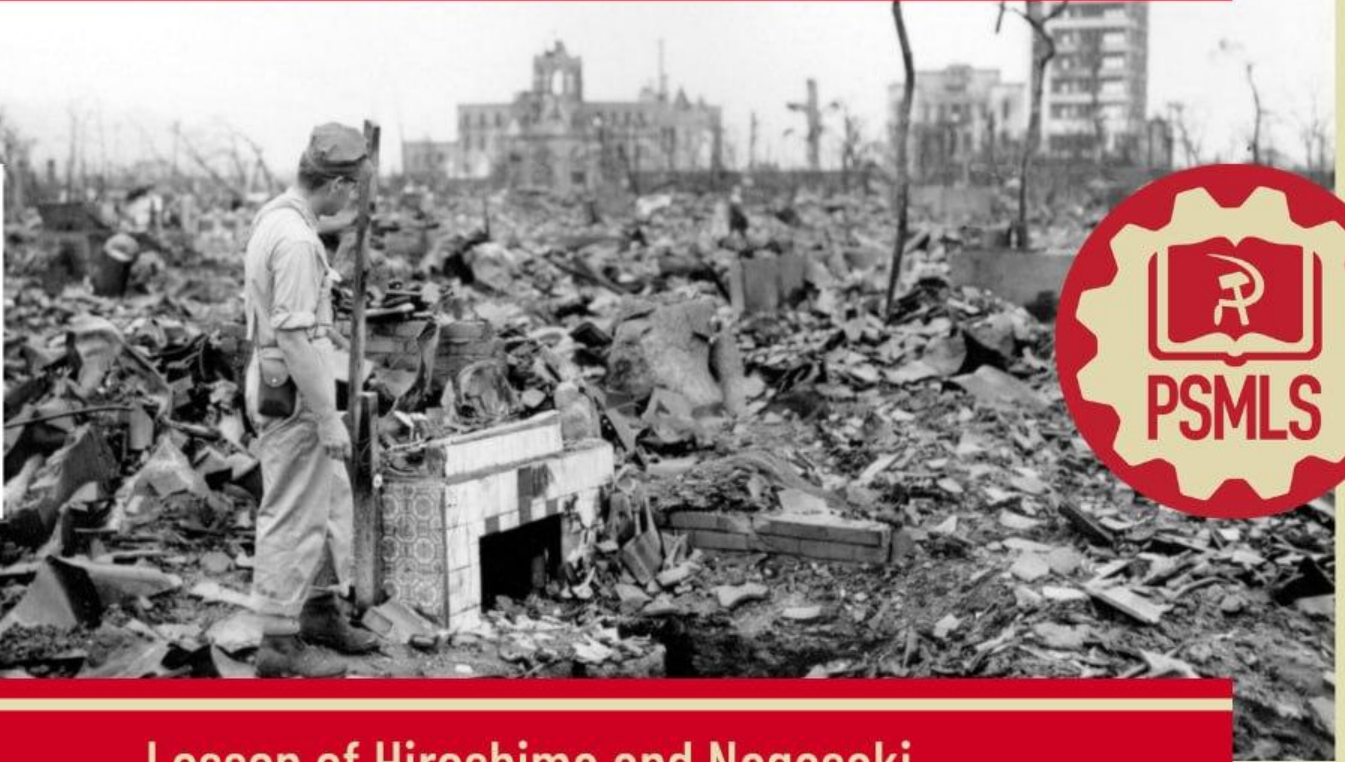




The Internationale

PEOPLES SCHOOL FOR MARXIST-LENINIST STUDIES™



Lesson of Hiroshima and Nagasaki



*Like traumatized people, we have been cut off from the knowledge of our past.
Like traumatized people, we need to understand the past in order to reclaim
the present and the future.*

*-Judith Lewis Herman
Trauma and Recovery*



Hiroshima Before the Bombing - 1935



Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6th, 1945



Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6th, 1945



The Decision to Use the Atom Bomb - Gar Alperovitz

Over fifty years we often also seem to have felt a strong need to justify the bombings by reference to what can only be called notions of “revenge.”

A recent survey of the press concluded that “present media coverage is worse than it was in the euphoric aftermath of World War II—the media now ignore, with limited exceptions, an impressive body of evidence and argument that run counter to the official line. . . .”

in the earlier [1945–1950] period 1) some journalists and editors themselves questioned the decision to use the bomb, in ways that are strikingly similar to the current scholarly consensus, and 2) journalists understood that the Russian entry into the Pacific war played an important part in ending the war. . . .³



The Decision to Use the Atom Bomb

- Gar Alperovitz

Quite simply, it is not true that the atomic bomb was used because it was the only way to save the “hundreds of thousands” or “millions” of lives as was subsequently claimed. [REDACTED]

Modern evidence—reinforced, again, by the information which has been discovered in the course of research for this book—suggests not only that the president and Byrnes knew Japan was on the verge of surrender, but that once the new weapon had been successfully tested, rushing to end the war before an expected mid-August Red Army attack was indisputably a major concern.

To be silent about the past is to accept the decision silently, with no challenge. It is thereby also to sustain and silently nurture the idea that nuclear weapons can and should be used or threatened to be used.



What we'll be learning today:

- Discuss the Manhattan Project & Atomic Scientists
- About the true nature of the atomic bombings and why the justification of the dropping of the bombs was unjustified.
- About the result of the dropping of atomic bombs, the way it changed the world and relating the event to the current day with western imperialists risking nuclear war with Russia and China.
- Scenes of a simulated nuclear war and scenes from The Day After (1983)



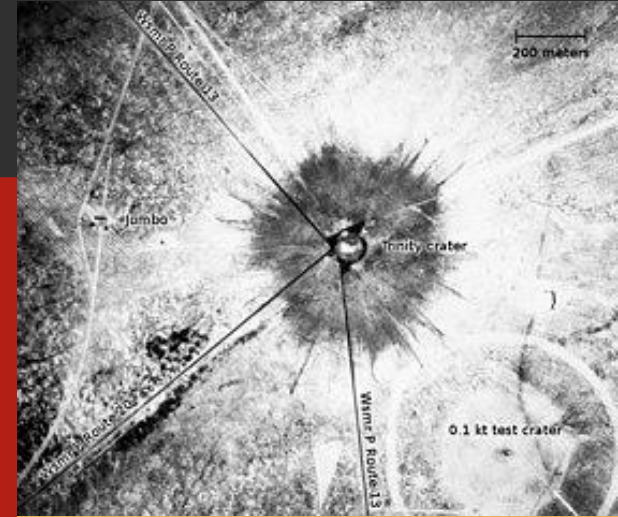
The Manhattan Project



Manhattan Project

Why was the Atom Bomb developed?

- In the early 1930's, British scientists split lithium atoms with protons and an era of nuclear science began. By 1938, with the discovery of neutrons earlier in the decade, scientists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strausman shocked the world by splitting a uranium atom with neutrons, creating fission of the nucleus of the atom, which could result in a nuclear chain reaction.
- Politically, the world was beginning to see more and more the threat of Nazi fascism and though research was kicked off at different times in several different countries, many atomic scientists of which many were Jewish, such as Albert Einstein, came to the United States and requested to FDR that nuclear weapons be developed to beat the Nazis in the race for a successful nuke, which Nazis would've used indiscriminately.
- Nazis had been trying to develop nuclear weaponry, but gave up in 1942 to focus on V-1 and V-2 rocketry, but this wasn't known until 1944 and Nazis could have begun research again at any point. However, the first US bomb, Trinity, developed in part by American communists like J. