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IN MEXICO

FOR A NEW COMMUNIST (4th)
INTERNATIONAL!

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ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO:

INTERNATIONAL NEWS, 1904 Division St., Chicago, Illinois, USA

STATEMENT BY A MARXIST TO THE TROTSKYITE ORGANIZATION.

March 1939

To all party members-Comrades!

In the end of January, I sent the Party E.C. the proposal of which you have now received an extract. I asked that the EC bring this document to the attention of the party members by means of an internal bulletin.

The EC refused, stating that the issuing of an internal bulletin involved great work and that this work was unnecessary, since what I wanted to bring up contained no new material. I replied, rejecting the EC's argument, and said that my work had its importance because it raised a whole series of problems which had to be clarified. The EC maintained its standpoint as correct. In view of this position I consider that the EC refused to publish my work because it criticized the centrist position taken by the organization of the 4th International and the majority of the leading comrades. Faced with this situation and with the importance of a correct position on the war problem, I have decided to bring this information before the party myself. In "Lutte Ouvriere" of Feb. 18, 1939, comrade Lesoil said: "We stand convinced that the new world war for the redivision of the earth by the imperialists is inevitable." This statement is completely correct, and hence I produced my contribution, for in the face of war's inevitability it is absolutely necessary that the correct position be carefully worked out, and we can arrive at this correct position only as a result of a discussion, which is the only means of grasping all the necessary elements of the problem. In the interest of the world revolution, I hope every comrade will take it to heart, will study this document and let me know his criticisms.

In any case, I shall not close this information letter without making the party members conscious of how seriously the methods of the EC hurt the interests of the party and the social revolution in general. Had the EC, in keeping with its role as leading organism of the revolutionary party, agreed to publish this document, then the discussion would have taken place, which was to the highest interest of our united struggle. But instead, it has throttled the revolutionary party's basis for life in this way and forbidden discussion and an organizational struggle, which is completely purposeless and can only bring our organization to grief.

J. Gaudelaine
Belgium

TO ALL REVOLUTIONIST

Despite the triumphing murderers of the people, the imperialist robbers and slaughterers, who have begun the second world war for the redivision of the earth, we appeal to you, persecuted and hunted class fighters, for revolutionary unity. The disgraceful betrayal of the second and third 'internationals' and the hesitant two-faced position of the centrists, have brought the international proletariat to the fields of imperialist slaughter instead of to power.

Already a hundred thousand proletarians have shed their blood in Poland, millions stand in arms on the Siegfried and Maginot lines ready to slaughter each other, the sailors are already prepared to sink their class brothers- and they are fighting of "their own free will", influenced by the capitalist propaganda machine and its lackeys are compelled by the force of their own oppressors. The Fascists and the "Democratic" and the "Neutrals" who are reaping bloody war profits, are weighing the question to decide which side they shall send their wage slaves tomorrow.

The imperialists hope to end this war with great profits and with victory of one of the two sides. But the working class armed by its oppressors and the oppressed masses of the world will and must unite to smash forever capitalism, the system of robbery, hunger and war. Defeats, aided by revolutionary action will increase the horror and misery of war, will lead to distrust, resentment and rebellion among the masses, and will remind them of the glorious October revolution; and the revolutionary party which we call upon you to build, on the basis of these defeats. Turn this war into a victorious civil war against our own oppressors and for the establishment of the international dictatorship of the working class. The aim of this organ (THE MARXIST, in German- Editor) is the unity of all revolutionists for the building of the German section of the coming international revolutionary party which alone is capable of leading the struggle and ending it successfully.

We came from the Comintern. In the struggle against its Peoples Front line, against social patriotism, and also against its ultra-left line we joined with the Trotskyite movement after the seventh congress of the C.I.

We first made a clear analysis of the Trotsky movement after emigration which showed us that beside the abandonment of its organizational and consequently its political independence, it deserted the road of Marxism and kept developing further and further to the right. We stood on the left wing of the pseudo-fourth "International" Trotsky movement. Our political criticisms were answered with bureaucratic presumptions and ignorance. Nevertheless we believed this organization could be corrected and become part of the growing revolutionary party.

Our own experience as well as the the clarity of the theoretical documents of the Revolutionary Workers League of the United States have brought us back to the bolshevik principles of the revolutionary party. That we can build only on the basis of the political and organizational independence from all reformist and centrist organizations. Until the outbreak of the imperialist war, in those sections where the pressure of the war did not destroy the Trotskyites completely or drive them even further to the right we remained inside fighting with this perspective.

But the war required a clear separation. We now raise the clear Marxian banner against all enemies and betrayers, and we join the Provisional INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION, for the new COMMUNIST (4th.) INTERNATIONAL.

The revolutionary unity, to which we call you, is possible only on the basis of Marxian principles. This basis shall consist of the 14 point programmatic declaration of the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION, which we have already published in the summer of this year. All those revolutionists who agree with the 14 points on all basic questions we summon to collaboration and to collective advancement of this organ. We shall publish the most important works of the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION in German, as well as our own fundamental Marxist works and those sent to us.

Revolutionists of the world! Revolutionists of Germany!
Fight with us for a new COMMUNIST (4th.) INTERNATIONAL.
For the victory of the international working class.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST OF GERMANY

Editors THE MARXIST

Editors Note:

The above appeal was translated from THE MARXIST, organ of the REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST OF GERMANY, a group with an international faction within the Trotskyite movement that have split and have now joined with the forces of the provisional INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION. Besides the German section these comrades have revolutionists of other countries who are in full agreement with the 14 Points and the split with Trotsky centrism. They will work in their countries against the imperialist war, for defeatism and for the building of groups upon the principle basis of revolutionary Marxism. The Revolutionary Communist and the Red Front of Germany are working toward contact, agreement toward unification. The difficulties of illegality and conditions in Germany is slowing this process but it will not stop it. The imperialist war, which has caused greater demoralization in the labor movement finds the Marxist groups throughout the world firmer than ever, growing stronger moving toward greater unity. Break with social-patriotism, break with centrism and unity with revolutionary Marxism.

