

# World Socialism

## COMMUNISTS AND WAR

By HERBERT ZAM

In this space last week we published a report to the effect that Largo Caballero had resigned from the Socialist Party of Spain. Since then we have received trustworthy information on this situation. Caballero did not resign from the Party, but only as chairman of the Party. He remains a member of the Party and of the national committee.

The resignation was caused by a dispute over the rights of the parliamentary fraction. The national committee, it seems, wished to adopt regulations which would place the policies of the parliamentary fraction under the jurisdiction of the national committee. Caballero insisted that while he was in sympathy with the objective of the national committee the present statutes of the Party gave the parliamentary fraction a considerable degree of autonomy, and only the convention of the Party could change that relationship. As chairman of the Party, it was his duty to enforce the statutes, and he could not remain chairman if these statutes were violated by decisions of the national committee itself.

After Caballero's resignation, the national committee offered to recall the decision if he would agree to continue as chairman, but Caballero refused to accept this proposal. He insisted that the comrades had known that the raising of this question in that form would lead to his resignation as chairman, and that his decision was irrevocable.

As to the political significance of this event nothing can be added to what was said last week. Whether it indicates that the Caballero group controls the parliamentary fraction, with the right wing in control of the national committee remains to be seen. Undoubtedly, in the near future further information on the entire Party situation in Spain will be available.

\* \* \*

How far can the communists go with their present policy on war and still class themselves as being anti-war? This question has been asked by many comrades since the "new line" of the Comintern on war, adopted at the Seventh World Congress.

**The New Line** That this is a legitimate question and not merely a fractional attack has been demonstrated by the position of the spokesman of the Communist Party of America, Earl Browder, in his debates with Norman Thomas. Last week we quoted from Browder's statement at the New York debate. We now have before us a Federated Press report of the debate in Chicago, held Jan. 13. The report was written by Carl Haessler, a communist sympathizer. It reads:

"Will the United States, so long as it continues capitalistic, ever fight a good war or will all its future wars be imperialistic like the last two?"

"The attitude of Norman Thomas, spokesman for the Socialist Party, and of Earl Browder, speaking for the Communist Party . . . differed more on this one point than on any of the others . . ."

"Thomas held that capitalistic American governments will make none but imperialist wars, either to grab still more or to defend what they have already grabbed. Workers must strive to turn imperialist American wars into civil war for the overthrow of capitalism, he said, citing the words of Lenin.

"Browder held that if the United States is in military alliance with the Soviet Union against fascist foes, then American workers should support the U. S. war administration as a Soviet ally because that will

help to defend the one and only country where capitalism has been overthrown and socialism established."

It seems that as the debate moves West, Browder becomes more and more open in his war-mongering policies. This statement is substantially the same as the statement made by Mike Gold in his column in the Daily Worker some time ago. At that time, Gold was considered a little too open and he "apologized." But even in the "apology" the policy was still defended. All Gold could find wrong with his position was that it was speculation and "speculation is not scientific." But as to the policy itself, which whether scientific or unscientific, cannot possibly be accepted by class conscious workers, there was no retreat.

Almost as outlandish as the policy itself is the effort of the communists to defend and justify it. Nowhere do we

### Hide In Woods

find a willingness on the part of the communist theoreticians to come out into the open and defend their policies frankly. Instead, they hide in the woods and snipe at their opponents. And their weightiest weapon is "slander against the Soviet Union." In the very article in which Gold admits his error, he still denounces those who corrected him as "slanderers." Imagine the gall of these people! Gold and his friends try to put forward pure and simple chauvinism as "Marxism" and "Leninism." That's kosher. But when someone else warns the workers against this kind of "Marxism," that's slander of the Soviet Union! Do such "defenders" help the Soviet Union?

Since the beginning of the Thomas-Browder debates, the communist press has conducted quite a campaign in support of its present line on war. Obviously the membership is not swallowing it quite so blindly as was anticipated. And the theoreticians of the Communist Party think that by shouting Soviet Union often enough, the membership and the workers will eventually accept this line. Thus, every one of their polemics against the criticism of their war-line either declares openly or implicitly that these opponents are enemies of the Soviet Union or opposed to the need of the Soviet Union to maintain diplomatic relations with the capitalist world. The first charge need not even be discussed.

The second charge is also absurd. Everyone realized that the Soviet Union, existing in the midst

of capitalist states, must live diplomatically with them, and the fact that the capitalist governments, after many years, were finally compelled to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, is a great victory for the Soviet Union. But from this it does not follow, as the communists insist that the diplomatic line of the Soviet Union has to become the policy of the international working class. The Soviet Union itself gave us the best demonstration of this when in 1918, compelled to sign the infamous Brest-Litovsk treaty, it called upon the world proletariat to do everything in its power to smash that treaty, and Lenin denounced those friends as traitors who voted to accept the Brest-Litovsk treaty on the ground that once the Soviet Union signed it, it should be accepted.

### The 1918 Example

of capitalist states, must live diplomatically with them, and the fact that the capitalist governments, after many years, were finally compelled to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, is a great victory for the Soviet Union. But from this it does not follow, as the communists insist that the diplomatic line of the Soviet Union has to become the policy of the international working class. The Soviet Union itself gave us the best demonstration of this when in 1918, compelled to sign the infamous Brest-Litovsk treaty, it called upon the world proletariat to do everything in its power to smash that treaty, and Lenin denounced those friends as traitors who voted to accept the Brest-Litovsk treaty on the ground that once the Soviet Union signed it, it should be accepted.