

- INTERNATIONAL - PRESS CORRESPONDENCE

Vol 7. No. 40.

14th July 1927

Editorial Offices and Central Despatching Department: Berggasse 31, Vienna IX. — Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered mail: Postamt 66, Schliessfach 213, Vienna IX.
Telegraphic Address: Inprekorr, Vienna.

On War and Danger of War.

Theses adopted at the Plenum of the E. C. C. I. on May 29, 1927.

The VII. Enlarged Plenum of the E. C. C. I. held in December last year, warned the international working class of the danger of war. The events which have taken place in China and Great Britain since that time have wholly and completely confirmed the forecasts made by the E. C. C. I. The concentration of troops in China, the bombardment of Chinese cities by international capitalism, already mark the opening of the war against the toiling masses of China who are fighting for their emancipation. The raid on the Soviet Embassy in Peking made by Chang Tso-lin, at the instigation of London, and with the support of the diplomatic representatives of all the capitalist governments, and the raid on the Soviet Union Trade Delegation in London and the consequent breaking off of relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union are criminal acts calculated to provoke war.

Now more than ever before is it necessary for the masses of the workers of all countries to exercise vigilance. Communists of all countries must close up their ranks and mobilise all their forces in the face of the war which has already begun in China and the war which is being prepared against the Soviet Union.

CAPITALIST ANTAGONISMS AND WAR.

1. With the world war of 1914—1918 there opened for the masses of the toilers of all countries a period of cruel wars of extermination, of unbridled and ruthless plunder of colonial countries and violent outrages against the working class. Ten million killed, nineteen million disabled and crippled, an enormous expenditure of economic resources, the economic interconnections of world economy shattered for years, depreciating currency, impoverishment of the masses of the people, growth of internal reaction in all countries throughout the world, a raging capitalist offensive against the working class, the Balkanisation of Europe, and the intensification since the world war of capitalist antagonisms, — such are the results of the war of 1914—1918.

2. The conclusion of the war was immediately followed by a period of "little wars" for the regulation of frontiers: the struggle between Germany and Poland for Upper Silesia, the armed occupation of Fiume by the Italian Fascists, the Greco-Turkish war for Smyrna, military collisions between Balkan States. The establishment of proletarian dictatorship in Hungary brought about the attack on it by the capitalist States — Czechoslovakia and Roumania. Simultaneously therewith, the capitalist world mobilised its forces for the purpose of crushing the proletarian revolution in Soviet Russia. The intervention com-

menced in 1918—1919 and "developed into" the war of Poland against Soviet Russia. This was followed by the occupation of the Ruhr and which was relieved by the colonial expedition of France against the Riff rebellion in Morocco. The French imperialist war against the Druses marked the close of the decade following the conclusion of the great war of 1914—1918. The whole of the period following the great war has been a period of imperialist struggles and partial wars which are but the prelude to a fresh period of great wars.

3. Although in the course of the last few years capitalism had attained a certain stabilisation, this stabilisation was of an extremely relative nature. The proletarian revolution in Russia dealt a heavy blow to world capitalism. The national revolutionary movements in the colonies make a new breach in the capitalist system. These two factors alone combined with the resistance of the international working class to the capitalist offensive exclude any possibility for a lasting stabilisation of the capitalist order.

The years which have elapsed since the conclusion of the world war were years of an especially marked "deterioration" of capitalism. The cyclical character of world economy has lost its pre-war periodicity; crises in world economy arise now here and now there, very brief and feverish booms are followed by prolonged depression. The re-distribution of the world brought about by the imperialist robbers as a result of the world war has created new sources of fierce competition and the danger of fresh conflicts between imperialist powers. A stubborn struggle is going on for regions which are either sources of raw material or places to which foreign capital can be exported. The capitalist States have cut themselves off from each other with new customs barriers, restricting thereby former trading facilities. Diminished consumption by the masses in the biggest capitalist States, the establishment of national industries in the colonies and overseas countries, which were formerly markets for foreign manufactured goods, confront world capitalism with the extremely acute problem of markets. The struggle for markets is assuming acute forms unprecedented in pre-war capitalist economy. This economic struggle is leading to armed collisions.

4. The epoch of relative equilibrium, both between the imperialist powers themselves on the one hand, and between the imperialist powers and the Soviet Union together with the liberation movement of the semi-colonies (China) on the other, is interrupted by open military conflicts which mark the approach of the conclusion of this epoch and the development

of conditions for a new imperialist war. In all parts of the world inflammable material is being accumulated ready at any moment to explode on contact with the first spark that reaches it. The Italian-Yugoslav conflict, the aggression of Italian imperialism in Albania, its menace to Turkey, the strained relations between Italy and France, the economic war between Poland and Germany, Anglo-French antagonisms in Asia Minor, Great Britain's struggle for the road leading to the African colonies, for domination in the Mediterranean; the aggressive role of the imperialism of the U. S. A. in the Pacific, its suppression of Nicaragua which clears the road for the subjugation of Mexico and South America, the menace of Japanese imperialism to the peoples of Asia — all these are but separate pages in the sanguinary history of approaching wars.

But without doubt the factor representing the greatest menace to peace at the present time is Great Britain. The new feature of the international situation is the fact that Great Britain has again acquired the hegemony in European affairs. It holds the initiative in international colonial policy, it dominates the League of Nations, it leads the united capitalist front against China and the Soviet Union.

CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION AS THE KEY POSITIONS OF THE WAR.

5. All the antagonisms among the capitalist States themselves recede into the background before the dividing line that divides the whole world into two camps: one, the Soviet Union and revolutionary China, the other, the whole of the capitalist world. China and the Soviet Union are the key positions of the whole international situation. It is at these points that the clouds of war are gathering most thickly. China and the Soviet Union, occupying the greatest part of the territory of Asia and half of Europe with their unexploited economic resources and hundreds of millions of population, represent two inexhaustible reservoirs of raw material and two enormous markets. The fight for these two immense markets is a life and death struggle for international capitalism and will proceed continuously until the world proletariat overthrows the international bourgeoisie.

