FOR A PEOPLE’S POLICY IN U. S.-SOVIET RELATIONS!*

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SINCE the signing of the military, political and economic alliance by Germany, Japan and Italy in Berlin on September 27, a strong agitation has sprung up in the United States for the establishment of better relations between the United States Government and the United States Government and by American reactionary circles generally, their new spirit of “friendliness” to that country seems a bit synthetic and its ulterior motive rather obvious. The plain fact is that, stripped of all pretense, American and British imperialisms are in a difficult position in the war; a predicament which is dramatized by the announcement of the fascist triple alliance. They badly need the U.S.S.R. as a military ally, and it is to satisfy this necessity that their present “pro-Soviet” agitation is directed. It would be perfect for them if they could acquire the Soviet Union as a belligerent on their side. With that great country lashing into Japan in the East and into Germany in the West, the British and American tories could (and would) sit back on their haunches, have a good laugh, and wait to pick up the pieces after the war had finished. Indeed, in all probability, before the fracas was over, they would actually be helping Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado to fight the Soviet Union. Their long record of inveterate hatred of the U.S.S.R. justifies this skepticism regarding

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their present "friendly" attitude towards the Soviet Union.

However, inasmuch as it is the long-established policy of the Soviet Union to live in the best possible relationship with all other countries —through trade agreements, peace pacts, non-aggression treaties and the like—it is quite possible that the present situation will result in a substantial betterment in Soviet-American relations, that is, as far as such improvement is possible in view of the widely diverging policies of the two governments. In fact, the United States Government has already somewhat modified its "moral"-economic embargo against the U.S.S.R. But it is hardly to be expected that the Soviet people will walk into the war trap which the American and British imperialists are now so busily spreading before their feet.

Collaboration between the American and Soviet nations is a matter of the very greatest importance, not only to the people of this country but of the whole world. There are two general approaches to the question. The first, which we have already briefly indicated, is that of the imperialists. It is based upon their policy of war and their desire to exploit the U.S.S.R. as a military ally. This path, as we have seen, must eventually lead to a dead-end.

The second approach to the question of closer American-Soviet relations, the approach of the people, is based on a policy of peace. This is the true path for the development of the maximum Soviet-American friendship and cooperation. The peoples of the two countries are profoundly opposed to becoming involved in the brutal imperialist slaughter and both want to make the recurrence of such a monstrous war crime impossible. The U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., collaborating together for peace, would be the center around which could rally all the peaceful and constructive forces of the world, constituting an irresistible power.

With this general question assuming such fundamental importance, the American people should come to understand the major conditions necessary for effective working together of the United States and the Soviet Union. These conditions are threefold: (a) a fundamental peace policy; (b) an attitude of neutrality towards the imperialist war; and (c) common democratic objectives. Let us consider each of these points in the light of present-day Soviet and American policies.

(a) A Fundamental Peace Policy

The first essential for a solid collaboration between the United States and the U.S.S.R. is an undeviating policy of world peace. This policy the Soviet Union already possesses. By the very nature of its economic, political and social make-up, it is unshakeably committed to a program of peace. With its industries and land owned collectively by the people, with human exploitation abolished, and all social classes liquidated, Soviet society has no over-production of commodities, no industrial crises, no parasitic and war-making ruling class, no imperialistic drive to conquer foreign markets and colonies. It has within
it, therefore, none of the forces that make for modern, imperialist war. The whole structure of the Soviet Union irresistibly impels it to cultivate the peace and welfare of its own citizens and to live and trade in friendly intercourse with other nations. Charges of "Red Imperialism" directed against the Soviet Union by Social-Democrats and others are a contradiction in terms, a lie on their face. Moreover, the socialist peace principles of the U.S.S.R. constitute the general pattern by which humanity will eventually abolish this monster war from the face of the earth.

Accordingly, since its inception the Soviet Union has been the world leader in the struggle for international peace. Repeatedly it has proposed complete or partial disarmament to the capitalist powers, which they have cynically rejected. It also developed the policy of making non-aggression pacts with all willing governments. Then, too, with the rise of Hitler and the growing threat of war, the U.S.S.R. championed the plan, within and without the League of Nations, of forming an international peace front of all the democratic peoples to restrain the fascist aggressors. This historic project, which would have halted the war, was defeated by the opposition of Chamberlain, Blum and Roosevelt and their Social-Democratic aids.

