

Stalinist International Anarchism

**A Condemnation of Stalinist
International Brigandage and Forcible
Annexation of Territory in the Light of
Marxian Fundamentals**



Published Online by
Socialist Labor Party of America

www.slp.org

March 2007

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SLP Declaration on Finnish-Soviet War

PUBLISHING HISTORY

PRINTED EDITION March 1941

ONLINE EDITION March 2007

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
P.O. BOX 218
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94042-0218

<http://www.slp.org/nyln.htm>

Stalinist International Anarchism.

The sun hits not back against the dark clouds that may gather in its face; neither does the Socialist Labor Party. The Socialist Labor Party, like all truth, can bide its time; and in the meantime proceed serenely along its orbit. To hit back increases disorders because it increases animosity.

—Daniel De Leon: *Socialism vs. Anarchism.*

The Stalinist war in Finland (which was no war!) is ended. A Stalinist paper jubilantly proclaims the “victory” of the Stalinist army in huge letters spread across the front page: “PEACE IN FINLAND!”

“Peace in Finland!” Yes, the peace in Finland that is like the peace in Warsaw, like the peace in Ethiopia, like the peace in Austria, like the peace in Czechoslovakia, like the peace in Albania, like the peace in Spain! It is the peace of the graveyard—the peace of Finland’s slumbering dead, the peace of proletarians on both sides of the border murdered by the brutal power of blundering and corrupt Stalinist imperialism, aided and abetted by the bloodiest and most degenerate of all imperialist powers—the co-destroyers of Marxism and co-enslavers of the workers, the Nazi gangsters and assassins.

That which lies murdered in Russia and Finland is not merely the flower of the Finnish proletariat, and the innocent Russian workers who, seduced and betrayed by Stalinism, died in a corrupt cause even as they dealt out death in the name of that cause. There lies murdered above all the body and spirit of Russian Socialism, the blasted hopes and aspirations of millions of workers the world over. Hovering over the frozen fields of the North are not merely the ghosts of Finnish

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and Russian workers, murdered by the Stalinist machine, but also the ghosts of Marx and Lenin, and of the countless workers in the proletarian cause who gave their lives gladly that the thing which Stalinism has done, should never again become possible. The betrayal by Stalinism of the proletarian cause, and of world-redeeming Marxism, is a crime that cries for just retribution and redress. An awakening world proletariat will hold the criminals to a strict account on that day of reckoning which cannot now be far removed.

At this tragic moment, and in this solemn hour, the Socialist Labor Party desires to restate the questions at issue, and underscore the Marxian principles involved which have been cynically violated by anti-working class Stalinism, in turn hypocritically and corruptly “explained” and justified by Stalinist apologists everywhere.

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We declare these Socialist truths to be basic and inviolate, and absolutely binding upon all who profess adherence to the cause of the International Proletariat and the principles of Marxian Socialism:

1. The national and international class struggle between the owning (the capitalist and imperialist) classes and the producing (exploited and propertiless) working classes is a fact the denial of which by any group or party *ipso facto* removes that group, whatever its Socialist pretensions, from the International Marxian Socialist Movement, and irrespective of the manner of the denial—that is, whether by denial in words, or by acts, such as, for

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instance, entering into alliances with imperialist and fascist powers, especially in situations involving pending or actual war.

2. The emancipation of the working class must, and can only, be the classconscious act of the working class itself. It can no more result from the benevolent act of another class within a nation than it can be imposed by force from without upon one nation by another. In the words of the founders of International Socialism:

“Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. **THE PROLETARIAT OF EACH COUNTRY MUST, OF COURSE, FIRST OF ALL SETTLE MATTERS WITH ITS OWN BOURGEOISIE [CAPITALIST CLASS].**”

We reiterate with emphasis and unshakable conviction, paraphrasing but slightly the brave words by Karl Liebknecht, martyred Socialist assassinated at the behest of a desperate ruling class with the connivance of the traitorous and cowardly German Social Democracy, that—

“the liberation of the masses within each country must be their own work.”

3. Hence, recognizing that the working class and the employing class have nothing in common, and, recognizing further that there can be no peace within nations or among the nations, so long as hunger and want are found among millions of workers, on the one hand, and the few, the employing class, who own all the good things of life, on the other hand;

Recognizing these things as basic and incontestable facts and Marxian truths, we reiterate that the

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workers must organize on the basis of these facts and truths, and form a *political union* with the revolutionary objective of capturing, through the ballot, the capitalist Political State, and dismantling it; and that they must further organize in an economic *Industrial Union*, equally revolutionary in objective and purpose, to take and hold that which they produce by their labor, and that which represents past and accumulated as well as present social labor—the mills, mines, factories and implements of production generally, together with the land needed wherewith to carry on production for use for the benefit of all, thereby establishing the Socialist Industrial Commonwealth of Labor.