6. The Chinese revolution is of enormous significance for the world proletariat. The victory of the workers and peasants in the Chinese revolution would serve as a mighty stimulus in revolutionising the world labour movement and especially the working class of Great Britain. It would, as a result lead to the movement rising to as yet unknown heights in the chief capitalist countries. The objective revolutionary conditions would be created for profound mass movements through the world. At the same time if the proletariat proves powerless to extricate revolutionary China from the imperialist noose, then the victory of imperialism in China would imply, firstly, a fresh temporary consolidation of the capitalist system throughout the world, secondly, extreme reaction against the working class in the imperialist countries, thirdly, and finally, the onslaught of the imperialist bloc upon the Soviet Union. The fight against imperialist suppression of the Chinese revolution is therefore at the same time a war of self-defence of the European, American and Japanese working class against the capitalist offensive and a fight against war in Europe and for the victory of social revolution in these countries.

THE EPOCH OF "GREAT WARS".

7. The new phase of imperialist policy is characterised by the fact that capitalism is about to pass over from the stage of "little" wars to that of great wars. The war in China, although at the moment recalling in its form the intervention in Soviet Russia of 1918—19, opens up a new period of great wars. In its international significance the intervention of the imperialist forces in China is already a great war. It is a great war because it is being conducted by the great capitalist States under the leadership of Britain against 400 million toilers of China. With it is connected the fate of four continents — Asia, Europe, America and Australia. It will inevitably develop into fresh wars, unless it is suppressed at the very outset.

This war is already developing into a war against the Soviet Union. The language employed by the British Conservative press against the Soviet Union recalls the language of a country already at war. In international capitalist relations such acts, like the raid on the Soviet Embassy in Peking, the arrest of diplomatic couriers, the raid on the Soviet Union Delegation

in London, are met with repressive measures pregnant with war. It is only the peace policy of the Soviet Government consciously bent towards this end, that has so far saved the toiling masses of Great Britain and the Soviet Union from this anti-Soviet war, in spite of the systematic provocation of Great Britain.

8. But this war, like a patch of oil on the water, threatens to spread to the whole of Asia and the Pacific coast:

a) It is quite evident that the victory of the workers and peasants in the Chinese revolution would give rise to desperate attempts on the part of the imperialists to crush the victorious movement of the toiling masses of China, and those revolutionary movements which would be called forth in India, French Indo China, Indonesia, in the Philippines and Korea. This would be a prolonged great war of the combined bloc of the imperialists of the great capitalist countries against the insurgent toiling masses of Asia, under the leadership of revolutionary China.

b) On the other hand, a defeat of the Chinese revolution would stimulate the antagonisms between Britain, Japan and the United States in China and would inevitably lead to a war between these imperialist powers in the Pacific.

9. Closely connected with the war in China are also the efforts to encircle the Soviet Union at other points on the European and Asiatic continents. British diplomacy is incessantly striving to create a united anti-Soviet Baltic front, stretching from Finland through Poland to Roumania. It endeavours to draw in Lithuania by organising a Fascist coup d'état. Through the medium of Fascist Italy it is striving to strengthen its position in the Balkans and to draw Hungary into the anti-Soviet coalition. By this it calculates on establishing a sufficiently wide anti-Soviet front on the Danube. One of the most active roles in this anti-Soviet front is to be played by Poland, but it must, in the event of war, secure its rear. Therefore British imperialism is exerting every effort to include Germany in its sphere of influence and to regulate German-Polish relations for the purpose of a joint attack on the Soviet Union. This is the meaning of the "Western orientation" of Germany and of the Locarno policy. Just recently Great Britain has been endeavouring to secure also the cooperation of France in the encirclement of the Soviet Union.

In Central Asia, in Afghanistan, Persia, in the Near East, in Turkey and in the Far East the evil arm of British imperialism is weaving a network of complicated intrigues against the Soviet Union. British diplomacy is striving to utilise the International Economic Conference for the purpose of establishing an economic blockade of the Soviet Union. Simultaneously feverish preparations for war are being made in the countries contiguous to the U. S. S. R., particularly in Poland and Roumania.

STRENGTHENING THE REAR FOR WAR.

10. Since the last Enlarged Plenum of the E. C. C. I. events have occurred in a number of countries which give an extreme illustration of the atmosphere of war preparations in which all the big capitalist countries now exist. In all capitalist countries we now witness increased reaction, the internationalising to a greater or less degree of terrorist Fascist methods of suppressing the working class. Domestic reaction marches in step with foreign aggression. In order to be able to conduct war, capitalism must have "peace" in the rear. The nature of modern warfare demands in addition to masses of men at the front an enormous industrial army to feed the gigantic war machine. These men must become mere cogs in its machine, they must be deprived of all will to fight, their trade unions must be converted into the principal levers for setting the whole mechanism of the war into motion. This gives rise to the attempts to "nationalise" and militarise the trade unions and to deprive them of the elementary rights they have won by decades of stubborn fighting.

11. Here attention must first of all be drawn to Great Britain, which, at the present time, stands at the head of world reaction. By its suppression of the miners' strike, British capitalism has given the signal for the offensive to the whole international bourgeoisie. The war in China, the attack against the Soviet Union, the attack upon Nicaragua and the defeat of the British miners are all links in the one chain. In Great Britain the right to strike is practically being destroyed. The anti-trade union Bill deprives the proletariat in the event of war, not only

To this Lenin replied that besides the activity of the legal workers' Party:

"It is necessary to supplement it by establishing an illegal base, an illegal organisation, an illegal Social Democratic (today read Communist) activity without, however, surrendering a single legal base." (Lenin, Vol. XIII, p. 128, "The Collapse of the Second International").

At the same time Lenin criticised those who tried to substitute the question of mass struggle against war by individual acts like sabotage or the individual refusal to undertake military service.

"Not sabotaging the war, not individual action, but mass propaganda leading to the transforming of the war into civil war."

He clearly foresaw the monstrous system of militarisation which the ruling classes are preparing to-day to introduce in France 13 years after the commencement of the world war.

"Today the imperialist bourgeoisie", he wrote, "is not only militarising the whole people, but also the youth, tomorrow perhaps it will begin to militarise the women." (Vol. XIII, p. 452).

