were purely secondary factors to the conquest of colonies. Now in the second world war, all powers recognize that much more is necessary than merely the conquest of colonies, than merely establishment of a weak League of Nations. A number of indications of this have already become apparent. For instance, at the time France was conquered, Britain proposed to France a union of the two nations and the two empires. The main idea here was that on the basis of the stronger resources of Britain, French economy could be brought up sufficiently to keep the battle going and to avert the inevitable revolution. Other plans along this line have already been formulated by the Axis which proposes a "United States of Europe"; and by various capitalist forces in U.S. and in Great Britain, who are in favor of union between both powers. Undoubtedly other such measures will be proposed and other such efforts will be increased as the war goes on. The crisis is far too deep for any one power to solve it alone! But the new amalgamations of nations, instead of facilitating the natural divisions of labor, will, as usual under capitalism, seriously retard that process. The price of the German United States of Europe has already been indicated. Added to the semi-slavery of the Germans themselves is the complete slavery or almost complete slavery, for instance, of the Polish People, the Jewish minority, and the others who are literally being exterminated and whose industrial resources are literally being eliminated.

Whether she likes it or not, present "collaboration" between U.S. & Great Britain is also having a similar effect. American industry is gaining in momentum while British industry is being destroyed and seriously handicapped by war.

Whichever way you turn in the political sphere, just as whichever way you turn in all sections of the economic sphere, the productive as well as the financial, the net result of the whole process is to hasten the retirement of the forces of production on a world scale and with it, naturally, the living standards of the oppressed. Whether this or that nation gains a temporary respite from this process as a result of its "victory" during the war, it cannot but go under as the rest of the ship of integrated world economy goes down. The crisis will bring out social results far too severe for any capitalist power to withstand, even a victorious power.

### OBJECTIVE BASE FOR REVOLUTION

The present World War, like the last war, will not be stopped on the battlefields by military victories. Armistice will be forced by the uprising revolutionary masses. The complete sweep of this revolutionary turn cannot be postponed for a long period after the war. The dislocation of capitalist economy is reaching

unthought of levels. The petty bourgeoisie is becoming further demoralized as a result of damages in economy brought about by the war. The proletariat will face a new round of revolutions before the war is over. The capitalists undoubtedly have learned a lesson from the last World War from the Russian revolution. They undoubtedly are "prepared" to squelch the uprisings that they know are inevitable.

But the objective economic factors are far more potent than even the conscious plans of the capitalists themselves. A repetition of the Hungarian crisis, where the capitalists were so disorganized that the workers were able to take power without even a fight, may occur in many countries. Favorable situations for revolutions such as occurred during the 1923 Ruhr crisis will be multiplied many times. Small voices speaking for the interest of the proletariat will yet make themselves heard. If ever there was proof that history is on our side, the decomposition of capitalist economy during the present war is that proof.

November 28, 1940.

# The I.C.C. Faces 1941

Immediately prior to the outbreak of the second World Imperialist War, the **International Contact Commission** for the New Communist, (4th) International was officially formed. The bitter chain of defeats of the post-October revolutionary struggles; the denigration of the Communist International into the most deadly social reformist force; continued opportunist policies of the Second International, the emergence of Fascism in Germany and its strangulating growth at the expense of the European proletariat; the stifling, by both direct and indirect counter-revolutionary practices, of the Spanish Revolution; and now sixteen months of a barbarous predatory struggle, in which the bourgeoisie of the previously defeated powers, having resorted to Fascism, are at death grips with the more bloated imperialist bandits still masquerading under the cloak of "democracy" — this chain of events has had a most devitalizing effect upon the international revolutionary forces of the working class.

The imperialist war with its persecution, propaganda, and pressure, has accelerated the process of demoralization, disillusionment and political capitulation. But on the other side of the picture the small forces and organizations of the International Contact Commission have not only been able to maintain their principled Marxian intransigence and organizational consolidation, but have been able to attract still other forces and groups, and to make small gains. To many people the significance of this latter event, in relation to the struggle against the imperialist war, is entirely lost. And this is no accident. For, having already given up the principles of Marxism, not being able to recognize that the present bloody events are a negative corroboration of Marxism, the revisionists, liberals, and their ilk could hardly be expected to have digested the lessons of the Spanish, German, and other defeats, as well as the October victory. They have completely lost hope in the cause of the proletariat, and the pressure of events and betrayals has pushed them into the camp of opportunism, into either direct or covert service to the bourgeoisie, into support of the imperialist bloodbath.

On a world scale, the trend continues today as in 1915, increasingly to the right. Not a single other organization today adheres to the fundamental doctrines of Marx and Lenin. (We do not gloat over this, on the contrary, we wish it were otherwise, that the forces of Marxism were a thousand-fold stronger than they are today.) Every other international tendency is in the camp of opportunism. Not a single other tendency remembers or advocates Lenin's position of carrying on the class struggle in this period of the imperialist war, i. e., revolutionary defeatism.