A SPECTS OF MARXIST STRATEGY

HOW TO STRUGGLE AGAINST CAPITALISM

The problem of the strategical and tactical application of Marxian principles is far from simple. If it were otherwise the working class would long ago have trampled over the capitalist agents in our ranks and would have seized state power. In a mechanical sense it would seem that with the further decay and decomposition of capitalist society, the problems confronting the working class would become simplified. But facts have definitely proved that the contrary is true: the strategical and tactical questions have become far more complicated. One of the main factors for this complexity and the subsequent confusion is the series of revolutionary defeats of the past two decades. The class of and by itself, as an unorganized force, does not learn the lessons of these defeats, and especially of defeats of workers in other countries. Only with the welding together of a vanguard party of the class, capable of analyzing and explaining these defeats, and presenting a positive program against capitalism and for communism, can the class assimilate these lessons and utilize its powerful driving force to complete its historical mission.

The position and attitude of the revolutionary parties and the working class toward the capitalist state is one of the most important aspects of the whole question --- an aspect which history has proved a countless number of times, but which is now more confused than ever. The theoretical position of revolutionary Marxists is well known. This article confines itself to only one aspect of the question: namely, is it permissible for revolutionists to support one group of capitalists, or one capitalist state against another group of capitalists? Marxists categorically answer: NO! The reformists and centrists, both in theory and practice state the opposite. Their form of support differs, but like the Anarchists or Syndicalists in the Spanish Revolution, their support of the capitalist state becomes obvious to all but the blind.

The clearest example of this non-Marxian position as expressed by centrism was presented by Leon Trotsky in Volume II, Number 2 of the Internal Bulletin of the Socialist Workers Party.

WHAT TROTSKY SAYS ON THE QUESTION

"However, aside from the manner in which to appraise the expansionist policy of the U.S.S.R. itself, there remains the help which Moscow provides the imperialist policy of Berlin. Here first of all, it is necessary to establish that under certain conditions --- up to a certain degree and in a certain form --- the support of this or that imperialism would be inevitable even for a completely healthy workers state --- in virtue of the impossibility of breaking away from the chain of world imperialist relations. The Brest-Litovsk peace without the least doubt temporarily reinforced German imperialism against France and England. An isolated workers' state cannot fail to maneuver between the hostile imperialist camps. Maneuvering means temporarily supporting one of them against the other. To know exactly which one of the two camps it is more advantageous or less dangerous to support at a certain moment is not a question of principle but of practical calculation and foresight. The inevitable disadvantage which is engendered as a consequence of this constrained support for one bourgeois state against another is more than covered by the fact that the isolated workers' state is thus given the possibility of continuing its existence." (our emphasis.-- p. 13.)

In this paragraph Trotsky throws considerable light upon the degree of degeneration and the rate of speed in which his group is travelling away from Marxism. In one stroke of the pen Trotsky has negated Marx' and Lenin's basic concept of the state and the workers position toward the capitalist state.

If it is permissible to support one group of imperialists against another group of imperialists, as Trotsky claims, and if this "is not a question of principle but of practical calculation and foresight", then our argument with the Stalinists and their control of the Soviet Union, with their policy of supporting the "democratic" imperialists through the Peoples Front yesterday, and their support of Fascist Germany today, --- then this is not a principled dispute, but merely a question of practical calculation and foresight, a dispute with Stalinism that should be resolved within the framework of one party. But this is completely false. Trotsky's first error of support of one group of imperialists against another group of imperialists leads him inevitably to the next error, the revisionist position that this is not a principled question of Marxism.

Trotsky has fallen into the age-old quick-sand of analyzing events and conditions mechanically instead of considering the dialectical process. All eclectic thinkers deal with the concept of a two-cornered struggle, of black or white, of yes or no. Such thinking inevitably lands them into the camp of either the ultra-left mechanical position of yes or no, or the reformist (and centrist) position of support of the "lesser evil" group of capitalists against the "big bad wolf" capitalists, a different form of yes or no, but equally false. Let us consider the class struggle from several different fields of activity and present the difference between opportunism (Stalinism, Trotskyism, Syndicalism, Kautskyism) and revolutionary Marxism.

1 -- REVOLUTIONISTS' PARTICIPATION IN REACTIONARY TRADE UNIONS AND THE FIGHT ON TWO FRONTS

In every trade union and strike struggle where the control of the union and the strike has been usurped from the rank and file and where the leadership is class collaborationist (Green, Lewis, Browder, Thomas, etc.) the working class and its vanguard have one problem that has two aspects: They must fight on two fronts in order to win the strike, to make gains in the interests of the working class. Before the strike breaks out and after it is in progress, the strikers must fight the exploiters (and his open agents) and their agents within the ranks of labor (concealed, class collaborationist agents). To give up the fight against the "leadership" during the strike "in order to unite 'our' forces" is to GIVE UP THE CLASS VICTORY OF THE STRIKE. In order to fight on two fronts, in this situation, it is necessary to use two types of strategy and different tactics at the same time.

The independent position of the working class in its unions and strike committees calls for a frontal offensive against the exploiters, and at the same time, a policy of marching separately and striking together with the class collaborationist leadership, as a stage in the process to remove this leadership when the strikers are strong enough and understand, and again restore rank and file control. Our Trotsky supporters will possibly say: But this is a trade union fight; Trotsky is talking about two different groups of imperialists. Some may even say that on this question they agree with the above concept. But either of their replies demands only one answer: When we are considering a workers organization such as a trade union, and it is here a three cornered struggle (workers; exploiters and their open agents; class collaborationist agents of the exploiters) --- then all the more reason to expect a three cornered struggle in relation to the workers' state and two groups of imperialists (be they "democratic" or fascist). It is false to

support the AGENTS of the exploiters in our own ranks, and it is equally false to support the exploiters directly.