And then he gives the following advice to the working class:

"They will give you arms. Take them and learn the art of war thoroughly. This art is necessary for proletarians, not in order to be able to shoot against their brother workers in other lands, as is being done in the present war, and as the traitors to Socialism are advising you to do, but in order to fight against the bourgeoisie of your own country, to put an end to exploitation, to poverty and wars, not by pious wishes, but by a victory over the bourgeoisie and by disarmament." (Lenin, Vol. XIII, p. 454).

29. This is what Lenin wrote concerning wars between the imperialists themselves.

What conclusions should the Communist Parties draw from this in the present situation?

1) Bolshevism concentrates in the struggle against war upon the mass movement and the mass struggle. Work among the masses, in the factories, in the trade unions, in the country districts, in the army, — this is what Communists do prior to and during the war, this is the way to transform the war into a civil war.

2) The extremely difficult conditions in which the workers organisations during the war have to work (Lenin: "Instructions to the Hague Delegation") make it obligatory for the Communist Parties to be ready for it at any moment. The Communists must commence the struggle against war not for the first time when it has already broken out, when the governmental terror temporarily enchains the masses, but above all in the period of preparation for war.

3) In steadily building up a secret apparatus for steadfast work against war, both prior to and also during the war, the Communist Parties must not restrict themselves entirely to conspirative work, but must fight to secure liberty for their agitation on the first possibility which presents itself on the road to revolutionary action, to lead the masses into the streets for the struggle to transform the imperialist war into civil war, for the seizure of power by the proletariat, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.

4. The Bolsheviks cannot raise the whole problem of struggle against war only as a question of the "general strike". A general strike which does not end in armed rising is of itself not capable of rendering an imperialist war impossible. For the successful accomplishment of a general strike and rising, i. e. a civil war, there must be a revolutionary situation; a revolutionary class, capable of mass actions, strong leadership through the Communist Party, systematic persistent work prior to the war to ensure the success of a rising against the ruling class. Therefore, the promises of the pitiful "heroes" of the II. International to "reply" to war with a general strike are either empty phrases or deliberate deceit. Struggle against war is not an one-time action, it exacts enormous sacrifices from the working class, a series of mass actions (demonstrations, strikes in munition factories, etc.), which should culminate in a victorious rising of the proletariat. Communist Parties should do their utmost to develop these mass actions still more and work more and more energetically for the general strike.

The Comintern is aware that in cases when it is a question of war between two imperialist powers it is generally very difficult to bring about a general strike at the moment when war breaks out, but nevertheless, it is essential for the Communist Parties in all capitalist countries to carry on continuous propaganda and agitation for the general strike prior to the war as well as during the war.

However the fact should not be lost sight of that it depends on the revolutionary development of the situation when the slogan of the General Strike can be put forward as a slogan of action that is to say when there is a possibility of the practical realisation of the General Strike. During the General Strike the Communists must seize the opportunity to transform it into the armed uprising.

30. The war against China and the Soviet Union is not an ordinary imperialist war, it is the imperialist war, par excellence: The conditions in which it is proceeding and will proceed in relation to the Soviet Union should it break out, will be different from those of the war of 1914.

1. This war is a special war, firstly, because it is a clearly expressed class war. The imperialists are not fighting with the aid of the people; it is a punitive expedition of the imperialists for the purpose of suppressing the workers and peasants. Every honest toiler in the imperialist countries will appreciate this.

2. The fetish of "national defence" particularly in the present war against China will have no meaning for the peoples of imperialist countries. No person with any common sense will believe that China threatens to invade the British Isles. Therefore the bourgeoisie and its lackeys are compelled to put forward instead of the slogan "Defence of the Fatherland", such sophisms as "Defence of property", "Defence of interests", "Defence of prestige", "Defence of the flag", "Defence of civilisation against Bolshevism", etc.

3. The working masses remember the sanguinary experience of 1914—18. It is also remembered by the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Parties. They will take into account the methods adopted by the bourgeoisie in conducting war and they have, if as yet still very weakly, "armed" themselves for it.

4. Finally, unlike the period of imperialist war of 1914, the vanguard of the proletariat is organised in Communist Parties and combined in the Communist International, which was not the case 13 years ago.

31. Consequently the possibilities for fighting against war at the present time are very much greater than they were in 1914—1918.

The following are the deductions for the Communist Parties:

A. In the imperialist war, par excellence, against China or the Soviet Union (in perspective), the workers in the capitalist countries engaged in that war should be for the defeat of their own capitalist government just as in every imperialist war.

B. If in an ordinary imperialist war between two capitalist countries workers must declare themselves in favour of the defeat of their governments, in the imperialist and counter-revolutionary wars, par excellence, against the Chinese Revolution (at present Wuhan) or the Soviet Union, they must actively fight for the victory of the workers of China and the Soviet Union.

C. The fraternisation slogan advanced by the Bolsheviks to the soldiers during the imperialist war holds good also now as one of the most important slogans of anti-militarist work among the soldiers and sailors of the imperialist armies and fleets. But preserving its significance primarily in a war between two imperialist States, this slogan in the war of the imperialists against revolutionary China (Wuhan today) and the Soviet Union must be linked up with the call to the soldiers of the imperialist armies at the right moment to join the forces of the revolution.

D. The proletariat must do its utmost to prevent the imperialists throttling revolutionary China. Strikes of transport workers and of workers employed in munitions factories, the general strike, etc. — constitute the means which the international proletariat must use in order to defend revolutionary China and the Soviet Union.

32. History provides the international working class with numerous examples of Communists fighting against war. Above

b) But at the same time, the Social Democrats are actively preparing war against the Soviet Union and the workers in the colonies. Some of the signs of these preparations are: the resolution of the Marseilles Congress of the II. International designating "World Bolshevism" (proletarian revolution) as the greatest menace to peace, the lying and infamous propaganda against "Red imperialism", against the "Terror" in the Soviet Union, against Socialist construction there, the grenade campaign and finally the last resolutions of the E. C. of the II. International which issued the slogan that one must put an end to Bolshevism in order to carry on the struggle against Fascism.