## TREND TOWARD THE RIGHT

Every sharp turn of events has seen a new form of revisionism. In the days, almost a hundred years ago, Marx and Engels first consolidated their fundamental concepts against the bourgeois philosophers and economists; then they had to struggle against Proudhon, Bakunin. The building of the Second International saw the emergence of anti Marxian tendencies within the Marxist organizations (Bernstein in Germany, Menshevism in Russia, etc.); and on August 14, 1914 the whole Second International collapsed there was culminated one of the lowest ebbs of the working class movement. And it was only after the outbreak of the first World War that the revolutionary Marxists under Lenin's leadership were able to consolidate a small force internationally. When one remembers that Lenin was in a minority even at the "left" Zimmerwald conference on the war question, then we can understand that the present demoralization and revisionism is nothing new. It is a concomitant of every sharp turn of events; we expected it; we do not lose faith because of it.

We are fortunate in having this previous lesson of the relationship of the numerically small Marxist force to the titanic pressure of the imperialists and their agents; we not only have the theoretical position of Lenin and his comrades in the days when they were calling for a New (3rd) International, but we have the historical confirmation of these principles in the subsequent October Revolution. In this sense, our task is somewhat easier than it was for the revolutionary Marxist of the first World War period.



## INTERNATIONAL UNITY

Moreover, we were further fortunate in being able to consolidate out international tendency **before** the outbreak of the war, whereas Lenin was handicapped by not being able to do so until after the outbreak of the 1914-1918 bloodbath. Our **international** tendency exists with comrades on **both** sides of the trenches (the Red Front forces of Germany, the Leninist League of Scotland forces) that from the beginning were united on the principle of revolutionary defeatism. It should be noted that there have been no waverings on this question, and likewise on its "opposite", i. e., the defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and its Stalinist and other agents; the forces of the I.C.C. stand firm on both aspects of the same fundamental questions.

The formation of the I.C.C. before the outbreak of the imperialist war has laid the base for its extension into the New Communist (4th) International, when the revolutionary struggles that the war is preparing come to the surface.

That is why we are not disheartened by the efforts of the bourgeoisie to crush the proletariat, or by the defeatist cynicism of the bourgeois "liberals" and ultra-lefts who feel that the bourgeoisie are, or will be, successful in this task, or by those who, in order not to be "isolated from the masses", capitulate to the bourgeois policies that dominate the masses. We recognize these as forms of pressure of decaying capitalist society. And that is why we insist all the more on maintaining and striving in action to realize the **HISTORIC INTERESTS** of the proletariat; the policy of revolutionary defeatism in order to turn the imperialist war into civil war, the overthrow of capitalism and the building of the Socialist Society.

This in no way means that we believe in the mechanical inevitability of Communism. The defeats of the past twenty years have amply demonstrated that the objective decay of capitalism does not automatically bring the victory of the working class. On the contrary,

they fully prove the necessity of a Marxian party capable of guiding the struggles of the masses to power.

The objective factors of capitalist decay in the imperialist war are more than over-ripe. The death, destruction, misery, hunger, increased oppression and exploitation are beginning to inculcate the working class with a consciousness of their historical interests, to permit them to see through the sham demagoguery of imperialist propaganda, and to prepare the workers to use the guns that have been given them against their real oppressors.

It is the task of the revolutionary Marxists and the **INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION** to deepen, further, extend and accelerate these processes through the policies of revolutionary defeatism. Victory is **not** mechanically inevitable; but the ability to maintain and extend in action the principles of revolutionary Marxism, and to give them roots in the mass of the exploited — this will permit a successful condition of the struggle.

It is with this perspective that the International Contact Commission faces 1941.

### "OUR LINE WILL PROVE RIGHT"

Yes, we are isolated, and in many cases hounded by the watchdogs of imperialism. But with an understanding that revolutionary situations are maturing and developing, with the firm realization that **before 1941 has run its course, this outbreak of world revolution will be much further advanced**, we continue the work of revolutionary Marxism.

As Lenin said in a similar situation:

"Even if it is necessary to remain in a minority, be it so. We must not be afraid to be in minority. We will carry on the work of criticism in order to free the masses from deceit... our line will prove right... all the oppressed will come to us. They have no other way out..."

It is with this conviction that the ICC faces 1941.

December 8th, 1940.

# Index of the 'International News'

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We publish below a complete index of the English editions of **INTERNATIONAL NEWS** since the first issue of Sep-

tember, 1939. Individual copies may be obtained, pre-paid, for ten cents; the complete two volumes may be obtained for \$1.00.

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