2 -- REVOLUTIONISTS' PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENTARY ACTION TOWARD THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

One does not have to give many examples in the field of participation in parliamentary action to reveal this same struggle: those who support one group of capitalists against those who carry on a three cornered fight. For revolutionists, participation in parliamentary activity is an AUXILIARY TACTIC to disrupt, to expose, to arouse the masses against the exploiters' corrupt state. But reformists and centrists and syndicalists (in Spain) all enter the government to SUPPORT ONE GROUP OF CAPITALISTS AGAINST ANOTHER. In Spain all the opportunists supported the Peoples Front (anglo-French bloc) against the fascists (German-Italian bloc).

In the United States the Trotskyites support BILLS OF THE CAPITALISTS: the Mahoney Bill in Minnesota, the Ludlow Amendment, the Ham and Egg Plan in California, the social-patriotic candidates of the American Labor Party in New York, etc. From the ultra-lefts (Syndicalists in Spain) to the centrists (Trotskyites) to the reformists (Stalinists-Socialists, etc.) the different false theories blend into common action --- of support of one group of capitalists against another group of capitalists, instead of a POLICY OF INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION, a three cornered fight.

3 -- THE LABOR PARTY

Everyone knows that the Trotskyites are for building a labor party candidates, and most disgusting of all, the support of the social-patriotic program and candidates in the New York election of the American Labor Party. In some of their writings some of the outstanding Trotskyist writers admit that the Labor Party is and can only be a THIRD CAPITALIST PARTY, that it is not a working class party in CONTENT and can never be one. This is the policy of supporting one group of capitalists against another group of capitalists. This is betrayal of the working class. (These are harsh words but true ones.)

4 -- CLASS GAINS VERSUS REFORMS

In the field of the most elementary aspects of the class struggle, the day to day struggle, we find the most complicated and least understood aspect of the class struggle. Again we find all non-Marxian tendencies carrying on a two-cornered fight: the support of reform versus reaction, instead of the fight for CLASS GAINS

(independent working class action) against reforms (class collaborationist crumbs handed down from the top to placate, to stem the tide, to warp, to control the working class movement), as well as the struggle against the reactionaries (who advocate the club and the gun to control labor instead of the sugar-coated words and crumbs from the masters' table). In the day to day struggle, it is not only the material crumbs obtained, and the laws the exploiters place on the books that are decisive; these are by-products of the CLASS STRUGGLE. Reforms are by-products of the class struggle TOWARD THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER, and to the degree that the class struggle is intensified (versus class collaboration on the one hand and reaction on the other) in the three cornered fight, the more crumbs as bribery (due to fear) will the exploiters hand down.

5 -- THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS OF THE WORKERS AND MASSES VERSUS BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY

Here too, in one of the most elementary spheres of the class struggle, the difference between class struggle and class collaboration is revealed. Those who advocate in one form or another, in any form, the support of one group of capitalists or one group of imperialists (as Trotsky does) inevitably fall into the swamp of defending capitalist democracy (not against fascism) but against the working class and its march toward power.

To defend the democratic rights of the working class and the oppressed masses there must be a systematic constant STRUGGLE AGAINST BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AS WELL AS AGAINST FASCISM. In other words, to defend our class rights we must struggle against capitalism in both its bourgeois democratic and fascist form.

Not so with the Trotskyites. They agree to support "even rotten bourgeois democracy" in Spain (the Peoples Front CNT-Caballero government), in China, the Cardenas government in Mexico, the social-patriotic American Labor Party in New York, etc. Instead of fighting on two fronts (a three cornered struggle) the Trotskyites think in terms of supporting one group of capitalists against another --- the old and rotten policy of the "lesser evil".

6 -- IMPERIALISM AND THE COLONIAL BOURGEOISIE

Trotsky and other centrists, as well as reformists like Stalin have completely warped the Lenin concept of the right of self-determination, the colonial question and the national question. In all phases of these questions the Trotskyites, since they agree you can support one group of IMPERIALISTS against another group of IMPERIALISTS, can naturally support the national bourgeoisie, the colonial bourgeoisie, the small capitalist nations "against" the large imperialists.

7 -- THE SUPPORT OF CAPITALISM AGAINST THE WORKING CLASS

In reality the concept of Trotsky --- to support one group of capitalists against another --- is a trick sentence and has no meaning unless broken down and analyzed. We are not only against the concept of supporting one group of imperialists against another; that is only part of the problem and not the most important part, even though it is fundamentally false. The other, more important aspect of the same problem that is concealed within this formula is the reaction of this position to the working class.

The support of one group of capitalists ("against" another group of capitalists) in reality means the SUPPORT OF CAPITALISM AGAINST THE WORKING CLASS. What is true in relation to capitalism as a whole, the support of capitalism against the working class, is also true in the trade union field. The support of the capitalist agents in our ranks is the support of capitalism. It is likewise true in the national and colonial sphere. The support of the colonial bourgeoisie is the support of capitalism against the proletariat and colonial masses.

The Marxists' position is not the support of Chiang-Kai-Shek, not the support of Cardenas, not the support of Ghandi, not the support of Haille Selassie, but instead the support of the proletariat and colonial masses against IMPERIALISM and against the AGENTS OF IMPERIALISM IN BACKWARD COUNTRIES. In the present decay stage, the exploiters of the backward countries can only be agents of one group of capitalists or another group of capitalists.

To SUPPORT the colonial exploiters, and to MARCH SEPARATELY AND STRIKE TOGETHER against imperialism with the colonial bourgeoisie are two different lines of march. To support Kerensky was the opposite of Lenin's line to march separately and strike together against Kornilov.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

There is a world of difference between the support of one imperialist power and the fact that an imperialist power takes advantage of weakness or difficulties, and thereby gains objectives for its own ends. For example, the Anglo-American antagonism was utilized by Italy in the Ethiopian invasion. The refusal of the United States to support the British oil embargo (together with the Stalinist sell-out) enabled Italy to gain its objective. But this was not United States' support of Italy.

The Brest-Litovsk example Trotsky gives is absolutely wrong. Lenin and the Bolsheviks did not support German imperialism (as for example, against Kerensky who supported the Anglo-French bloc). Lenin's policy which prevailed was based on the line of independent working class action against ALL imperialism. Instead of an advance, the Russian workers had to RETREAT at the point of the German gun at their head. Momentarily the Germans gained. But if the Brest-Litovsk treaty had had the policy of support of German imperialism, instead of the policy of defeatism, the October Revolution would have passed out of history at its inception.

The I.W.W. (yesterday) and the C.I.O. (today) carry on organizational drives that objectively help, in a limited sense, the A.F. of L. Because the bosses fear the industrial unions and the "radicals", they placate the organizational drive by quickly signing up with the reactionary A.F. of L. leaders. No one could claim that because the boss signed up with the A.F. of L. this meant that the I.W.W. or the C.I.O. were SUPPORTING the A.F. of L. There are countless other such examples.

8 -- SUPPORT ONE GROUP OF IMPERIALISTS, AS TROTSKY ADVOCATES?

Yes, there are maneuvers and maneuvers, but the support of a group of imperialists versus another group (and to pawn this off as a "practical calculation" and not a principle) is just the kind of maneuver that has nothing in common with Marxism. It is opportunism.

True, the proletariat and its vanguard must utilize the friction in the camp of the enemy. We must take advantage of the struggle between bourgeois democracy and fascism, etc. But one CANNOT take advantage of the friction in the exploiters camp BY SUPPORTING ONE GROUP AGAINST ANOTHER.

The class cannot support one group of exploiters against the other through its trade unions, through its political party, or through its Soviet States. The organizational instruments of the class must carry out an INDEPENDENT working class line AGAINST CAPITALISM (both "democratic" and fascist) to defend and advance the INTERESTS OF THE WORKING CLASS.

The utilization of the friction in the exploiters camp by the working class and its organizations can be had only on the basis of the political and organizational independence of the revolutionary Marxian organization, and through clear-cut independent

working class action. This calls for maneuvering, such as united fronts, such as a fight on two fronts in the trade unions, such as the strategy of marching separately and striking together.

It is no accident that Trotsky can write on revolutionary defeatism and call for defeatism in Germany and for "political opposition" in France (if the Soviet Union is on the side of France in the imperialist war). It is no accident that Trotsky can call for opposition to British Imperialism in the Mexican oil dispute, but at the same time keep as silent as the grave on the role of American Imperialism.

94-- LENIN, KERENSKY, KORNILOV

One should read and re-read, not Trotsky's version, but Lenin's own material and the historical facts on the Lenin-Kerensky-Kornilov struggle in Russia. Here is the best historical example of the question we have been discussing: the three cornered struggle.

The reason it is the best historical example is because it was the first major success of the Marxian LINE of INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION AGAINST CAPITALISM (against its bourgeois democratic form, Kerensky, and against its reactionary form, Kornilov.)

Yesterday Stalin started out to revise Marxism as a centrist and now ends as a social-patriot and reformist of the worst type. Following him, Trotsky is revising Marxism as a centrist, but here, too, a centrist fastly moving to the right. Centrism is not so easily transformed into its crystal-pure form in a writing room. It is more rapidly transformed in the red heat of participation in the class events.

10 -- A CLASS-AGAINST-CLASS LINE

We have pointed out that these opportunists in their eclectic reasoning ignore the three-cornered strategical struggle (Lenin-Kerensky-Kornilov) and instead become victims of capitalism because they SUPPORT one group of capitalists against the other. These different aspects of the class struggle presented above reveal the Marxian LINE as against the opportunist line. But we must, before concluding, point out that the three cornered fight is the STRATEGICAL APPLICATION OF A LINE, the line of class struggle. This line deals with two FUNDAMENTAL contradictory forces --- the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, but not just TWO antagonists.

For determining the LINE, the Marxian principles, an understanding of the two FUNDAMENTAL forces, is essential. But for determining the strategy and tactics of the class struggle, we must also take into account the antagonists, the division of labor within the capitalist camp, the three cornered struggle.

It is not the ultra-left who talks about class against class and then retreats to a vacuum, who can understand the relation of the two classes, the exploiters and the exploited. In their concept of a pure class struggle they reach Buddhist bliss. Nor is it the "realists", those who "understand" the "mass movement", the opportunists, those who SUPPORT ONE GROUP OF CAPITALISTS AGAINST THE WORKING CLASS under the guise of supporting one group against the other group of CAPITALISTS, who can understand the class struggle. They, too, these centrists and reformists negate the class struggle, the fundamental LINE of opposites. That is why we say that the centrists and reformists and ultra-lefts (opportunists) supplement each other.

The working class must understand that the capitalist mode of production and its contradictions are the material factors of the class struggle from which springs the Marxian principle of the class struggle and its position of no support to any group of exploiters, their state, and their agents, but rather the policy of independent working class action on an anti-capitalist, pro-communist LINE.

November 16, 1939

THE STRUGGLE FOR ASIA

The significance of the struggle for Asia now greatly increases as the imperialist powers now launch their war for the FOURTH imperialist redivision of the world. As stated in greater detail previously (International News, December, pp. 10 - 14), the present war for the redivision of the world, now in a "narrow" European form, inevitably means a war in which the imperialist powers will attempt to obtain decisive control of Asia as the KEY to the division of the entire world.

The present military operations in Europe may superficially seem to obscure the struggle for Asia. But the whole past struggle continues in even sharper form, especially the three-cornered fight between England, the United States and Japan (as well as Germany's attempts to regain a foothold, and Stalin's frantic maneuvering as the Soviet Union comes to grips, under his false leadership, with world imperialism). The struggles flow from and are an extension of the basic inter-imperialist antagonism between the United States and Great Britain. (The role of the Soviet Union and the basic contradiction between world capitalism and the proletarian revolution will be dealt with separately).