As treacherous and openly counter-revolutionary is the standpoint of the anarchist and syndicalist leaders, who under the cloak of the struggle against the "dictatorship" of the proletarian leaders, against the economic and political centralisation of the Soviet Union are in reality in collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the preparation of an attack on the first Workers' State of the world which is surrounded on all sides by imperialist enemies.

17. This treacherous campaign was intended to justify the position of "neutrality" which the Social Democrats through the mouth of Breitscheid recommended the workers of Germany to adopt in the event of the capitalist countries declaring war against the Soviet Union.

The adept German Social Democratic swindlers understand perfectly well that there can be no such "neutrality", that the German chemical industry will most likely supply the States fighting against the Soviet Union with the materials they require, that German transport will transport shells from Great Britain and Italy and that the German worker will be compelled like the workers of other countries to work, to produce the requirements for the war against the toilers of the Soviet Union.

But if the position of "neutrality" is supported by German Social Democracy, because it coincides with the position of German imperialism, the other parties affiliated to the II. International like the Polish Socialist Party are jointly with their bourgeoisie and landlords, active pioneers in a war against the Soviet Union. Everywhere the position of Social Democrats coincides with the interests of their respective bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, something new has arisen in the evolution of Social Democracy in recent times, namely, in certain countries the Social Democrats are proceeding further than the policy of supporting the imperialist policy of their governments. They take the initiative for imperialist policy and armaments out of the hands of the bourgeoisie. The position of the French Socialists, who, through Paul Boncour, introduced the new war law, is one of the most striking examples of this latest "evolution".

18. The so-called "ultra-Left" groups have played no small part in the work of demoralising the proletariat. While in the campaign against the Soviet Union the Social Democrats were an echo of the bourgeoisie, the ultra-Lefts were an echo of the Social Democrats. Now when the preparation of an attack on the Soviet Union is becoming self-evident, when the professional house-breakers from Scotland Yard are raiding the premises of the Soviet representatives in London, the objective meaning and significance of "ultra-Left" treachery is perfectly clear. In the light of the anti-Soviet campaign, this treachery appears as one of the elements intended to disorganise the Soviet rear in the event of war. In as far as this fraction endeavours to assume an international character, it constitutes an element in disorganising the struggle of the Comintern against war.

19. The attitude of the Second International on the Chinese question was no less treacherous than its attitude towards the Soviet Union. The Second International did not move a finger to prevent the concentration of foreign troops in China. Its leaders are cynically and impudently for the war in China. If such a leader in the Second International as Thomas, disagreed at will with the policy of his government in regard to the Chinese question, it was only in the sense that the government was not sending enough troops and should send more. Another leader of the Second International, MacDonald, declares that the protection of British interests in China demands the presence of an adequate armed force in the "settlement". The Second International openly supports the Chinese Gallifet, Chiang Kai-shek, after the Shanghai shootings (see "Hamburger Echo" of 19. 4. 27). The efforts of the Chinese proletariat to secure hegemony over the national revolutionary movement are meeting with fierce opposition on the part of the entire international Social Democracy.

20. No less criminal and infamous is the attitude to the war question of the so-called "Left" section of Social Democracy (Otto Bauer, Paul Levi and others).

a) This wing of Social Democracy is disguising its criminal passivity in regard to the war, which has already begun in China, by talk about the peril of imperialist wars in general.

b) Together with Hilferding they keep alive the extremely dangerous illusion that imperialism itself is not dangerous, that it only becomes dangerous if accompanied by reaction (Austrian Social Democratic organ "Kampf").

c) In their campaign against the Soviet Union they use the same poisonous weapons as the Right wing of the Social Democrats.

This wing of Social Democracy is the most dangerous because its leaders are disguising the standpoint of the Right Social Democrats with "Left" phraseology, because they always save at the critical moment the Right Social Democrats and the bourgeoisie, and by misleading the workers help the bourgeoisie to carry out its plans.

21. The Communist Parties in their struggle against imperialist intervention in revolutionary China and their struggle for peace with the Soviet Union, cannot renounce the united front tactics. On the contrary. In this struggle the widest possible application of the united front tactics is a necessary condition both in the interests of the mobilisation of the broad masses of the workers, peasants and oppressed nations and also in the interest of exposing pacifist illusions. In this respect it must not for a moment be forgotten that the so-called "Left" Social Democratic leaders (such as Paul Levi in Germany, Bracke in France, such representatives of the British Labour Party as Maxton and Wheatley, and such "Left" trade union leaders as Purcell and Hicks) are the most dangerous enemies of Communism in the labour movement. Even the more sincere leaders of the Left opposition within the Social Democracy in so far as they merely waver and chatter, but refuse to dissociate themselves organisationally from the Social Democratic leadership, the Communist Parties are obliged to criticise most strongly and to expose their role as deceivers of their working class followers.

But at the same time the winning over of the Left Social Democratic workers and also of their Leftward inclined workers such as the anarcho-syndicalists for a revolutionary united proletarian front in the struggle against war was never such an important task as it is at the present time.

DISARMAMENT AND PACIFISM.

22. In view of increased preparations for imperialist wars, the talk of the bourgeois governments and of the petty bourgeois pacifists about disarmament is the acme of hypocrisy and mockery (sabotage of the Washington Agreement of 1921, concerning limitation of naval armaments, failure of the Coolidge "disarmament!" proposal, failure of the Geneva Conference of the League of Nations in March 1927). Communists must expose in every possible way the false and reactionary meaning, as long as the capitalist system still exists, of the slogan and of disarmament advanced by the bourgeoisie and their agents, the Social Democrats. To support such a slogan means to sow illusions that it is possible to do away with war without the abolition of capitalism. No proposals of the bourgeoisie and the Social Democrats concerning the curtailment of armaments and the reduction of war expenditure can reduce by a single iota the danger of war during the imperialist epoch.