The peace policy of the Soviet Union, however, is no utopian attempt at isolationism. No more than the U.S.A., can the U.S.S.R. cut itself off from the rest of the world. The Soviet Government's foreign policy is based upon a militant proletarian internationalism. The U.S.-S.R. literally "wages" peace. Not only does it try to restrain the rampant imperialist states, but as a settled practice, it always comes militantly to the support of any peaceful people attacked by aggressors. Spain was one example of this, China is another, and during the Nazi attack upon Czechoslovakia the Soviet Government, as repeatedly acknowledged by President Benes, offered alone to defend that country against the fascist invaders. Nor has the Soviet Union hesitated, with its Red Army, to liberate the oppressed peoples on its borders, and to help them establish socialism. Through this positive policy of peace, the Soviet Union, as the only socialist country, exercises its natural role as the world leader of all oppressed peoples.

Obviously the peace policy of the Soviet Union—its living and trading in harmony with the other great states and its active defense of the peace and national independence of invaded peoples—dovetails with the interests and desires of the overwhelming mass of the American people, who feel themselves being forced into the useless war butchery and who are increasingly realizing the futility of isolationism. But the policy of the United States Government has nothing in common with the people's desires for peace. Capitalist, imperialist, dominated by a profit-hungry ruling-owning class, our Government is following a war policy, skilfully disguised with trappings of "national defense." It is deeply involved in the ruthless
struggle now going on among the imperialist powers over questions of markets, raw materials, colonies and the control of the whole earth. It is out to seize what it can in Latin America, the Far East and elsewhere. It wants to become the dominant world power. This militant imperialism is taking us headlong into the war. After the present national election, regardless of whether Roosevelt or Willkie is elected, we can expect a coalition government of the Republican and Democratic parties and a greatly increased drive to plunge this country into the war.

From the foregoing it is clear that between the basic peace policy of the socialist Soviet Union and the war policy of the imperialist United States, there is a wide gulf. This places severe limitations upon the good relations possible between the present United States Government and the Soviet Government. Before a solid and comprehensive collaboration can be developed between them the abyss separating their policies must be bridged over by our Government adopting a true policy of peace. This can be accomplished only if the basic democratic forces of our country—the trade unions, farmers' organizations, youth and women's movements, etc., bring enough pressure to bear against the Government either to curb or to break altogether the power of the war-making imperialists. Until this is done, cooperation between the American and Soviet governments, despite all efforts of the U.S.S.R., must rest upon a relatively restricted, temporary, and shaky basis.

(b) A Policy of Neutrality

The second basic essential for a thoroughgoing American-Soviet collaboration is an attitude of neutrality towards the present European war. The Soviet people have correctly condemned this war as an unjust war, a murderous struggle among ruthless imperialist capitalist powers for colonies and world domination, and their Government has adopted the intelligent policy of keeping out of it. Enemies of the Soviet Union undertake to deny that its policy is one of neutrality, trying to picture it as, to use the words of Churchill, "a riddle wrapped in mystery inside an enigma." Others call it an ally of Nazi Germany. Especially they contend that the Soviet-German pact of fourteen months ago was an act of alliance with Germany which started the war. They also assert that the U.S.-S.R. is now a silent partner in the recently announced agreement for joint military action between Germany, Japan and Italy.

But these enemy allegations cannot bear investigation. At the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, held in January, 1934, Stalin in answering similar charges that were being made at the time, stated the relationship of the U.S.S.R. towards the imperialist countries as follows:

"We never had any orientation towards Germany nor have we any orientation towards Poland and France. Our orientation in the past and in the future is towards the U.S.S.R. and towards the U.S.S.R. alone. And if the interests of the
U.S.S.R. demand rapprochement with this or that country which is not interested in disturbing the peace, we should take this step without hesitation." *(Socialism Victorious*, p. 20, International Publishers, New York.)

The Soviet Government has steadily followed this policy of keeping out of the war lineups of the imperialist states, while at the same time cooperating with any country desirous of peace, a policy which, as we have already seen, does not prevent the U.S.S.R. from giving active assistance to small or weak peoples attacked by aggressor neighbors.