IMPERIALIST AGGRESSION THROUGH THE "OPEN DOOR"

By means of this war for pillage and plunder the imperialists hope to "save civilization" for further pillage and plunder; hope to be able to find new bases for the export of capital, new spheres of influence, new methods of temporarily overcoming the restriction of the productive forces by the narrow confines of the profit system. Asia is the center of their hopes --- hopes which are not new but which now seem to the imperialists to have the possibility of fulfillment.

--- In the whole past period of imperialism, all the powers have believed in the "open door" for China. This is in contrast to their usual policy where each imperialist maintains the most zealous safeguarding of "its own" colonies and spheres of influence. The general historical development of the imperialist powers provides the reason: at the time when the imperialist penetration of China became (relatively) intense, each of the imperialist powers was occupied with consolidating its own empire (the U.S. in Latin and South America, the Philippines, Hawaii, etc; Britain in India, Africa, etc; while Japan was just reaching the

status of a capitalist power). Consequently none was in a position to achieve dominance and they therefore resorted to the next "best" policy: an "open door" for all, i.e., the right for each to rob and plunder at the expense of the exploited colonial masses. Of course, each country had the perspective of ultimately crowding the others out and assuming the dominant hand; but history has not given the imperialists a free hand in this matter and the door still stands open to be closed only by the biggest thief that the war produces.

An illustration of this is how American Imperialism now shrieks with great "moral" indignation that Japan is trying to oust "free competition". The U.S. which sanctifies the Monroe Doctrine in an attempt to build a Chinese Wall around the Americas to oust British, German and Japanese competition there, is fighting to have the door left open in Asia until it, and it alone, is in a position of political hegemony to close it.

"EXPANSION" WITHIN IMPERIALIST DECAY

The above fact that no single imperialist power has been able to achieve the necessary political hegemony in Asia is one reason that economic penetration has been relatively so slight. This is of extreme importance today, in the period of the fundamental decay of capitalism; for, within this decay, a certain amount of expansion is possible in Asia. This is particularly shown on the basis of the export of capital, one of the chief characteristics of imperialism. For example, in the case of the United States, out of a total of \$7,219,200,000 direct foreign investments in 1935, only \$487,600,000 was in Asia, that is about 6.7%. If this is subdivided, the approximate percentages are as follows (in relation to similar sub-divisions of her world total): railroads, 1.9%, manufacturing, 3.9%; mining and smelting, 1.1%; public utilities, 4.1%. And when this is considered in relation to, say, Mexico the possibility of expansion is even clearer. The direct investments of the U.S. in Mexico are \$651,700,000, or almost 1 1/2 times as much. Like the Caribbean "lake" Mexico is directly under the thumb of American Imperialism and the U.S. has been able to protect her expansion. (statistical source, America's Share in International Investments, Brookings Institute).

Similar statistics can be adduced for the other powers to make clear the point that capital expansion is not only desirable, but without the intervention of that spectre of all capital investment --- the proletarian revolution --- is practically conceivable, especially if political hegemony can be attained by one of the other imperialist powers.

Thus out of the sweat of the millions of Asiatic toilers the imperialists have great hopes of wringing huge profits. This does not mean that imperialism has a new lease on life through further penetration into Asia: even if expansion could be practically achieved, the contradictions of capitalism would relentlessly grind their way to still worse decay; in addition, the Asiatic toilers as well as their brothers throughout the world will have a word to say on the matter in the very near future.

THE INTER-IMPERIALIST ANTAGONISMS

In Washington, London and Tokyo, therefore, (as well as in Berlin) the hopes of imperialist expansion in China and Asia run high. In this period of the war, as in the immediately preceding one, the imperialists are maneuvering for a key hold. From the point of view of the present relationship of forces, Japan, on the basis of its military intervention, holds the key IMMEDIATE POSITION; but it is weak because of its cost in relation to the results thus far obtained, and because these military gains, at this terrific cost, in themselves have not secured political hegemony for Japan. She has been able to make progress because she has cleverly utilized the basic inter-imperialist antagonism between the United States and Great Britain. The latter two, each more wary of the other than their common but subordinate Nipponese rival, have never taken the co-ordinated political or economic, let alone military, measures that could have stopped Japan. Whenever the one moves against Tokyo the other proceeds to try to sabotage; the result has always objectively been in Japan's favor.

BRITAIN RETREATS AS EMPIRE TOTTERS

In the whole past period Britain has made feverish efforts to maintain and extend her foothold in China; in the Spring of 1939, for example, she made a loan of 5 million pounds (\$25 million) to the Chiang-Kai-Shek regime in China; for, as Sir John Simon declared, in answering the arguments that the loan was very costly in relation to Britain's trade with China, the trade is "well worth preserving". (Oriental Affairs, April, 1939). It is not so much Britain's trade (it is only 5.65 % of its world total) that Mr. Simons is so anxious to preserve, as it is Britain's economic and political interests and her possibilities for capital investment. But the outbreak of the war with the internal weakness of the British Empire sees Britain in retreat, withdrawing troops from Tientsin "for reasons of military convenience arising from the conflict in Europe" (War Office communique), which means that she dares not risk coming to blows with Japan.

THE AMERICAN DOLLAR VS. THE JAPANESE GUN

Japan very "graciously" replies to Britain by ceasing the anti-British campaign. For this is a victory of relative importance to Japan. But she does not share it alone. The power of the American Dollar is far greater, in the last analysis, than the might of the Japanese guns in China. Now that Britain is in retreat both the United States and Japan are in a position to gain, although Japan stands to reap the immediate harvest in the Far East. But the U.S. profits from the Japanese position. In an economic sense, Japan constitutes 42% of the U.S. Far Eastern trade, over three times as much as her trade with China, equal in amount to about 2/3 of the total U.S. direct investment in the Far East. (U.S. Department of Commerce Yearbook, 1938). Thus the American imperialists supply Japan with the essential materials necessary for the prosecution of the military invasion of China and, especially, now that Britain cannot afford to continue on the same plane its own plans in Asia, the United States gains in the long run from Japan's costly military moves. More importantly, it must be pointed out that even if Japan were in a position to establish a stable economic regime in China (i.e., that her bayonets could maintain it), she does not have the internal economic base and capital to carry it through. Either London or Wall Street would step in and thereby profit. And the fact that Japan has only recently pegged the yen to the American Dollar instead of as previously to the pound sterling in ample testimony that the U.S. is gaining.