The only country which has really reduced its army to a minimum is the Soviet Union. Among all the existing States, it is the only sure buttress of peace. Emerging in October 1917 from the struggle against the imperialist war, it has been for ten years like a heavy weight round the neck of the European imperialists, preventing them from hurling the various sections of the toiling masses against one another. It can fulfil this role also in the future, provided its policy has the support of the international working class. The policy of the Soviet Union directed towards disarmament is the policy of a State in which the proletariat is the ruling class and is laying the foundation of a new society which makes war impossible. The attitude of the world proletariat to the position of the Soviet Union on the disarmament question must

therefore differ in principle from its attitude towards the hypocritical disarmament plans of the bourgeois States.

23. There is no doubt about the fact that the millions of toilers who went through the great imperialist war of 1914-18 do not want a new war. The wounds of the last war are still too fresh. These workers sincerely desire to combat war, but deceived by the Social Democrats, they do not yet see their way clearly, and have yet no revolutionary basis. This is the source of the vague and sentimental "pacifism", from which the working class still suffers. This pacifism has nothing in common with the deliberate deception carried on by the bourgeois pacifists, clergy and other charlatans whose task is to provide palliatives for the negative sides of capitalist society.

24. One must differentiate between these two forms of pacifism. While Communists are prepared patiently for weeks and months on end if necessary to explain to the workers their errors endeavouring to draw them into a "united workers' front" with the vanguard of the working class and helping them in the course of the struggle to overcome these errors, they must be utterly relentless in regard to the "leaders", who, taking advantage of the confused pacifist ideas among the proletariat, give this pacifism the definite form of a "position" and give various false explanations of the fundamental principle.

"One of the forms of deceiving the working class", wrote Lenin during the war in the year 1915, "is pacifism and the abstract preaching of peace. Under capitalism and particularly in its imperialist stage, war is inevitable... To preach peace at the present time without at the same time calling upon the masses for revolutionary action, can serve only to sow illusions, corrupt the proletariat by imbuing them with confidence in the humaneness of the bourgeoisie and convert it into a plaything of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent countries." (Lenin, Vol. XIII, p. 51 "Pacifism and the Slogan of Peace").

25. Among these pacifist muddleheads who "preach peace without at the same time calling upon the masses for revolutionary action" must be included first of all, the British Independent Labour Party, which has not taken a single practical step towards the mobilisation of the British working class and the soldiers and sailors for the struggle against British imperialism. The Independent Labour Party stubbornly rejected the united front with the Communist Party. It condemned the "violence" and armed struggle of the Chinese masses against the foreign imperialists, it advocated "negotiations" in order to paralyse the further development of the national revolutionary movement in China.

Not less harmful is another form of this "Socialist pacifism", namely, the peculiar religious-mystical "anti-militarism" associated with Lansbury and supported by the Independent Labour Party. It is limited to voting against war credits, to the advocacy of individual and collective refusal to do military service and to transport arms in the event of war. This group is coming more and more under the influence of the Labour Party and is capitulating before British imperialism. This pseudo-Socialist pacifism is dangerous because it creates among the workers the illusion that Social Democracy, at least its pacifist section, is prepared to fight against war. As a matter of fact it only helps to suppress the question of genuine mass methods of struggling against war.

TACTICAL QUESTIONS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WARS.

26. Lenin's presentation of the question of war determines the tactics of the Communist Parties for an entire historical epoch, the epoch of imperialist wars. Slogans like "War against war", "Convert the imperialist war into civil war", "Defeat of the home bourgeois government in an imperialist war", remain to-day classical examples of true revolutionary internationalism. Leninism has rendered the great service of dealing with the question of war in its concrete historical conditions; the following three types of wars were laid down: a) wars between imperialist States; b) national revolutionary wars against imperialism including also colonial countries (China); c) capitalist counter-revolutionary wars against the proletarian revolution and countries building up Socialism. The Comintern has now merely to put into concrete form —

with regard to wars of the last two types — the general treatment of the question of war, which Bolshevism laid down most fully with regard to wars between imperialist States.

27. Bolshevism first of all rejects: a) a frivolous treatment of the question of war. In his draft of instructions to the Russian delegation to the Hague conference, Lenin very emphatically warned against any frivolous treatment of the methods of struggle against war. He advised all Communist Parties to take into consideration the actual conditions in which war arises; the secrecy with which preparations are made for it; its unexpected outbreak, the helplessness of the "ordinary organisation of the workers" even if it calls itself revolutionary, in the face of an actual menace of a war; the fact that "the overwhelming majority of the toilers will decide the question (of national defence) in favour of their own bourgeoisie, owing to the powerful pressure exercised by the bourgeois State apparatus which holds all sources of information in its hands, etc."

"The boycott of war is a stupid phrase" wrote Lenin.

b) On the strength of the experience of the war of 1914, Bolshevism also exposed the treachery of those who substituted empty phraseology for serious and persevering preparation of war against war. As everyone knows Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg were the authors of the amendment to the resolution of the Basle Congress which recommended — in the event of an outbreak of war — to work for the

"acceleration of the collapse of capitalism in the spirit of the Commune and of the October (General Strike) and December (Moscow rising) event in 1905."

But Bolshevism fought also against anarcho-syndicalism and the old Hervé school, which, while talking big about a "General Strike", about "insurrection" and about "sabotaging mobilisation", did not take a single practical step to prepare themselves for war against war in order not to be utterly helpless at the moment when war was declared. The world war has vindicated the worst suppositions in regard to this type of "revolutionaries."

28. The position of Lenin on the question of "the transforming of the imperialist war into civil war" confirmed subsequently by the experience of the Russian Revolution, can be summarised under the following main points:

1. For the revolution to be successful there must be first of all the existence of a revolutionary situation arising from a series of military failures and defeats of the capitalist governments engaged in the imperialist war, that is to say a situation in which it is

a) impossible for the dominant classes to preserve their domination unchanged; various crises among the "upper classe";

b) unusual accentuation of the misery and poverty of the oppressed classes;

c) considerable increase, owing to the above-mentioned circumstances, in the activity of the masses.

II. But these objective reasons alone are not enough to bring about a victorious revolution. To them must be added:

The subjective "capacity" of the revolutionary class for revolutionary mass actions strong enough to overthrow its own government or put it with its back to the wall which will never — not even in the epoch of crises — "fall" unless it be "made to fall". (Lenin Vol. XIII, p. 139, and 140 "Collapse of the Second International").