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In the light of these fundamental Marxian propositions and objectives, the Socialist Labor Party denounces, as a base betrayal of Marxism and the cause of International Working Class Solidarity—

A. The pact entered into by Stalinist Russia with the most cruel and bitterest enemy of working class emancipation, Nazi Germany.

B. The invasion of Finland, and the now accomplished subjugation of the Finnish people, by Stalinist Russia, through force of arms—a wanton and anti-Socialist act that has resulted in the slaughter of thousands of Finnish and Russian workers for purposes that have no relation whatsoever to working class emancipation, but which, whether so designed or not, have in fact served as a powerful aid and a triumphant victory to Nazi arms in the desperate struggle with the imperialist rivals of the so-called

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Western democracies—an act, finally, which had for one of its main purposes the maintenance in power in Russia of a bureaucracy that has as effectively strangled Marxism in Russia as the Nazi murderers have caused its assassination in Nazi Germany.

As to A:

We declare that on the basis of the record and the facts, the pact between Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany became the signal for commencing the European war. By its base betrayal of Marxism in this respect, Stalinist Russia furnished assurances to the brutal and anti-working class Nazi power that it would have a free hand in its contemplated predatory raid on Poland and other countries, and in any eventual war with the equally predatory Western “democracies.” By sharing the spoils resulting from the bloody Nazi conquest of Poland, Stalinist Russia underscored its wanton and base betrayal of Marxian Socialism, and forever forfeited the right to speak for, and act in behalf of, the sacred cause of working class emancipation. By concluding the pact with Nazi Germany, the Stalinist traitors entered into an unholy alliance with the deadliest enemy of Marxism, strengthening beyond present calculations the forces making for fascism throughout the world, becoming in fact one of the pillars of the fascist structure. By its alliance with the Nazi butchers, Stalinist Russia became responsible for the European war which otherwise might have been postponed long enough to have enabled the workers of the world to organize their forces to put an end to capitalism, thereby insuring the prevention of all wars for all time.

Thus, the Stalinist betrayal of Marxism constitutes

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a crime without parallel in the annals of Socialism; it constitutes a crime against the cause of working class emancipation and international working class solidarity, for which the criminals will answer on the day of proletarian triumph.

As to B:

We declare that the invasion of Finland was the logical result of the criminal alliance with Nazi Germany. Having in fact, if not by legal hocus-pocus, become the ally of Nazi Germany against the Western imperialist powers, it became necessary for Stalinist Russia to protect itself Against possible attack by the now common foe. The necessity, we repeat, arose solely out of the alliance with Nazi Germany, and not primarily because there existed any grounds for assaulting a small, and on the whole peaceful, nation in order to defend the “Soviet Fatherland,” as falsely and hypocritically claimed by the Stalinist traitors. Knowing that the invasion of Finland, in characteristic “undeclared war” gangster fashion, was in violation of all Marxian principles hitherto acclaimed by Stalinist Russia, the imperialistic, marauding assault on Finland was wrapped in phrases of ideological professions, such as the claim that Stalinist Russia was bringing liberation to the Finnish workers—even as Hitler had brought liberation to the Polish, Czech and Austrian workers! The sickening hypocrisy of Stalinist Russia emphasizes its betrayal of working class principles, as did the setting up of the puppet government of the Stalinist off ice boy, the wretched Otto Kuusinen, now completely ignored and all but forgotten! As for the claim of Stalinism that it was bringing liberation to the Finnish people, we are

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reminded of Karl Liebknecht's scornful words: "Germany, the accomplice of Czarism, the model of reaction until this very day, has no standing as the liberator of peoples." Paraphrasing again Liebknecht, we declare:

"STALINIST RUSSIA, THE ACCOMPLICE OF NAZI GERMANY, THE MODEL OF REACTION AT THIS VERY MOMENT, HAS LOST STANDING AS THE LIBERATOR OF PEOPLES."

In true imperialist fashion Stalinist Russia assaulted a small peaceful nation, for reasons prompted by imperialist necessities, and, after a cruel slaughter of thousands of proletarians, imposed a "peace" upon Finland in the best imperialist traditions, by forcibly annexing important Finnish territory, including the ancient Finnish city of Viborg. In view of its original protestations, this act of forcible subjugation and forcible annexation of territory, the imperialist banditry of Stalinism, acquires a peculiarly odious character. Lenin, in whose footsteps the Stalinist traitors are supposed to walk, vigorously condemned forcible annexation, insisting again and again upon the right of self-determination of small nations, and what he said upon the very subject of Russia's relations to Finland are so appropriate as to constitute a direct and strong condemnation of the Stalinist brigandage. In his article, "Finland and Russia," written in May, 1917, Lenin declared:

"Only equals can agree. For an agreement to be real and not merely a verbal cover of subjection, it is essential that both parties be given the same rights and privileges, that is to say, BOTH RUSSIA AND FINLAND SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT NOT TO AGREE."