UNCLE SAM TURNS ON THE HEAT

This is not to say that Japan would not like to be able to run the whole show at the exclusion of both John Bull and Uncle Sam. But the hopes and aspirations of the Nipponese expansionists do not correspond to the relationship of forces. Wall Street is well aware both of her superior strength and the conflicting sense of Japanese imperialism; hence, now with Britain retreating, she does not permit Japan to get illusions of grandeur and she sharpens her struggle. The sharply worded speech of Ambassador Grew, the notice of the impending abrogation of the 1911 trade treaty by Roosevelt are meant as firm warnings to Tokyo that while her bayonets may plunge ahead, the American Dollar must have ultimate hegemony in the imperialist expansion.

THE STALIN -- TOKYO PACT

In the whole past period the frequent border clashes between Japanese and Red Army troops testified to the bitter struggle that was raging. But no sooner was the ink of the Hitler-Stalin pact dry than Japan and the Stalinists came to terms. This was the signal for the launching of a new military offensive by Japan, followed by the "warnings" of Uncle Sam to the latter. But the Stalin-Tokyo pact, like the German-Russian pact, has meaning only in the immediate period with the present relationship of forces in the war. Should a new line-up, possibly of the imperialist powers against the Soviet Union, materialize, both these pacts would be torn up at a moment's notice. Other variants of imperialist alignments would produce the same results. But at date of writing the Stalin-Japanese pact has significance in that it permits Japan to launch a new offensive which further weakens Britain's position, at least partially withdraws Soviet support from the Kuomintang puppet government, and causes Wall Street to sharpen up against Japan (even though the former loses less than Great Britain.).

THE APPROACHING SECOND CHINESE REVOLUTION

All these imperialist maneuvers and plans of action which are carried out with the most brutal exploitation and oppression of the millions of Asiatic toilers, are possible and continue only because the Far Eastern workers were not successful in their great revolutionary struggles of 1925-1927, as well as other defeats of the world proletariat. The failure of this revolution, largely due to the counter-revolutionary policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy, not only gave imperialism a new breathing spell but now permits it to juggle for position in the hope that tomorrow, one or the other group will be able to carry through vast capital expansion in Asia.

Another article will deal with the extremely important political aspects of the revolutionary struggles, the Kuomintang and other agencies of the imperialists, as well as the strategic lessons of the past that must now be applied to bring the revolutionary struggles to a mature and successful conclusion. Suffice it to now state that these fond hopes of the imperialist powers to attain control of Asia as the key to their imperialist redivision of the world, must and WILL be dashed to pieces by the dynamics of proletarian revolution, including the Chinese, that the war is bringing to maturity.

December 1, 1939

THE AGRARIAN QUESTION
IN MEXICO

In a certain sense it is fortunate that the first victorious proletarian revolution took place in backward, semi-feudal czarist Russia. The tasks and problems confronting the revolutionists in highly developed imperialist nations are, comparatively speaking, simple and uniform. It is true that the law of the uneven development of history has its expression in even the most advanced countries, combining, to one extent or another, elements of diverse stages of historical progress, but these are in no way comparable to the problems confronting the revolutionists in backward, colonial and semi-colonial lands.

In these countries the diverse stages of the economic and cultural development each present peculiar problems of their own, side by side with tasks and perspectives of decay-stage capitalism are unsolved tasks of previous historical epochs. Class lines and class relationships are far more complex in backward countries than in most imperialist nations, and in order to see their way clear, the proletariat in these countries, the only leader and vanguard of the oppressed masses must be armed with the weapon of Marxism.

THE DEMOCRATIC TASKS

In Czarist Russia all these contradictions and complexities were sharply posed. The picture that Czarist Russia presented in the epoch of the decay of capitalism was of a social structure in which highly developed elements of capitalism existed side by side with semi-feudal elements, a highly concentrated industry side by side with a semi-feudal agriculture, with an absolutist government reminiscent of the seventeenth century. The bourgeois-democratic tasks that the bourgeoisie of the imperialist nations had accomplished to one degree or another in the nineteenth century were still on the order of the day in the Russia of the twentieth century. Under these circumstances what was to be the character of the inevitable Russian Revolution, what was to be its tasks and perspectives, and above all, who were to be its leaders?

To the Mensheviks the problem was simple. It was only a matter of turning back the pages of history to the bourgeois revolutions of the nineteenth century and of following the same pattern. The coming revolution for them was to be bourgeois democratic in character, the leadership and state power consequently would belong to the bourgeoisie, who would of course carry out the democratic tasks, i.e., the land problem, the problem of constituting a bourgeois democracy, the problems of the various nationalities comprising Czarist Russia, etc. The Mensheviks assigned to themselves the modest task of left critics of the bourgeoisie, of guardians of the interests of the working class. After Russia would pass through a period of "normal" capitalist development, they would then consider the question of Socialism. To these magnificent theoreticians who never understood the dialectics of the historical process, France in 1793 and Russia in 1917 were analogous. They still dreamed of a "normal" capitalistic development in the decay stage of capitalism. To Lenin and Trotsky the problem was equally clear but in a Marxist sense. They understood that the bourgeoisie of Russia would be incapable of solving the belated democratic tasks, that only the working class through the dictatorship of the proletariat could solve these problems. Events demonstrated the correctness of this analysis. Kerensky was too busy serving the French and British imperialist to even consider these tasks.

THE SPANISH BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATS.