III. Apart from this, the revolutionary class must have an experienced Bolshevik leadership (to-day the Communist Parties) capable of preparing and organising revolutionary mass actions of this class. In the period preparatory to revolutionary mass actions, this leadership, making use of every "legal" opportunity, must carry on an incessant agitation among the masses against the imperialist war, under the slogan of transforming it into civil war. In connection with this, Lenin took into account that this agitation will meet with fierce resistance on the part of the ruling classes.

"Not only in war", so he wrote, "but in absolutely every acute political situation, let alone any revolutionary action of the masses, the government of even the freest democratic country will also threaten to break up the legal organisations, seize their funds, arrest their leaders and other similar 'practical measures'. What is to be done?"

of the weapon of the General Strike against war, but of the weapon of the strike as a whole. The government may declare illegal any strike, even in peace time.

In Italy, in an atmosphere of savage terror against the working class, "nationalisation" of the trade unions, which in reality is tantamount to complete liquidation of the independent class organisations of the toiling masses, is being carried out with the support of the reformist leaders (D'Aragona and Co.) Before our very eyes, Italian Fascism is doing what the bourgeoisie did not dare to do during the world war. The practice of "social peace" is being carried to its logical conclusion.

Finally, in France, the "Armed Nation" law has been passed, the essence of which is a monstrous militarisation penetrating every pore of political and economic life. According to this law, in the event of war the entire population regardless of age or sex will be mobilised at home as well as in the colonies. The workers in the factories will be converted into soldiers; the trade unions and all other associations will be militarised; the right to strike will be abolished. Anyone who takes part in a strike is liable to be court-martialled.

In Japan schools are militarised and penalties against strikes introduced in the event of war.

Germany abolishes one of the achievements of the German revolution — the eight-hour day; new legislation is being contemplated against strikes. The Fascists are gradually penetrating the State and Administrative apparatus.

In Poland the methods of the reactionaries used against the working class surpass any of the methods of the former tsarist regime. The national organisations of the White Russians and of other national minorities are being destroyed. By means of bribery and corruption Pilsudski's agencies are established whose business it is to secure a rear among the "national minorities" for the war against the U.S.S.R.

Similar methods are employed by Roumania to strengthen its rear in Bessarabia.

All these measures are but links in the chain of the war mobilisation plan.

12. In this plan, no small place is provided for the armed detachments of the bourgeoisie. Prior to the world war of 1914, this form of a purely class counter-revolutionary army was not so wide-spread.

Capitalism in its fight against the mass movement utilised the organs of the "State", the standing army, the police and the gendarmerie. The growing acuteness of the class struggle after the war divested the bourgeoisie of the last remnants of "democracy". Everywhere the capitalists are organising their fighting organisations, which in several countries exceed numerically that of the standing army. The function of these organisations is to support reaction at home in "peace time" and in war-time:

a) To form a permanent reliable service to be used for the suppression of the revolutionary movement that may arise during the war or at its conclusion.

b) In the event of mobilisation to drive the masses to war at the point of the bayonet.

c) To form ready prepared cadres in the existing armies in the event of imperialist wars.

A serious factor in strengthening the capitalist rear guard in case of war is also the work carried on amongst women by the nationalist parties and Fascist organisations, which take into account the women's role in the economic machine in case of war (i. e. in the munition factories, agriculture, transport, administration, etc.).

13. Every imperialist war is primarily war against the working class and the toiling masses. It abolishes all liberties, strengthens immensely the apparatus for exploitation and the machinery for the suppression of the working class struggle. But the war against the Soviet Union will be a special war. It will be a war directed against the working class and Communism all over the world and primarily in Europe. The emergency laws against the Communist Parties which the bourgeoisie is already enacting are calculated to clear the way for war, and to give the bourgeoisie a free hand. The bourgeoisie will endeavour to exterminate the most active sections of the proletariat.

This is clearly proved by the fight which is already in progress against Communism. By the hand of Chang Tso-lin and Chang Kai-shek, it is strangling and shooting Communists in the most barbarous manner in China. It is assassinating them

in Italy and Latin America. It is shooting them down in the Balkans, in Roumania, in Bulgaria and in Poland and Lithuania. It brings charges against Communists for espionage in Czechoslovakia. In France it brings charges against them of being agents of a foreign government and is preparing a new campaign of persecutions against them. Scores are being sent to penal servitude in Germany and Hungary.

If in imperialist wars the bourgeoisie tramples under foot all "international agreements" which set a limit to barbarous methods of war, then in a super imperialist war, the class war against the Soviet Union and the insurrectionary colonial peoples, it is sure to make use of the most terrible means for the extermination of the toiling masses. The masses of the workers must now by this time clearly realise the counter-revolutionary character of the war preparations of the bourgeoisie.

THE GROWTH OF MILITARISM.

14. Simultaneously with the measures being taken to strengthen the rear, the mobilisation has taken place of all resources for the war front. Militarism is growing from day to day. War budgets are increasing (expenditure on armaments has almost doubled). The war industry has grown to monstrous dimensions. Having exhausted its resources of man power, modern capitalist armies are concentrating all attention upon the technical perfection of the war machine. The number of machine-guns per unit, the range of artillery fire, the carrying capacity of aeroplanes, the effective radius of exploding bombs have all increased; one-man tanks have been introduced, new poison gases are being invented. Special inflammable material is being invented, which when projected is capable of destroying whole regiments and divisions; preparations are being made for the so-called germ war for spreading contagious diseases among the enemy troops, etc.

15. Future war will be a mechanised war. Every country will be converted into an enormous factory for the manufacture of the means of extermination. The motor will occupy the decisive place in this murder machine. But precisely because military technique has reached such a high stage of development the capitalist States will be obliged to throw enormous numbers of men in the theatre of military operations. For these aims the capitalist States are reorganising their armies through the militarisation of the entire population, in addition to the extensively developed permanent cadres. Owing to the extensive employment of aviation, the destructive power in modern bombs, the extensive range of artillery, the line of demarcation between the front and the rear will be obliterated. The future war with all its consequences will exceed in horror all that which the toiling masses were obliged to suffer in the war of 1914—18.

