

The Dilemma Is Not War or Peace But War or Revolution

American Fraction of the Left Communist International
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Public opinion is preoccupied at present with a great question: When will the next world war break out?

The possibility of a new international conflict is not denied by anybody. Everybody is concerned about it. They understand in a situation of this kind that the politicians who speak of a right to capture the masses for peace, already feel their skin burnt from the effects of atom bomb radiation. Everybody hesitates to take a position in favor of a new war. Demagogic propositions are advanced to conjure away the coming conflicts: disarmament, outlawing the atomic bomb, mutual appeasement, peace movements, or strengthening the U.N.O. (United Nations Organization). For the working class to think of opposing war by these methods is equal to the practice of magic, but certainly not the basis of the struggle against war.

It is clear that Russia and her allies are not fighting against war. They simply aim to neutralize the military and economic force of their adversaries. Only in that sense does Stalinism operate all over the world. It is not against the use of the atomic bomb. This would then sanctify their use of it second, in retaliation. On the other hand, neither do they take the peace movement very seriously, the aim of which is not the transformation of the capitalist social order, but simply to maintain conditions as they exist at present.

The genuine Marxists must not pose the problem in the questions: Will there be a New World War? To the genuine Marxists, the conflict is inevitable as long as capitalist society exists. They, the Marxists, are the unique workers for peace through the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the proletarian revolution. They reject, therefore, the hypocritical and false pacifist crusade, denounce it and refuse to join with it in any manner whatsoever. The claim that it is possible to secure peace or conjure away war is the refuge of all "the men of good will" and therefore also, of the bourgeoisie. Such a claim is treason to and proof of the abandonment of the interests of the working class.

The work of political clarification that qualifies as revolutionary must be based on the following:

1. It must anticipate the end of the period in which the workers are forced to fight for this or that imperialist antagonist. It must assert in a most explicit manner that the working class will not fight for any of these, and refuse in every case to yield to the deceit and trickery of Imperialist war.

2. They do not support any victor, but profit from the crisis of the world bourgeoisie in order to prepare and lead to the revolutionary struggle. The proletariat recognizes the two adversaries only as their class enemies and in both cases, there is only one kind of politics to follow behind either fronts: revolutionary defeatism.
3. In face of the attempt to line up the masses physically and spiritually for the war, the Marxists call upon them to refuse to shed their blood a for the cause of any Imperialism whatsoever, and to work instead not for the bloody victory of this or that brigand, but for the victory of the revolutionary proletariat.

There is no greater task for the real revolutionary than to make clear to the workers that they have nothing to defend in capitalist society, and that they should not seek to support this or that Imperialism that permits a more easy life. To the proletariat, whoever gives support to the war betrays their cause. The proletariat has no interest in defending anybody in this conflict, or any other Imperialist conflagration. It has only one interest: to conquer the peace by the only possible method: Revolution!