More recently this thesis was once again vindicated, not in a positive but in a negative sense, not by a victory, but by a defeat. Spain during the Azana-socialist period (1931-1935) and during the period of the People's Front presented the same economic-political pattern, the same dynamic as did Russia of 1917. But in Spain there was no Lenin or Bolshevik Party to counteract the Spanish Kerensky. The program of the parties in power in both of these periods had as their objectives the creation in Spain of conditions for a "normal" capitalist development. The agrarian were solved by paper decrees and by long winded discussions in the Cortes on the political economy of the Canary Island. The peasants however whose low cultural level made them unappreciative of economics in the abstract dealt with concrete economics by seizing the land, only to meet the armed resistance of the state. The total result was Franco, which proved that in backward countries as well as in highly advanced countries liberal bourgeoisie regimes can only lead to Fascism if the working class does not take power.

THE BELATED BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

The importance of understanding the lessons of October as well as those of the Spanish debacle lie in the fact that in most countries in the world today similar conditions prevail. The entire continent of Africa, Latin America and most of Asia as well as countries in Europe are today Colonial or Semi-Colonial in character, in which elements of advanced capitalism exist side by side with semi-feudal elements. The objectives of the belated bourgeoisie democratic revolution are yet to be realized. How are the problems of these countries to be solved? In the manner of the bolshevik October or by Fascism.

This entire problem has a special significance for the American worker, for upon its very door step a situation is maturing in which the diverse factors that we have dealt with are rapidly leading to an explosion.

THE CRISIS IN MEXICO.

Mexico presents to a very large extent the same picture that its former mother country Spain did during the Peoples Front period. We expect a civil war to break out in Mexico very soon involving various elements similar to those that participated in the Spanish Civil War. We intend in a series of articles to analyse the Mexican situation, to dissect these various elements from the standpoint of Marxism thereby helping in a small measure the Marxist in Mexico to crystalize a force that will culminate the impending civil war in a Mexican October.

FEUDALISM IN MEXICO

For centuries the oppressed masses have been struggling to strike off the shackles of a corrupt, degenerate Feudal system that was foisted upon the Indians of Mexico by the Spanish Colonial policy. For centuries the Masses of Mexico have lived in brutal oppression and poverty, exploited by the land owners and the church which characteristic of all semi-feudal countries was one of the largest landowners in Mexico. When at the beginning of the 19th century, under the influence of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic invasion Spain promulgated the liberal constitution of 1810 the Mexican land owners and the church who formerly opposed independence decided that the best policy would be to bread Mexico's ties with Spain. Mexican independence as far as the oppressed masses were concerned meant absolutely nothing. Their horrible lot remained unchanged. Again and again they would rally around the

banners of leaders who would raise the slogan "land to the landless", who would promise to ameliorate their miserable conditions. Those who like Father Hidalgo or Moreles were sincere were usually branded as bandits and ended up on the scaffold. Others after gaining power would become puppets of the landlords and the church adding to their oppression the oppression of a bureaucratic military clique. During the regime of Diaz the masses of Mexico gained a new master class. Diaz opened up the country to the exploitation of foreign capital. He inaugurated the policy of close collaboration with foreign capitalists. This influx of foreign capital instead of accelerating the disintegration of the corrupt semi-feudal system bolstered it up, strengthening it by means of an alliance of the two, in which the foreign capitalist used the local exploiters as agents.

THE 1910 REVOLUTION

The bourgeoisie-democratic revolution of Mexico had its inception in the revolution of 1910 which ousted Diaz from power. This revolution according to its leaders has been in process ever since. Between 1910-1934 one pattern was generally repeated. The various men in power started out with promises of reform and ended up by becoming wealthy as a result of collaboration with foreign and domestic capitalists. In 1933 the National Revolutionary Party, the only bona fide party in Mexico, presented the masses with a six year plan designed to regenerate Mexico, to solve the tasks of the bourgeoisie-democratic revolution. The main objective of the Cardenas regime (1934-40) has been to carry out this "new deal" of Mexico. These articles are going to concern themselves with an analysis of this six year period and the extent to which Cardenas has dealt with the essentials and problems of Mexico.

The basic problem of all bourgeois-democratic revolutions has been the agrarian problem. Before the bourgeoisie of the 19th century could begin the task of reconstituting society in a manner compatible with the needs of the new economic order they had to break the power of the landowning class. This meant the division of the huge estates among the peasantry. It is our thesis that the bourgeoisie in the backward countries are today incapable of accomplishing this task. History has moved beyond the stage of the democratic revolution. The bourgeois revolution was victorious in the period of the birth and development of capitalism, but can not be today, in the decay stage. In this present epoch only the Proletarian revolution can carry out the democratic carryovers.

MEXICO and INDUSTRIALISM

Mexico presents a paradox in the fact that while it is potentially an industrial country, by virtue of its resources, 70% of its population is dependent upon agriculture and occupy only 7% of the total land area, the rest being mountainous or too arid for cultivation under present conditions. Half of the surface of Mexico comprising 767,198 miles, is oblique. Its plains are in the north, most of this area however is desert. The water problem is equally difficult. Most of Mexico's water flows deep under the surface. The rain washes down the steep slopes of the mountains into the sea. On the narrow coastal strips there is considerable rainfall, on the northern plains hardly any. The primitive water carrier is to be found all over Mexico, except for the five or six largest cities. This is the Mexican agrarian problem; little cultivable land, a meager water supply.

THE LAND QUESTION

Now let us consider the actual distribution of the land and the extent to which it is cultivated. The following figures are for the year 1938. Total land surface 196.1 million hectares. (a hectare is about 2.5 acres)

7.1	million	hectare	under	cultivation
7.	"	"	"	fallow
66.5	"	"	"	pasture
29.9	"	"	"	forest
89.6	"	"	"	arid
Total crop land consists of 14.5 million hectares of which				
1.7	million	hectare	are	irrigated
1.3	"	"	"	humid
0.04	"	"	"	orchard
11.5	"	"	"	semi-arid

These figures are of vital importance for it is estimated that the extent of Mexico's tillable land consists of 265,000 acres of which according to the above figures only about 36 million acres are under cultivation and about half of this acreage is always kept fallow because of primitive agricultural methods. In these figures lie the key to Mexico's agrarian problem for in spite of the fact that almost half of Mexico is arid, and the problem of the water supply is difficult, it does possess the basis for a healthy agriculture. The roots of Mexico's agrarian difficulties lie in the fact that the land is insufficiently exploited, exploited in a primitive manner under a system of private ownership.

