

Declaration Against War



Adopted by

Socialist Youth League

Libertarian Socialist League

Young Peoples Socialist League

West Coast Socialist Youth Conference

SOCIALIST YOUTH AGAINST WAR

Today, only five years after the conclusion of World War II, a war of atomic annihilation threatens mankind. Twice in one generation the futile struggles between imperialist nations have inflicted untold suffering on the peoples of the earth. The organization and scientific technique of modern industry offer the possibility of peace and plenty to mankind. But their utilization for destruction threatens the world with a new barbarism—a world dominated by powerful totalitarian states and wracked by the horrors of atomic, biological and chemical warfare.

Ours is a period of perpetual conflict. Peace has become an armed truce, merely a time for repairing the damages and healing the wounds of past wars while continuing to prepare for future ones. The rulers of mankind have again thrown aside all the treaties, pacts, alliances and promises of the past and have divided the peoples into two huge war camps. Today the competitors for world domination are capitalist America and Stalinist Russia.

The Garrison State in America

The United States is the last powerful capitalist nation remaining in this era of decline. It confronts an expanding Stalinism which threatens the very existence of capitalism itself. Having no positive ideology with which to appeal to the peoples of the world, the U. S. can meet this threat only by force of arms.

Moreover, the domestic economy of the U. S. is so unstable that it can be kept in working order only by vast deficit spending for a war economy. As armament production increases, the question of "guns or butter" will again be answered to the detriment of the working people who have suffered most from wars between imperialist powers.

To wage so unpopular a war the capitalist class must attempt to wipe out all opposition. The militarization and bureaucratization of American life have already resulted in a dangerous attack on all the traditional rights of the American people. Spy trials, subversive lists, legislative witchhunts, anti-labor legislation and red-baiting provide the smoke screen behind which war preparations and military intervention take place. The attack on the campus has assumed unprecedented dimensions. Educators, actors, scientists, writers and civil servants are all compelled to prove their unimpeachable loyalty to the American state.

Those who support America as a "lesser evil" against Russian totalitarianism will find themselves obliged to defend and strengthen the development of the Garrison State. As the war develops they will be called into the service of imperialism against even the most elementary interests of the American people. We socialists oppose the preparations for this war. The present reactionary drive against civil rights and the labor movement is but the first step toward the total regimentation which must accompany the all-out war.

Stalinism Is Not Socialism

In competition with the capitalist bloc stand Russia and its satellites. The rulers of the Russian slave empire are constantly driven to extend their control over the resources and productive capacities of neighboring lands. To maintain their rule they must encompass the entire world. They use the atmosphere of war crisis to tie the oppressed and restless masses to their backward regime.

The Russian bureaucracy is able to extend its particular form of exploitation only because bankrupt capitalism offers nothing to the peoples of Asia and Western Europe. Yet instead of creating a free, democratic social order, Stalinism imposes a new form of social oppression.

To identify this ruthless social system with socialism is an error. Socialists are the mortal enemies of state slavery. Giving the slightest support to Stalinism aids the destruction of democracy, freedom and socialism.

The War in Korea

The military battle between America and Russia for the control of Korea foreshadows the nature of World War III. The Stalinist regime of murder and terror in Northern Korea complements the corrupt Rhee government. Caught between two powerful and reactionary imperialist nations, the Korean people find their prostrate country ravaged in the struggle for world domination.

Socialists cannot support either side in the Korean war. The Korean people will be enslaved regardless of which power is victorious. Only a militant socialist power in the United States can stop the advance of Stalinist despotism and ensure the fulfillment of the economic, social, and independent political aspirations of the Korean people.

The Failure of the United Nations

The formation of the United Nations in 1945 was widely hailed as a step toward the abolition of war and the reign of international law. Today the failure of the United Nations is self-evident. It has intervened only where the immediate interests of the big powers were not involved. Before the American-Russian conflict it is impotent. American aid to Turkey and Greece, the Berlin incident, the Stalinist coup in Czechoslovakia, the Chinese civil war, the French "police action" against Indo-China—all important conflicts have been settled by the big powers themselves.

Now the United Nations stands exposed as an instrument of the American bloc in the struggle over Korea. It has shed its nominal independence. Far from preventing war, it has become an instrument for organizing and directing imperialist intervention.

Socialists have always championed international law in opposition to the unbridled warfare between sovereign and nationalistic states. But the United Nations must be condemned and exposed for its imperialist character. It blocks the way to a real federation of free and equal peoples in a socialist world.

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Socialists and War

The American ruling class, its supporters and apologists, today demand that the American people submit to the all-out race for world domination. Those who refuse to capitulate are silenced by threats, intimidation and reactionary legislation. But the warmakers will discover that apathetic submission is far from wholehearted support. Although the people are bowed today under the tremendous pressure of pro-war forces, the final word has not yet been spoken.

We call for support and building of a third force—democratic socialism—as the only alternative to exploitation and war.

We know the people of the world want to abolish atomic warfare, colonial oppression and Russian-American aggression against small and helpless nations.

We reaffirm the militant anti-war tradition of American socialism which, in the name of socialism, peace and plenty for mankind, fearlessly and openly denounces imperialist war.

**AGAINST BOTH IMPERIALIST WAR CAMPS!
FOR A SOCIALIST WORLD OF PEACE AND ABUN-
DANCE!**

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