

World Socialism

COMMUNO-CHAUVINISM

By HERBERT ZAM

The Communist International and all its individual sections, are being rapidly pushed toward social-chauvinism, or more correctly speaking, toward communo-chauvinism; by the

present foreign policy of the Soviet Union. The Stalin-Laval communique was neither a mere diplomatic gesture, nor an incidental statement; that is now crystal-clear. It represented a definitely new policy of the Soviet Union, and a definitely new line of the Communist International. And the two are necessarily linked together. Only supine agologists for Stalin, like the Lovestoneites, can continue to maintain the fiction of the "duality" of his policy and criticize the Stalin-Laval statement, not for its false content, but for the fact that it was Stalin who signed it. If only Stalin had kept quiet and let Litvinov do the talking! Stalin himself, and his henchmen, militantly repudiate the idea of "dualism."

When the Soviet Union signed the Kellogg Pact, the revolutionists did not have to fall in love with it. It was a gesture for peace by the Soviet Union. The Franco-Soviet Alliance is a gesture for war. It is active not passive. And it requires more than mere words to carry out—it requires armies: not Red Armies, but bourgeois armies, commanded by militarists and chauvinists. As the New York Communist Freiheit declares, "What would be the use of a military alliance unless France is strong militarily?" A military alliance therefore requires that these who support it shall work to maintain the necessary military strength to make it effective. This is what the Communists have done. This is the meaning of the statement by the Czechoslovak Communist deputy Sverma:

"If the army of Czechoslovakia will consistently fight against German imperialism, the Czechoslovak Communists will support this fight and agitate for the army. . . ."

But this pact drives its supporters even further, not only into the camp of militarism, but straight into the camp of jingoism, of rabid patriotism. Let us listen to Thorez, the Secretary of the French Communist Party and the authoritative spokesman on this question:

"The dangers which menace the Soviet Union are grave . . . if under these conditions, a war against the Soviet Union broke out and if for any interests whatsoever, an imperialist state should find itself on the side of the Soviet Union, the war is not a war between two imperialist camps, for it would be monstrous to consider as imperialist the camp in which the land of socialism, the land of the working class, finds itself."

What is monstrous, from a revolutionary point of view, is Thorez's statement. Even if France, England and the United States are in one camp with the S. U., they still remain imperialists; they make war for imperialist motives; they will settle the war in an imperialist manner. Thorez talks about future combinations, but very conveniently forgets that such a possibility as he speaks of already existed. After the Bolshevik revolution in November, 1917, the Soviet Union found itself in the same camp with France, England and Japan. Did Lenin declare that due to the Soviet Union it was no longer an imperialist camp. Did he adopt Kerensky's policy of "revolution-

ary defensism." On the contrary, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had no illusions about the "democratic" allies, and hastened to pull out of their camp. History has amply demonstrated the correctness of Lenin's policy on this question. The policy of Stalin-Thorez is a direct descendent of Kerensky and a direct repudiation of Lenin.

The Communists, of course, cannot ignore the striking parallel between their present policy, and that of the social patriots in 1914. They try to discover differences.

"Now we are face to face with two factors which change the situation as compared with 1914," declares Thorez, "on the one hand, the existence of the Soviet Union, the fatherland of socialism, and on the other one, the ravages of fascism in central Europe."

Would France in the next war, be fighting for the Soviet Union; for democracy as against fascism? Nonsense! A fascist France would be equally hostile to Germany, perhaps more so. Would the Soviet Union be justified in making alliances with it for that reason?

Jacques Duclos, the Communist whip in the French parliament goes even further. An imperialist power he maintains, on the side of the Soviet Union "objectively serves the cause of peace, which is the same as the cause of the working class power; it objectively serves the cause of the proletariat. . . ."

Aside from the striking resemblance between this and Wilson's "war to end war," the question naturally arises: if an imperialist power "objectively serves the cause of peace, the cause of the proletariat," what should the proletariat do in such a case, Duclos does not answer, but Thorez answers plainly and categorically.

"The question has been asked me: In a war started by Hitler against the U. S. S. R. would you apply your slogan: Transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war,

"Not at all." Because in such a war it is not a question of an imperialist war, between two imperialist lands. It is a matter of a war against the Soviet Union.

With this policy the last justification for the existence of the Communist International has disappeared. Through all the years of failure, of disruption, of stupidity, the apologists for the C. I. could still point to a solitary flag waving in the swamp: "The C. I. will never capitulate to patriotism in the next war. We must keep it for that purpose." Now this flag is deeply embedded in that swamp. A cycle has been completed. The Communist International struggled out of the swamp of social chauvinism in 1914-1919, only to sink into a swamp of its own creation in 1935—the swamp of communo-chauvinism.

This is all the more reason for the revolutionary socialists here and in other countries to continue their efforts for a truly revolutionary policy, based only on the interests of the proletariat and independent of all diplomatic maneuvers. Revolutionary Socialism can be successful only if it avoids the snare of patriotism and works consistently along the lines of the slogan "The enemy is at home."