In the light of this neutrality policy, the significance of the Soviet-German pact was that the Soviet Union, its long efforts to establish the international peace front having obviously failed (because of Chamberlain's, Blum's and Roosevelt's sabotage) and the war having become inevitable, merely stepped out of the line of fire and, through its celebrated non-aggression pact with Germany, adopted an attitude of neutrality towards the war that was beginning. To charge the Soviet Government, therefore, with responsibility for the war amounts, in plain English, to a capitalist confession that it was only the peace pressure of the Soviet Union that had been preventing the outbreak of the war and that when this pressure had to be removed the capitalist powers flew at each other's throats like unleashed tigers.

So far as the present tri-partite fascist military alliance is concerned, the neutrality of the U.S.-S.R. is attested to, not only by the clear statement of *Pravda* (September 30) that the Soviet policy of peace and neutrality "remains and will remain invariable," but also by the fact that the ambassadors of both sides in the war (including those of the United States) are wearing smooth the path to Moscow, trying to win over the Soviet Government to their respective causes. Indeed, the Pope himself has felt called upon to warn publicly the several capitalist governments against the "great danger" of thus "wooing" the hated Bolsheviks.

Following its established policy of peace, neutrality and friendly collaboration with all peoples, it is not outside the realm of possibility that the Soviet Government should soon sign a non-aggression pact with Japan, even as it has done with Germany and Turkey, and as it would so do with Great Britain and the United States. But we may rest assured that any such pact will not identify the Soviet Union with the predatory designs of Japan, but that it will advance and continue to protect the interests of the Chinese people, and will further the interests of socialism throughout the world.

The Soviet Union's policy of neutrality is, of course, no absolute guarantee that that country can stay out of war. There is always the danger of a deliberate attack from one or the other group, or both of the warring powers. But Soviet neutrality has demonstrated itself to be the intelligent and correct socialist policy to pursue amidst the present desperate struggles of war-mad world imperialism.
It has been so brilliantly successful that the whole capitalist world, however grudgingly, has had to acknowledge it. Thus, although encircled by heavily armed and irreconcilable enemy capitalist governments, the Soviet Union, alone of all the great world powers (not excluding the United States which is part way in the war), has been able to keep out of the slaughter.

While the imperialist states massacre each other’s peoples and destroy one another’s industries, the U.S.S.R. goes ahead peacefully building up its prosperity and strength, liberating neighboring oppressed countries, and daily growing in world prestige among the downtrodden and exploited millions. The Soviet Union is an oasis of hope and civilization amidst the wild desert of capitalist war and barbarism.

Beyond question the overwhelming majority of the American people, although often laboring under serious illusions as to the justice and character of the cause for which Great Britain is fighting, are nevertheless definitely in favor of such policies of peace and neutrality as would provide the basis for a solid, lasting and beneficial collaboration between the United States and the Soviet Union. They want to stay out of the war, they want to halt the imperialist aggressors, they want to assist the Chinese and other oppressed peoples and they want a just and lasting world peace. These sentiments they have made manifest time and again in Gallup polls and various other expressions of public opinion.

But the American Government, responding to the dictates of Wall Street, is carrying out no such policy of peaceful neutrality. On the contrary, it is part and parcel of the present war for the imperialist redivision of the world, and it bears its full share of responsibility for the war. It is seeking to seize whatever colonies and spheres of influence it can grab from the remnants of the crumbling British, French, Belgian and Dutch empires. The United States is clearly lined up with one side of the war, that of Great Britain. Under transparent pretenses of “national defense” it is building up a gigantic armed force for the purpose of aggressively entering the war. The plan of “all aid to Great Britain” is a belligerent policy. It has already led to a number of definite war acts on the part of the Roosevelt Administration, such as the shipment of the secret army airplanes and the “obsolete” destroyers to England. It is directly stimulating the spread of the war.

Izvestia (September 30) was correct in stating that “closer British-American military cooperation . . . served as one of the most decisive stimuli for the Berlin pact.” Behind this policy of systematically aiding Great Britain there exists, in all probability, a more or less well-developed secret understanding, or possibly even a definite war alliance, with Great Britain. When the national election is out of the way, we shall probably see this secret understanding or war alliance made more manifest by even bolder acts of pro-British support.

Obviously, with the Soviet Gov-
ernment following a policy of genuine neutrality and the American Government pursuing a course that leads straight towards belligerency, the grounds for effective collaboration between the two governments are greatly restricted. In line with the interests of the American people, and particularly to promote the Soviet-American collaboration we are discussing, it is necessary that the orientation of our Government be changed from one of moving into war into one of neutrality towards the war. To accomplish this re-orientation is the task of the great mass of democratic, peace-loving people in the United States, who must find the ways and means to make their will prevail against that of the warmongering imperialists who are working day and night to plunge our country into the criminally stupid imperialist war.

(c) Common Democratic Objectives

The third basic essential necessary for effective American-Soviet cooperation, in addition to the peace and neutrality policies we have already discussed, is the possession of harmonious democratic objectives in other respects by the two countries. For such cooperation it is not imperative, of course, that the United States adopt the Soviet socialist system, the highest form of democracy, but it should, at least, be moving in the general direction of strengthening its democratic structure and practices.

The Soviet Union is the most profoundly democratic country this earth has ever known. Its democracy, based upon socialization of industry and the land, and the abolition of all class division, is on an entirely higher level than any type of democracy that capitalism has ever produced or can produce. Bourgeois, Social-Democratic and Trotskyite slanderers of the Soviet Union deny these facts, of course, but occasionally an honest, non-Communist voice speaks out regarding them. Thus Lieutenant-Commander Charles S. Seeley, United States Navy (retired), in his book, *Russia and the Approach to Armageddon* (p. 85), gets a glimpse of one angle of the type of democracy that is growing among the Soviet people:

"It is a different kind of freedom; a freedom we do not have, never have had, and never in our most pleasant dreams expect to have. The Russians are free from all worry and fear of a helpless, dependent old age. They are free from all worry and fear of losing their jobs, crop failure, factory shut-downs, strikes, etc. They are free from all worry about doctors' bills, store bills, interest on the mortgage, or any other money matters. They are free from all worry about whether or not their children will be properly educated. They are even free from all worry and fear of everlasting torment in hell, because the Bolsheviks have abolished the future plan of abode for folks that God dislikes."

In accordance with its own fundamentally democratic character internally, the inevitable international orientation of the Soviet Union is to collaborate with all democratic peoples and movements. Its support of Spain and China and its
struggle to construct the international peace front of the democracies are only a few among many examples of its world democratic policies. Therefore, the enemy charges that the Soviet Union is a "totalitarian" state, whose natural affiliation is with the fascist powers, is a monstrous political distortion.

The capitalists of the world, singularly unconvinced by Social-Democratic denials of Soviet democracy, are quite aware of the socialist character of the U.S.S.R. and of its democratic international orientation. This is precisely why they hate it so bitterly and oppose it so relentlessly. It is not so much that they fear a conquering Red Army (although this is by no means left out of their calculations) as it is that, with a dying social system on their hands, they dread the effects upon their own exploited and harassed peoples of the great world example set by the flourishing socialist system in the U.S.S.R. They consider the very existence of the Soviet Union a grave menace to their whole international system of exploitation and robbery.

Ever since the foundation of the Soviet Government, the capitalist states have never ceased to work and plot against it, individually and collectively. A dozen of them, including the United States, tried unavailingingly to overthrow the Soviet Government by armed intervention in 1918-1920, and they later sought for many years to strangle it by economic and diplomatic blockade. For years also, tory England and France schemed to destroy the Soviet Union, and it was in the ill-fated hope that Hitler would march his troops eastward that, so fatally for themselves, they armed and "appeased" him. Germany, Japan, and Italy, with their anti-Comintern pacts and their open threats to invade Soviet territory, have also unmistakably displayed their deep hatred of the Soviet system. Could these powers, on both sides of the war, succeed in inveigling or forcing the U.S.S.R. into the present war, they would probably finally gang up against it and try to annihilate it, or at least to make the peace at its heavy expense. Throughout its history the Soviet Government has had to maneuver skillfully to prevent a united imperialist coalition against it, and its success in doing this constitutes a diplomatic victory of the very greatest magnitude.