But as a consequence of this very character of the war, the role of the working class and its organisations, primarily the trade unions, without whose participation the conduct of war is impossible, will increase. Its resistance to war together with the revolutionary struggle in the army will be fatal for the imperialists.

THE IDEOLOGICAL PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

16. The principal function of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals after the war of 1914—18 was to serve as a sort of agitation department for the international bourgeoisie, the business of which was to find the ideological justification for the despicable features of the capitalist system. A division of labour was introduced between the capitalists and Social Democracy. The capitalists armed themselves and made technical preparations for war, — the Social Democrats made the ideological preparations for it. These preparations proceeded along two lines:

a) along the line of justifying war between the imperialists themselves. Hilferding's theory of ultra-imperialism, of a "pacifist" epoch, the characteristic feature of which is the application of cartel methods and "democratic principles" to foreign policy corresponds to the practice of the Social Democratic Parties; propaganda for the League of Nations as an organ capable of preventing war, support for Wilsonism, the Dawes Plan, Locarno, etc. etc. By this policy, the Social Democrats lulled the watchfulness of the masses, foisting on them the illusion that the epoch of wars had already come to an end.

all we have the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks during the imperialist war in 1914-18; the enormous experience of the German Spartacists, the fight put up by the workers of various countries during the intervention in Russia in 1918-1919. The sailors' mutiny in Odessa; the experience of the Yugoslavian and Austrian comrades who fought against intervention in Hungary in 1919; the Committees of Action in Great Britain during the Soviet-Polish war in 1920, the prevention by the workers of Great Britain, Germany and Italy, of the transport of arms, the guerilla warfare conducted by the workers and peasants in the rear of the Polish armies; the experience in the Ruhr of organising illegal work in the army and combatting the occupation, the experience of the Communist Party of France and the Communist Youth of France during the wars in Morocco and Syria, and finally the rich experience of the Y. C. I. The utilisation of this rich experience in the present war against China constitutes the most elementary duty of all Sections of the C. I.

THE SLOGAN OF "NATIONAL MILITIA" AND PARTIAL MILITARY DEMANDS.

33. Recently a number of Communist Parties have been substituting the old democratic slogans of "National Militia" by the slogan of "Toilers' Militia" (a militia of workers and peasants) or the slogan of arming the proletariat. Is this correct? Has the slogan of a National Militia become obsolete? We know that Lenin already in April 1917 in an article entitled "The Proletarian Militia" supported the old slogan of "universal arming of the people" for the Russia of that day.

In that period, in April, when the masses of the soldiers supported the Mensheviks and mainly the Socialist Revolutionaries, "the universal arming of the people" was a counter-slogan to the imperialist army at the front and had a two-fold meaning:

a) As a guarantee against a possible military counter-revolution.

b) As a slogan directed against the imperialist war. The bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia was then developing into a Socialist Revolution.

34. What has changed since? Firstly, in a number of European countries (Austria, Hungary, Germany) the period of bourgeois revolutions has closed as it was closed long ago in the overwhelming majority of countries in Europe and America. Secondly, during the last decade the class struggle has assumed a severity unparalleled in history, classes are arming themselves openly: on the one hand the Fascists and on the other the proletarian defence organisations (the Red Hundreds of Germany and similar organisations); thirdly and lastly in the event of victory the proletariat must utilise the experience of the Russian revolution which passed from the Red Guard composed of workers detachments to the establishment of the Red Army. Hence, it would be a mistake to apply the slogan of a "universal national militia" to all countries. This would be a purely mechanical solution of the problem.

35. The questions of the abolition of standing armies, of a "universal national militia" of "arming the proletariat" and of the "toilers' militia" must be formulated in their concrete historical conditions.

1. In modern capitalist countries which have already gone through the period of bourgeois revolution, Communist Parties as a rule must bring forward side by side with the demand for the abolition of the standing army the slogan of the arming of the proletariat. This slogan is of immediate importance: In the period of actual preparation for civil war, for the struggle for proletarian dictatorship as well as during the civil war itself should the bourgeoisie have at its disposal Fascist organisations.

2. The Red Army slogan is essential after the conquest of political power by the proletariat for the purpose of liquidating all relics of the bourgeois counter-revolution within the country, and for defence of the achievements of the revolution from the attacks of the capitalist world.

3. The slogan of the "Toilers' Militia" which presupposes the abolition of standing armies has at present a propaganda significance. Its realisation depends on the victory of the proletarian revolution in a number of important capitalist countries. In their propaganda for this slogan, Communist Parties must concentrate on the disarmament of the bour-

geoisie, of the Fascist organisations, of the police and the gendarmerie.

4. The slogan of "universal militia" has not become obsolete but should be advanced: 1. In colonial countries which have not yet passed through the stage of bourgeois democratic revolution (Syria, Morocco, Egypt, etc.), 2. in capitalist countries in which, owing to the existence of feudal survivals, bourgeois democratic revolutions are possible with the prospect of their growing under favourable international conditions into Socialist revolutions. In a number of countries, where the military cast make coups d'état, as in Greece and Spain; 3. in capitalist countries which, although the bourgeois democratic revolutionary period has closed, had fallen into a stage of semi-colonial dependence upon world capital, and in the event of the existence of a powerful national revolutionary movement against oppression.

36. Communists are obliged to support the partial demands of the soldiers and sailors such as: the election of officers, the territorial system of military service, national formation, active and passive suffrage rights, improvement of the material conditions of the soldiers, support for their families, prolongation of leave of absence, etc.

Communists must link all these demands up with their general slogans (arming the proletariat, a militia of toilers, etc.) in their agitation.

THE ERRORS AND DEFECTS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES.

37. The Comintern as a whole as well as its separate Sections must expose their errors and remedy their defects in an impartial manner in order to be able to cope with the task of combating war.

1. The fundamental defect from which all Sections of the Comintern suffer is that they under-estimate the danger of war. The line of conduct of all the Communist Parties is such as to make one believe that war is a matter of the more or less remote future and not the bloody reality of today. In some countries the Communist Parties let themselves be influenced by the mood of the broad non-Party masses who do not feel so strongly the war in far off China, and in other countries removed from the great centres of world politics, they allow themselves to be influenced by the position of "neutrality" determined by the role played by those countries in world politics (the Scandinavian countries). In other countries again they come to a certain extent under the influence of the bourgeois press, which maintains that there is no war in China, that there has been a mere preliminary despatch of troops for the protection of national interests.

2. A number of Sections of the Comintern are unable to link up their domestic problems with international problems. Sometimes it takes the form of a parochial provincialism (Czecho-Slovakia), the idea that little countries are not concerned with great questions of international policy.

3. Another weakness revealed by our Parties is the under-estimation of the role of the imperialism of their country (this happened in France and Japan); they raise the question of war in the abstract instead of giving a clear reply to the workers to the question as to what they should do in the present war conducted by the imperialist powers against China and how to fight against their own imperialism. It is necessary in this respect to draw attention to the mistakes of the Communist Party of Holland, which after the rebellion in Indonesia confined itself to demanding the despatch of a committee of investigation whilst it forgot such elementary demands as the withdrawal of the Dutch troops from Indonesia and the recognition of Indonesia's "right to separation". Objectively such "mistakes" are a capitulation to imperialism.

4. Ideological confusion is also one of the defects from which the younger Communist Parties suffer. Certain prominent comrades flounder on the position of vulgar-pacifism (Great Britain). Many are inclined to draw the conclusion from the fact that the Soviet Union as a workers' and peasants' State in a capitalist encirclement takes the initiative in limiting armaments, that this is a slogan for those Communist Parties still fighting for power in their own countries.

5. Absolutely wrong conclusions are drawn from Lenin's views regarding war. The instructions given to the Hague Dele-

gation are interpreted as meaning the abandonment of the strike as such, as a means for combating war.

6. The role of mass organisations and the activity in the trade unions, and in the army and navy is underestimated.

THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES.

38. What are the fundamental tasks of the Comintern and its various Sections in the struggle against the present war in China, and the danger of war against the Soviet Union?

1. The main central watchword of the present anti-war campaign should be: "Defence of the Chinese and Russian Revolutions". The attention of the masses must be concentrated on this watchword. The Communist Parties must explain to the masses that a real struggle for peace is impossible without revolutionary mass actions, that pacifism is only a means for deceiving the masses, that the struggle for a lasting peace and for the prevention of war is synonymous with the overthrow of the bourgeois Government and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.

2. Untiring propaganda in the press, at meetings, in Parliament against the war of the imperialists in China, exposure of its predatory character and of the treachery of the Social Democratic leaders and reformist trade union leaders. While exposing in every possible way the role of Anglo-American imperialism, to fight unceasingly against the predatory efforts of their own ruling classes; there must be a ruthless criticism of pacifist illusions and pacifist ideology, exposure of the measures taken by the bourgeois governments on the question of "disarmament" and for this purpose to the publication of the secret treaties and military agreements contracted by the bourgeois governments.

3. Communist Parties should carry on their anti-war campaign so as to make their slogans correspond with the given stage of the military conflict. War against China and the Soviet Union can assume various forms in the future. Economic blockade, military blockade of coasts by the navy, raids of armed gangs on the Soviet Union from the adjoining States, organisation from outside of internal insurrections, etc. Therefore it is necessary that the Communist Parties should take into account in their agitation these special features of the war which is taking place, combining it with the general military preparations of the capitalist States for concerted attacks on the Soviet Union and China.

4. To expose the international network of intrigues against the Soviet Union, the mobilisation of the masses for the defence of the Soviet Union against the attacks of the imperialists under the slogan: "International proletariat, defend your comrades' country".

5. Agitation in favour of a general strike against the war particularly in Great Britain and other countries which play an active role in the punitive expedition against China.

6. To organise demonstrations outside the Embassies of countries participating in the punitive expedition against China and also of governments threatening war against the Soviet Union.

7. Demonstrations of women and children along the routes where troops depart for the front and at the harbours, demonstrations of women and children as well as of the war disabled in the squares in front of Parliaments, before the Ministries of war and of Foreign Affairs.

8. The Communist Parties must concentrate their attention on work in the trade unions, particularly among metal workers, miners, transport workers and chemical workers.

9. Agitation against war in proletarian and petty bourgeois women's organisations. The calling of women's delegate conferences, local and national congresses, for the war against war.

10. Establish committees of action under the slogan of "Hands Off China and the Soviet Union" securing the affiliation of trade union organisations thereto. More determined application than hitherto of the tactics of the united front as against the united front of the capitalists.

11. General struggle against Fascism as one of the armed detachments of the counter-revolution. In opposition to these fascist organisations to form mass bodies like the Red Front Fighters' League, wherever there is the slightest possibility of so doing.

12. Work in the sports' organisations against Fascism and against war.

13. Most intensive work of the Young Communist League in closest contact with the Party among the working and peasant youth from whom modern armies are recruited and who have not experienced the sanguinary world war.

14. To set up war invalid organisations and to bring in already existing invalid organisations for the fight against war.

15. The Communist Parties of all countries should pay special attention to the establishment of organisations of a non-Party character, embracing in their ranks sympathisers with the liberation movement of the proletariat, colonial workers and all elements who sincerely hate the capitalist social order with its oppression, exploitation and war (for example: the League for struggle against colonial oppression).

16. The strengthening of the work in the army and navy, the strengthening of anti-war work among the peasantry.

17. The intensification of work in the colonies. The establishment of a united front of the proletariat and the nationalist liberation movement of the oppressed nations in the struggle against war. Treatment of these questions in the Party press and of the colonies for the purpose of agitation and to explain the identity of their interests with the interests of the Soviet Union and the toiling masses of China in their fight for freedom.

18. Serious presentation in the Communist Parties of the fundamental questions of Bolshevik tactics in the struggle against war. Treatment of these questions in the Party press and at Party meetings.

19. Greater internationalising of the Sections of the Comintern, concentration of the attention of the masses on international problems, the linking up of these problems with questions of internal class conflicts. Closer mutual contact between the Sections of the Comintern in the whole fight against war.