A comparison of the crop yields of Mexico and of more advanced countries demonstrates its backwardness. These figures are for 1938.

COUNTRY	MAIZE (In kilograms per H ectare)	CORN	WHEAT (metric quintels p.h.)
U.S.	1,730	990	16.2
Argentina	2,000		
Egypt	2,300		
Mexico	640	550	6.1
Canada			22
Chile		1,170	
Belguim		2,670	

LAND TO THE LANDLESS

The slogan "land to the landless", has been the battle cry of almost every revolution in Mexico. The task of dividing the large estates and returning to the peons the land that was taken from them has been hailed as the crux of the six year plan. To what extent has the plan materialized in this sphere? In 1930, 83.48% of the land was divided among a few landowners in the form of large estates. The Mexican peasant was practically landless. In 1938 it was estimated that 82.7% of the land was privately owned and 17.3% owned by the ejidors, that is by communal farms. The ejidors will be dealt with in another article. Since the very beginning of the process of land division, only about 46,000,000,000 acres have been give to the landless peon. Of this total the Cardenas regime has distributed 30,000 000 acres.

When we note that Mexico's tillable land consists of 265,000 000 acres, we realize that the land question has been merely scratched on the surface. Cardenas partisans will insist that achievements have been considerable, considering the short time of his tenure of office and the little that was done prior to his election. We would like to ask these individuals how long it took Lenin and the Bolshevics to divide the large estates of Czarist Russia.

WHAT HAS CARDENAS ACCOMPLISHED?

Let us see what a friend of Mexico has to say about the land reforms.... "The land reforms are not entirely satisfactory to the peasants.... The original concept was that it should not be the basis for the whole agricultural economy of the country, it was to be no more than a kind of allotment act disignated merely to relieve the peons poverty by giving him a plot of land to supplement his miserable wages. A few hundred hectares pared from an estate of 100,000

hectares enable the low wages to be paid in pernetuity... The land reform still keeps to its original character subsequent amendments have not greatly modified it'. There we have it, the tremendous land reforms of the six year plan. Cardenas handles the agrarian reform only to the extent that he can keep his bourgeoisie base safe.

There are those who maintain that the standard of living of the peon today is no better than it was in 1910. The expenditure of 16,500,000 peasants of Mexico for their daily needs does not exceed twenty five pesas (\$5.00) per month.

In spite of the advances made in education and in the social services, the material condition of the Mexican peasant is incredibly low. One third of the Mexican people possess small farms upon which the great pajority eke out a primitive existance. They cultivate crops subsistance only, occasionally they are fortunate in reaping a small surplus which they barter for a few tools, some cotton cloth etc. Many of them have to supplement their meager incomes by working on large farms.

Another third of the population is settled on the haciendas and large farms where they work as sharecroppers or hired hands. There are a few wealthier peasants who enjoy a slightly higher stadard of living. These three catagories together with the 5% wealthy farmers and planters constitute 70% of Mexicos population, they are agrarian Mexico. The standard of living of the overwhelming majority of these peons is primitive. They live in one room, floorless huts, sleep on mats, the entire household furniture consisting of a few chairs and a table. Their diet consists corn, beans flavored with chile and chicory coffee. The infant mortality rate among the peasants is 60%.

THE PROLETARIAT AND THE LAND QUESTION

The problem of uplifting the Mexican masses is tremendous. It requires the mobilization of the entire resources of the land and will be impossible as long as the industrial wealth of Mexico is exploited by private individuals for personal profit. The development of Mexican agriculture demands first the cultivation of a far greater acreage than is today under cultivation, it demands a more advanced agricultural technique and above all the construction of vast irrigation projects. Such irrigation projects can transform semi arid land into excellent farm land as has been demonstrated in La Laguna. The wealth of Mexico, Humboldt called it, "the treasure chest of the world", the only means to accomplish these gigantic tasks are in the hands of primarily the American capitalists and their junior partners, the Mexican capitalists, whose only aim is to enrich themselves. The workers and peasants

must seize this wealth, they must socialize it. Only then can they look forward to material and social betterment. The only solution to the problems of the Mexican masses lies in a Mexican October.

November 20, 1939

JOSEPH GAUDELAINÉ

A FIGHTER FOR THE NEW (IV) COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL IS DEAD

He played a leading role in the Belgian labor movement. As an internationalist, he joined the left faction of the "4th International" and fought together with it against the centrism of the Trotsky organization. He was a member of the editorial committee of the Left Faction's organ. After the mobilization this young revolutionist lost a life full of sacrifice by an accident. He long since foresaw the threatening war, hence his fight was above all directed toward the revolutionary position on the war question.

Because of his revolutionary-defeatist writings, he was bureaucratically fought by the Trotskyites and abruptly suspended from membership in the PSR. In order to win him over, the gentlemen of the Molinier group pretended to agree with him in his criticism of the centrist position of the "4th International" on the war question. But behind his back they fought against him by defending the "transition program" and the war theses of Trotsky. Now that he is dead, the Trotskyites as well as the Molinier group hold funeral orations for him in order to misuse his revolutionary figure for their opportunist aims. They both refuse to publish his revolutionary writings.

In the struggle against "Daugism" which has been another step to the right, and against the centrism of the Molinier group, we publish one of the many letters in which Gaudelaine made clear his revolutionary-defeatist position.

YOU ARE DEAD, COMRADE GAUDELAINÉ! YOUR CONCEPTS AND YOUR REVOLUTIONARY EXAMPLE WILL LEAD YOUR CLASS TO VICTORY! HAIL, COMRADE GAUDELAINÉ!

March 1939

Provisional

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