The United States, most powerful of the imperialist powers, has shared fully in the world anti-Soviet orientation characteristic of all the great capitalist states. From the days of its ill-starred armed attack upon the newly-born Soviet Russia down to the present time, the American Government has scorned to hide its hatred for the first socialist government. Its long-continued policy of non-recognition, its systematic attempts to misinterpret the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement, its "appeasement" of Japan in the hope that this power would attack the U.S.S.R. and, lately, its obvious attempt to transform the Soviet-Finnish conflict into a general capitalist anti-Soviet war, are characteristic features of American imperialistic hostility towards the U.S.S.R.
The deeper the crisis of capitalism becomes the more the capitalists in the various countries turn towards fascism and the more they hate and fear the Soviet Union and try to unite to destroy it. This reactionary tendency is pronouncedly evidenced in the United States. The great capitalists are, with success, heading the country both into the war and towards a reactionary dictatorship. In spite of their present blandishments towards the Soviet Union in their efforts to win it as a war ally, never was their hatred of that country and its socialism sharper than now.

Obviously the Soviet Government cannot trust and solidly cooperate with capitalist governments which are waiting to knife it at the first opportunity. True enough, it makes trade agreements, peace treaties and non-aggression pacts with these governments, and it lives up to them loyally. Yet at its peril would it forget the type of social tiger with which it is dealing. Particularly now the Soviet Government cannot ignore the transparent desires of British and American imperialism to win it as a war ally to do the fighting for them against Germany and Japan.

The question of democracy, therefore, is fundamental in determining the relationship between the Soviet Union and other powers. The more democratic a country is, the more easily and closely it will come into good working relations with the U.S.S.R. When, for example, the Soviet Government was conducting its determined fight to organize the international peace front to restrain the fascist aggressors, the fate of this vital project was definitely tied up with the status of democracy in Great Britain, France and the United States. The Tories in these countries, of course, were against the peace front. So, in order for it to succeed and to prevent the world from being drenched in blood, the democratic forces in these countries—the workers’ parties, trade unions, farmers’ organizations, etc.—necessarily had to bring irresistible mass pressure to bear against their unwilling governments or actually to take them over. But this was not accomplished. Because, as usual, the Social-Democratic mass leadership in the bourgeois-democratic countries, tailing along after the capitalist class and accepting its theory that the Soviet Union was the main enemy, sabotaged the whole peace front and allowed the war-makers to have their way. Similarly the fate of the Franco-Soviet mutual defense pact was tied up with that of French democracy. The reactionaries hated this pact, and the only way it could have been given vitality was for the democratic masses to rally solidly behind it. But again the Social-Democratic Party and trade union leaders were more interested in defeating the Soviet Union than they were in stopping the war. They destroyed the Popular Front, and with it went not only French democracy, but also the Franco-Soviet pact.

The main lesson in all this for the American people is that the question of a powerful collaboration between the peace-loving American and Soviet peoples is inextricably bound up with the question of strengthen-
ing democracy in this country. To establish that close cooperation is the task of the workers, farmers, professionals and other democratic strata, as part of their general fight for peace, democracy and prosperity. It cannot and will not be done by the capitalist-minded politicians who are now running our government. Only when the people themselves take up the question of Soviet-American collaboration as their own great political issue will the necessary progress be made towards achieving it.

The Possibilities of American-Soviet Cooperation

It is clear that the United States cannot avoid becoming involved in the present war nor from suffering its consequences merely by sticking its head in the sand, as the isolationists feebly advise. It should also be no less clear that the proper road for our nation does not lie in joining up with Great Britain and sacrificing our blood and substance in the criminal imperialist war. The intelligent course for the American people to take is not only to stay out of the war but also, in collaboration with the Soviet people, to embark upon a positive policy of world peace. In the foregoing pages we have seen that such Soviet-American cooperation is possible and we have also examined the main bases necessary for its firm establishment.

The United States and the Soviet Union, cooperating actively for peace, would form a world center towards which would gravitate in one form or another such great peace forces as the Chinese, Indian and Latin American peoples, the oppressed national minorities and vanquished nations, and the labor and farmer movements of the world. Even a casual indication of the potential strength of these vast aggregations of humanity shows that they would be well able to more than defend themselves from the assaults of the fascist and other imperialist war-making states.

