

the one word, "twaddle." That word exploded the Roosevelt illusion.

A FOREIGN POLICY OF WAR

How sure were the instincts of the youth is now testified to by the unchallenged note, sounded from Washington one month before the national elections, that "*The United States may be at war by next spring, if not sooner.*" It is testified to by the conscription law, which has sense and meaning only as preparation for plunging this country into the worldwide scramble for empire.

Conscription, militarization, and very soon a place in the very vortex of the imperialist world slaughter—these are the prospects held out to American youth by both Roosevelt and Willkie.

Last Wednesday in Cleveland, Mr. Willkie made some vote-catching gestures to the overwhelming anti-war sentiments of the American people. But every word he said about practical policy, about what to do *now*, was thought for thought and almost word for word, on the same line on which Roosevelt is not only talking but acting. If America is being dragged into the war, a fact now being generally recognized, it is precisely by the *present policies* upon which Willkie and Roosevelt are agreed—so closely agreed that Willkie quoted from Roosevelt's own words to express that agreement in his acceptance speech.

No, it is clear the American youth cannot express their deepest thoughts and feelings against the disastrous war into which they are being dragged by choosing between Willkie and Roosevelt.

Domestic policy has, for both Roosevelt and Willkie, been reduced to the position of "the tail that goes with the hide" of a foreign policy of war and preparations for war.

Consider for a moment the needs of American youth for education and jobs, which are harder and harder to obtain, and more and more precarious when gained. Out of years of bitter experience and profound thinking, the youth of America, through their broadest and most representative organizations, brought forth a program for a minimum satisfaction of their needs, that they might be en-

V. THE CHOICE BEFORE AMERICA'S YOUTH

TONIGHT, I wish to address myself especially to the young people of the United States, to those who have come to maturity during the period of the great crisis of the capitalist world now unfolding in the second imperialist world war.

You, young men and women, were born into the richest country in the world, a land whose wealth and productive powers were equal to all the rest of the world combined, where scientific technique was highest, where the current boast was that "prosperity" had become permanent. Even then, of course, half or more of the workers, young and old, had to console themselves with hopes for their failure to share in the "prosperity," but the dominant tone was unlimited optimism for the future. Before the present young generation had time, however, to begin to face their own problems of practical adjustment to life, the great crash of 1929-32 destroyed the illusions of the Coolidge-Hoover era. Since then, our young people have been groping for a new foundation upon which to build their expectations of life.

The false dawn of Roosevelt's New Deal period aroused great hopes and enthusiasms, especially in the younger generation. Then came the war, and with it the growing suspicion among the young people that Roosevelt was not dealing frankly with them, that under cover of fine phrases about neutrality and peace, he was actually taking us step by step into partisanship and final belligerency.

Last spring, the organized youth movement put the question squarely to the President when its delegates gathered in Washington for the Citizenship Institute. The President answered them with

abled to marry, establish homes and become useful citizens. They put this into the form of a practical legislative measure, called the American Youth Act. They estimated that it would cost the Government about five hundred million dollars per year. They proved that this would be the most remunerative investment that our country could possibly make.

But Roosevelt has scrapped even his little beginnings in that direction of the New Deal period, now long dead and gone. He answered the young people who urged their plan upon him in these words:

Don't seek or expect utopia overnight, don't seek or expect a panacea—some wonderful new law that will give to everybody who needs it a handout or a guarantee of permanent remunerative occupation of your own choosing.

Those are the words, and express the thoughts of all the Willkies of Wall Street who have fought with such bitter hatred against every social and economic advance, even the smallest, that has been wrung from them by the struggles of the people. Today, Willkie and Roosevelt are united in telling the young people to look to the army and to the munitions factories for all the solutions of their problems.

Today it is the threat of war, of "national emergency," that is used to justify this brutal and callous rejection of the demands of the youth. But only a few months ago, before war and emergency had been brought to our doorsteps by the Roosevelt-Willkie policies, they rejected the Youth Act with equal brutality; then they said it would cost too much money, it would lead the country to bankruptcy and ruin, America could not afford it.

How is it, you statesmen and gentlemen of the moneybags, that a mere five hundred millions to educate the youth and train them for useful work would in 1939 have threatened America with bankruptcy and ruin, while in 1940 you rush to appropriate fifteen billions, thirty times as much, for militarization and war, without a single voice being raised from your midst to warn us that this is the

road to ruin? Either you were lying to us last year when you said our proposals for social expenditures were the road to disaster, or you are hiding from us this year the fact that you are rushing us on the road to disaster thirty times as fast. The truth is in both these alternatives: You were lying to us a year ago, and you are also rushing the country to catastrophe this year.

In this issue we find the explanation of why our economic royalists, the ruling class of America and their statesmen in and out of power, are rushing our country helter-skelter into the midst of the bloody world scramble for empire. Their system of rule, the system of capitalism, is rotting and dying; it is no longer working and cannot be made to work again so as to satisfy the needs of the people. So long as they cling to the capitalist system, they must fight for ever-rising profits for the big capitalists, the monopolists, the economic royalists. But big profits are eternally in opposition to the needs of the people, to rational expenditure of the national income for the people's needs. So they are driven, by the logic of their position, to sacrifice the people and to drive them into the world war, speculating to solve their insoluble problems at the expense of other peoples and other lands.

But war is no way out, it is only the hundredfold multiplication of all the ills of peace and the addition of new catastrophes.

THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THE YOUTH

The old order is dead. It can never be resurrected. Not Willkie nor ten thousand Willkies can take us back to the days of Coolidge and Hoover. Not Roosevelt nor ten thousand Roosevelts can restore life to a moribund economic and social system through the violence of war.

Young people, especially, are learning to understand that beyond all their immediate demands for the betterment of their present intolerable conditions, there is the deeper necessity to find a way out of the present mess to a new world.

There is no road back to the days of pre-war capitalism, to the old world. There is no by-path to any long-term compromise solu-

tion. There is, finally, only one road to the new world which youth is seeking. That is the road away from capitalism, to socialism. That is the road away from the rule of the capitalist class and toward the rule of the working class.

Capitalism is, and can only be, the ownership and control of the national economy, and everything that goes with it, by a small class of parasitical monopolists. That is the root of crises, unemployment, and all the social ills of mankind; it is the root of militarism and war.

Socialism is the only alternative to capitalism. It is the transfer of the national economy to the ownership and control of the entire people, incorporated into the working class, with the full utilization and development of the national economy for the benefit of all.

Socialism has been proved to be eminently practical. While the capitalist world is falling to pieces, the great socialist Soviet Union is forging ahead to prosperity, security and well being for two hundred millions of people. It is multiplying its national wealth at a rate unheard of in previous history, and distributing its benefits over the whole population. It is doing this in a hostile and warlike world, without assistance, and keeping itself out of the war through a powerful modern defense coupled with a vigilant and intelligent policy of good neighborly peace.

Not through Roosevelt nor Willkie, not through any party or policy that clings to the profit system and drives to war, can American youth find its way to the bright future world which they seek. Only the Communist Party points the way to the future. Only the Communists organize the workers to travel on that road. The future belongs to the youth—and to socialism.

Speech delivered over the Network of the Mutual Broadcasting Company, October 4, 1940.