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To what extent the Stalinist traitors have observed this principle, laid down by the one whom they acclaim as master, may be judged by the Stalinist bandit invasion of Finland, and the forcible annexation of Finnish territory.

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Whatever Stalinist Russia may conceive to be the ultimate fruits of its “victory,” the fact remains that so far these results have been accomplished:

I. Hitler and his Nazi gangster government have won a signal victory, otherwise unthinkable without the aid of Stalinist Russia.

II. Conversely, the Western imperialist powers have sustained a severe defeat.

III. In any case, the cause of the proletariat has suffered a severe setback that it may take years to recover.

IV. Through its betrayal of Marxism, Stalinist Russia has lost the respect and confidence of the major portion of the world’s classconscious workers, standing now convicted as a felon among nations, matching infamy with the Nazi fascist criminals.

Thus, the forces of reaction have triumphed while the forces of progress—Marxian Socialism and working class solidarity—lie crushed and bleeding on the ground.

In denouncing the wanton invasion and subjugation of Finland, the Socialist Labor Party sheds no tears in behalf of the so-called bourgeois democratic Finnish Republic. In “democratic” and fascist countries alike, the workers are brutally exploited by their capitalist masters. But again we say that the emancipation of

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the workers of any nation must be the classconscious act of the workers themselves. Moreover, apart from the moral wrongs committed, apart from its betrayal of Marxism, the Stalinist reaction, in invading Finland, has succeeded in doing what the Finnish ruling class had been unable to accomplish: IT HAS SUCCEEDED, FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, IN DRIVING THE FINNISH WORKING CLASS INTO THE ARMS OF ITS EXPLOITERS. And therein lies not the least evil of the Stalinist criminal betrayal of Marxism.

The acts of Stalinist Russia, described and condemned here, constitute the very essence of Anarchism. The use of force, the violation of established civilized principles even under the pretense of serving the cause of the proletariat (which cause is even now invoked by the corrupt Stalinist press in this hour of their gangster triumph) is similar to the use of force, and the trampling under foot of civilized methods, by the Anarchists, past and present, and in all countries. There is no difference in principle between the forcible attacks upon, and destruction of, capitalist property and institutions, in disregard of law and civilized methods, by minority guerilla bands in the several capitalist countries, and the physical assault upon another country by a country professing working class principles. The one is traditional Anarchism on a national scale; the other is undisguised, naked international Anarchism. And even as traditional Anarchism ever was the mortal foe of Marxism within the respective countries, so Stalinist Anarchism is today the mortal foe of international Marxism. The great Daniel De Leon, hailed by Lenin

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as the greatest twentieth century Marxist, laid down this principle:

“The bona fide Movement of Labor may not adopt the methods of the capitalist class in the class war. The Labor Movement must, on the contrary, place itself upon the highest plane civilization has reached. It must insist upon the enforcement of civilized methods, and it must do so in the way that civilized man does.”

He who rejects this principle reads himself out of the Marxian Socialist movement, and proclaims himself an Anarchist, a traitor, and an enemy of working class emancipation.

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In conclusion, and to sum up, we reiterate these obvious Marxian truths:

We declare, with convictions more strongly fortified than ever, that the emancipation of the working class *must* be the classconscious act of the working class itself. We declare that pacts or alliances with capitalist imperialist groups or nations constitute a criminal betrayal of the working class, and a basic violation of international working class solidarity. We declare, moreover, that no foreign invader can, by fire and sword, establish Socialism or effect working class emancipation. If Socialism cannot be offered the workers silver platter, neither can it be imposed upon them on them by a blazing torch and a blood-dripping sword, and still less with flesh-mangling bombs or choking poison gas! The notion that this can be done, or that it should be attempted, is contrary to the very nature of Socialism, and inimical to the conditions which must be present to insure maintenance of the

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Socialist Commonwealth—the Commonwealth which is of, by and for the brotherhood of man, or it is nothing. The working class in each country, in the language of Marx, must settle its accounts with its own exploiters; the liberation, the emancipation of the proletariat of each country, must proceed *from within* the respective countries. Any other course is criminal and a betrayal of the workers, a betrayal that is emphasized to the extent it is embellished with Marxian phrases and would-be Socialist catchwords.

Down with capitalist and imperialist war!

Down with the traitors of the working class and the corrupters of Marxism!

Forward to the Socialist Industrial Republic of Labor!

National Executive Committee
Socialist Labor Party,
ARNOLD PETERSEN,
National Secretary.

March 14, 1940.