To begin with, a truly democratic United States, with its gigantic economic resources, would be a tremendous force for peace. Also, the Latin American peoples, democratized, armed and united, could defend their country from all attacks. As for the Chinese people, their valorous repulse of arrogant Japanese imperialism has shown their great strength. And as for the Soviet Union, it is perhaps the greatest military power of all. Bourgeois and Social-Democratic writers, in their campaigns to slander everything about the Soviet Union, have deliberately minimized its military strength. But current facts give these liars their answer. There was nothing Hitler wanted more than the rich Ukraine and he threatened repeatedly to invade it. But when it came to a showdown he chose to fight Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, France and Great Britain together (with the United States in prospect) rather than try conclusions with the Red Army. Likewise Japan in the East, burning to seize the strategic Soviet Maritime Provinces and also to put a stop to Soviet aid to China, tried its teeth on the granite of the
Red Army and had such a bad experience thereby that it gave the matter up as a bad job.

With even a modicum of organization, such as could be furnished by Soviet-American collaboration, the above-listed peoples and movements and many others, fighting for elementary principles of peace, liberty and progress, could unite and constitute an irresistible force. Not only by direct resistance could they hold the warlike imperialist powers in check, but they also could readily build up a democratic and peace backfire behind the imperialists in their own countries that would eventually bring their reactionary regimes to the ground.

But the working together of the democratic, anti-imperialist and socialist forces of the world, which could develop around the collaboration of a democratic America and the U.S.S.R., would confront historically much greater tasks than the preservation or restoration of their own peace and national independence, vitally important though these things may be. Such a combination of all the peaceful and progressive forces of humanity especially would face the tremendous job of the economic and political reconstruction of the world, and they could accomplish it.

Imperialist capitalism is bankrupt. It is torn asunder with destructive and insoluble economic and political conflicts. It can no longer keep its industries in operation, it cannot feed the starving populations, it cannot prevent the rival states from murderously slashing into one another. All it holds henceforth in prospect for humanity is endless starvation, fascism and war. The World War of 1914-18 dealt the capitalist system a deadly blow from which it has never recovered, and the present war is giving the system an even more devastating smash. Capitalism is historically sentenced to death.

The League of Nations was unable to reconsolidate capitalism after the last war, and Hitler's New World Order, dividing the world into four great divisions, to be controlled by the four great powers—Germany, Japan, the United States and U.S.S.R.—cannot cure capitalism after this still more ruinous war. The fascists' world scheme, if they actually succeeded in setting it up, could not solve the basic contradictions that are destroying capitalism. On the contrary, it could but lead to deeper and more prolonged economic crises, greatly sharpened class struggles and endless wars by the dominant fascist powers against the oppressed peoples, desperate struggles among the great fascist empires themselves, and fierce attacks by all the world reactionary forces against the Soviet Union and the rest of the expanding socialist world. As for the "democratic" countries—the United States and Great Britain—their bourgeois have no program whatever for solving the world crisis. They have no after-war plan for democracy, and it is no accident that Prime Minister Churchill openly confesses that he cannot state Britain's war aims. The "democratic" governments of these two countries move in the general direction of fascism.
The only possible solution for humanity's present miseries and to avert its unthinkable future under a rotting capitalist system is for the progressive forces of the world to take the situation in hand themselves. Popular Front movements and governments in the respective countries; a linking together of the democratic and anti-imperialist peoples internationally, with Soviet-American cooperation as its core; a determined democratic struggle to break the economic and political power of finance capital, both in its domestic and international aspects—this is the general path along which society is heading. It must result eventually in the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of world socialism. There is no alternative but death and destruction for the world's masses.

The question of American-Soviet collaboration, not in the war sense of the imperialists, but in the peace meaning of the people, must be made a major political issue in the United States. It is high time that the labor movement woke up to this necessity. Soviet slandering, Red-baiting, and persecution of the Communist Party must be dropped, as giving direct aid to the reactionary and fascist enemy. The trade unions should become leaders in the fight to develop a sound cooperation between a democratic America and the Soviet Union. Upon such cooperation depends their future welfare, as well as that of the whole American people.