The American War Party

Stalinists Follow "Holy War" Policy to Reaction

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE

WALTER DURANTY, who has long been recognized as an unofficial spokesman of the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union, recently summed up from Moscow the war policy dictated to the American Communist Party.

"What Russia would really like," he cabled to the New York Times, "would be a Russo-American pact to prevent war, if necessary by fighting, because every Russian believes that no fighting would be necessary if the two countries could get together and say they would not allow war."

Of course, no one, Stalinite or otherwise, really believes that a mere alliance of powers will prevent war or maintain the status-quo under capitalism. Hence, the real meat of the Duranty dispatch lies in the words: "if necessary by fighting." And all the domestic politics of Major General Earl Browder, who says that if he ever got an order from Moscow he would "throw it into the waste-basket," are calculated on the basis of attempting to involve the United States in an alliance with the great "democratic," "peace-loving" powers like England and France, and in a war with any of the potential enemies of the Soviet Union. This is the real meaning of his "Twentieth Century Americanism" and of his "American League for Peace thru War."

"The Enemy Is At Home!"

Hence the efforts of the American Stalinites may be directed against the war-makers in Germany or Italy but they must not be aimed at the only war-makers that the American working class can really wage an effective fight against: our own war-makers. Yet the struggle against imperialism and war, and the struggle against capitalism itself, are like the charity of the proverb—it must begin at home! It is only the struggle against one's own ruling class and one's own war-makers that is truly "national in form, international in essence." Blowing spitballs at long distance at the rulers and war-makers of other lands, and covering up your own, is "international" in form, but nationalistic—jingoistic—in essence. In the familiar terms of the last war, it is "social-chauvinism," "social-patriotism," class treason.

Stalinism Against Class Independence

The American Stalinist leaders are ready to accept consistently all the consequences of their new position. The successful waging of modern war requires the softening of the class struggle at home. Already the Communist Party is trying to prevent the most urgent necessity of the American workers, their conscious separation politically and ideologically as a class from that vague and illusory entity "the people." The whole meaning of the theory and practise of the "People's Front" lies in the attempt to prevent that growing consciousness of separate aims and the development of separate organization. The Communist Party is trying to submerge the growing movement for independent political action of labor into the Democratic party and has virtually liquidated itself into an agency of Roosevelt and a sort of unacknowledged or illegitimate half-brother of that party. In France, the Communist Party pretends to grumble as it supports Daladier while he breaks a strike with troops at Marseilles and scraps the forty-hour week "for the war emergency." In the United States, Browder doesn't even pretend to grumble at Roosevelt.

Towards Totalitarianism

Modern warfare so completely enlists the total population, in farm and factory as well as at the front, that it requires for its successful prosecution a totalitarian state. In a capitalist democracy, such a war-totalitarianism is brought about by "abolishing" the class struggle, by crushing all labor organizations that refuse to be harnessed to the governmental war machine, by providing a shining veil of idealistic and hypocritical phrases ("make the world safe for democracy," "quarantine the aggressors," "war on the war-makers," etc.) to cover the naked imperialist and capitalist aims of the ruling class; and above all by creating a dictator psychology under such slogans as "stand behind the President."

Here the Daily Worker is over-eager and goes to such ridiculous lengths as must surely offend every thinking person. No other paper has "discovered" so many plots to assassinate the President. The Daily Worker unearths such plots on an average of once a month. On April 13 of this year, they dug up the assassination of Lincoln, seventy-tree years earlier, as an historic parallel! And Earl Browder told a Hippodrome audience:

"When Lincoln was assassinated, the deed was clearly protected and organized from within government circles. . . . And if Jefferson had his Burr, let us not forget that Roosevelt has his Garner."

But not content with going back to Lincoln and Jefferson, during the same month the Daily Worker editors went back to Wang Ming and discovered that "two thousand years ago China had its 'New Deal' under Wang Ming, who set himself up as emperor and finally was assassinated." This brilliant discovery gleaned from the curator of a Chicago Museum via the New York Times, was solemnly pronounced to be "the latest wrinkle in the campaign of the reactionaries as they whip up a lynch-spirit against the New Deal and incite the assassination of President Roosevelt." (Daily Worker editorial, April 5, 1938).

Browder Defends The Legion

Totalitarianism needs, besides the blind worship of a leader, extra-official shock troops in the form of the Italian Black Shirts, the German Storm Troopers, and the war veterans organization established on a reactionary, chauvinistic basis in other countries. The nearest American analogue of importance is the American Legion. Originally organized by wealthy reactionaries, it has been repeatedly used to break strikes, to raid union halls, suppress free speech and whip up a fervor of reaction in many parts of the country. When the last American Legion convention was held in New York, the Communist Party greeted it in the following terms:

"AMERICAN LEGION PROMOTES PEACE"

"The American Legion, now holding its convention in New York, feels that the peace of the U. S. is in immediate danger.

"That is why the question of peace is playing such a prominent role in the Legion's activities. National Commander Harry W. Colmarry recommended to the Legion gathering that it propose and participate in a national peace conference. . . . Such a conference could be a tremendous force to arouse action to maintain peace. We of the West Side should see to it that our boys in the American Legion should support and promote such a program." (West Side Flash, September 22, 1938, organ of the 10th A.D. Unit, Communist Party).

When scholarly Professor Gellerman published a factual study of the origin, purposes and activities of the Legion, entitled "The American Legion as Educator," it was Earl Browder and the Daily Worker that rallied to the defense of the Legion against its "detractors"! And, in the Daily Worker of July 16 of this year, under the heading "Looking Toward the American Legion Convention," the paper reiterates: "The Legion, even tho a reactionary clique has tried to defame its name, has been the fighter for the welfare and rights of the hundreds of thousands of vets down

(*Continued on Page* 3)

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tions that can be later recommended in the nature of a report by this committee to the International Executive Board for final determination.

"The agreement between the union and C.I.O. also provides:

"All parties in the U.A.W. have earnestly affirmed their loyalty and allegiance to the C.I.O. and its leadership, principles and policies. It can be seen this agreement dissipates all rumors of rifts between the C.I.O. and the U.A.W.

"The full autonomy of the U.A.W. has never been questioned. Along with such recognition goes the responsibility and duty of the union, in keeping with the constitution, to prevent all activities which undermine, or which are detrimental to the best interests of the union or the C.I.O.

"The controversy regarding the expelled officers is submitted to the vice-chairmen of the C.I.O. as arbitrators, and their decision will be rendered on October 1 or as soon thereafter as possible.

"The agreement between the C.I.O. and the four expelled officers contains their consent to the submission of the controversy involving them to the vice-chairmen of the C.I.O. as arbitrators.

"The board and the committee express appreciation of the spirit of cooperation manifested by all groups in promoting peace, and not least of the patience and loyalty manifested by the membership.

"We wish to emphasize that this controversy was settled within the councils of the C.I.O. We make an earnest appeal to all parties concerned and the membership particularly to lend every support to the enforcement of this agreement."

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The American War Party

(*Continued from Page 2*)

thru the years."

Finally, "the ethics" of capitalist war-mongering and war-making requires that you do not inquire too closely into the sins of your own imperialist government or any of its allies, confining your idealistic efforts to freedom and self-determination for the victims of the "enemy countries." The French Communist Party, for example, denounces the freedom movement in French North Africa, which once it aided and helped to call into being, denounces it today as an agency of Hitler and Mussolini. The American C.P. has already more than hinted that the Philippine freedom movement is the work of Japanese agents. England, which parallels the Nazi terror thruout such vast semi-continents as India, becomes one of the "great democracies" that, under Eden if not Chamberlain, should "safeguard peace and freedom."

A favorite device of the defenders of the present system is to take the accomplished for granted and not inquire too closely into how the wealthy acquired their wealth. You may denounce the robbery not yet consummated, the fraud caught in the act, but if you would enter into polite society, you must not inquire how those who are already rich have acquired their wealth. Now that the Communist Party has entered into the homes of those in power—even tho it be into the Democratic party thru the servants entrance and under cover of night—Browder is willing to play the game and has even developed a theory to justify it. Let the reader consider well the following:

"The world organization of peace, like the organization of civil society itself, cannot begin by passing judgment upon all past crimes that arose from the prevailing anarchy, but it must begin by establishing certain standards which every one must now live up to, or find the world organized against them."

Thus does Earl Browder play the Emily Post to the working class of the great British, French and American empires. The theory of good-breeding here advanced has no more to do with the views of the working class, who need to challenge all established iniquities, than the Communist Party has to do today with communism or the "American League for Peace thru War" with the struggle against war and reaction. Those who would continue the struggle against war in this country will have to examine such words and deeds as have been cited above, and will find their way into the Keep America Out of War movement. And those who are for the continuance of the class struggle and the fight for revolutionary socialism will have to join the Independent Labor League of America. The so-called Communist Party of the Stalinists knows these aims no longer and uses such knowledge as once it had of them, the better to fight against them today.

regulation politics and politicians. These forces will oppose, just as they did in Pennsylvania, any and all attempts by the labor movement to utilize the Democratic (or Republican) party institutions. The old-line parties are boss parties, run for corporate interest, inherently hostile to the aspirations of the labor movement.

The course of the "primary purge" makes more clear than ever the need of independent political action for labor.

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