

# World Socialism

## A 'REALISTIC' WAR PROGRAM

—By HERBERT ZAM—

**T**HE Bauer-Dan-Zyromski thesis on war certainly contains a mass of thought-provoking material for all revolutionists. It further represents a real effort to pose the problems which Socialists may be confronted with in the near future. For this reason it deserves the most serious consideration, regardless of the agreements or disagreements we may have with specific sections of it.

The thesis poses the ideas that should the proletariat be unsuccessful in its efforts to prevent war it will be necessary to utilize the war for the purpose of overthrowing the capitalist system and establishing a workers' government. This certainly is a generalization which by itself we can all agree with. To state this generalization, however, and then to lay down a line for action during the war which completely vitiates this intention is the worst form of self-deception. The readers of *The CALL* know that the Communist International also still pays lip service to this phrase, but that specifically the course of action the Comintern proposes in case of a war in which the Soviet Union should be involved is directly in contradiction to this stated aim. In fact, this is the new problem which has been raised in the International Socialist movement in connection with war, and consequently, a thesis which aims to provide a course of action for Socialists must make that course of action consistent with its aims.

### Same Errors.

Unfortunately, we find in the Bauer-Dan-Zyromski thesis those errors which we have recently criticized in the Communist International attitude on war. The mere fact, of course, that there is this similarity between the thesis and the Comintern line is not in itself a reason for rejecting it, but neither did we reject the Comintern line because of its source.

**T**HE heart of the thesis on the subject in question is contained in the following sentences:

"In the democratic countries allied with the Soviet Union the Socialists can not, and shall not sabotage the conduct of the war; any sabotage would mean support to Hitler Germany and damage to the Soviet Union. Socialists shall tell the workers to perform their duties as soldiers, and as workers in the war industries."

"In the beginning of the war the disorganized, handcuffed and frightened German proletariat will not be able to show revolutionary resistance to war. If the International should put forth a slogan to prevent the war through a general strike, this slogan would never penetrate into Germany and would never find any response. Therefore such slogans shall not be put forth; If carried out only in democratic countries which are against Germany they would help German fascism."

This idea suffers from the illusion that the defense of the Soviet Union can be promoted through supporting the military efforts of capitalist countries which are on the same side of the Soviet Union and that the defeat of fascism could be achieved through the medium of the "democratic" bourgeoisie of capitalist countries.

Only superficially can it appear that a defense of the Soviet Union can be promoted in this manner. Such a defense however, is not real, it is only apparent. To the bourgeoisie conducting the war the fact that the Soviet Union is on their side is a pure

incident. They have no more interest in defending the Soviet

Union than they have in defending the interests of their own proletariat. They endeavor to use the proletariat just as they will endeavor to use the Soviet Union in their own interests and they will not hesitate to intrigue, conspire against, and even overthrow the Soviet government to promote their imperialist interests. Once and for all it should be made clear that the defense of the Soviet Union is a task for the international proletariat, through its own organizations and not through the imperialist governments.

### Self-Delusion

It is also self-delusion to believe that fascism in Germany can be overthrown by the democratic bourgeoisie of some other country, just as it was self-delusion to rely upon the democratic bourgeoisie inside Germany to defeat fascism. The results in Germany and Austria are tragic memorials to this belief, which unfortunately appears to be still alive. The alignments in the next war will not depend upon the form of government of the countries involved, as the thesis implies. Democratic and fascist countries will be pretty well mixed. Based on present relations it is likely, for instance, that while fascist Italy will be in one camp with "democratic" France, fascist Germany will be in the camp of "democratic" England. The thesis very conveniently neglects to discuss such a possibility. Of course the Comintern has already provided for this by distinguishing between "good" and "bad" fascisms. But the very existence of such a possibility shows the unreality of the "realistic" thesis.

**O**F course the thesis sees this weakness and considers the proposed line of policy to be only temporary.

"Now we are forced in the interests of peace to support the policies of these (democratic-H. Z.) governments. But their policy is not our policy. In the course of development it may be that we will be forced to come out against these capitalist governments and to call upon the broad masses to struggle against them."

Note the cautiousness of the formulation. "Why 'in the course of time' if 'their policies are not our policies?' Why not now? Why should we fight them only when we are 'forced' to (by the pressure of the masses?) rather than because we are against them?"

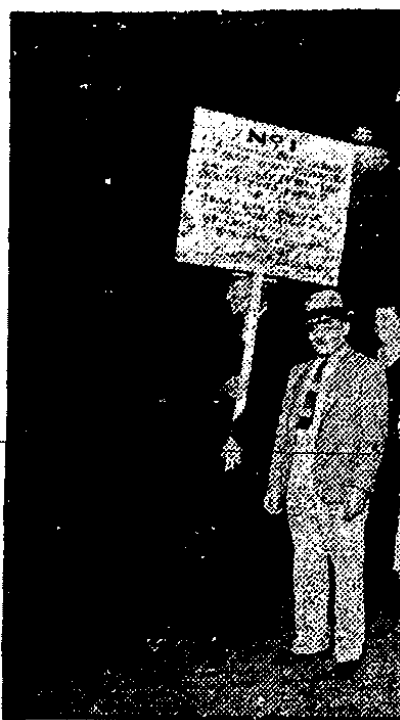
### Contradicts Self

But these are minor considerations. The thesis assumes that we can maneuver with masses as if they were lead soldiers—lead them into war, lead them out again! That is nonsense. It contradicts the thesis which in another section declares:

"International socialism will be able to utilize the war for the conquest of power and the overthrow of capitalism only to the degree that the masses will be convinced that the only ones who are guilty of the war catastrophe are capitalism and fascism."

Exactly. And if we in any way

UNIONS PIC



When the Young Democrats of the Wisconsin Federation of Labor met in convention hall, carrying sign.

## The Life An

Huey Long lived as he died — by the gun and wise-crack.

After 17 years of cheap, rotten politics, Huey finally reached his height — an all-powerful dictatorship over the state of Louisiana — and died from an assassin's bullet.

Huey was born in the red clay hills of Central Louisiana seven years before the World's Fair at Chicago marked the turn of the century. Raised as a devout member of the Baptist Church, he remained until his death a loyal member of that church, despite his political use of profanity.

Huey began his political career at the age of 25 years, when he was elected to the State Board of Railway Commissioners in Louisiana. Brilliant in Tulane University, he completed a usual three-year course in seven months and passed a special bar examination to become a law-partner with his brother, with whom he was later in his life to quarrel bitterly.

Early seeking popular issues, he declared "war" in his early political years against Standard Oil. Taking advantage of a Standard squeeze which isolated and eliminated independent operators, Huey traveled through the bayous and swamps of Louisiana demanding that pipe lines be declared common carriers, under the jurisdiction of the railway commission.

### Begins in Politics

Using his office as railroad commissioner — equivalent to a public service commissioner in many states — Huey began a clever campaign for the "rights of the people" against the monopolies. In 1923 — four years after he entered politics — he entered the

share in this guilt we will never be able to place ourselves at the head of the masses rebelling against a slaughter. Only those who consistently and from the beginning oppose the war will be able to gain the confidence of the masses.

We are facing a more serious situation than even in 1914. For in 1914 at least no section of the movement was consciously preparing to support a war, as is the case at present. That is all the more reason to have perfect clarity in our own ranks. It is hoped that these preliminary remarks will serve as a sort of introduction to a full discussion which the thesis deserves, and which will be possible only after a thorough reading and study of the entire document.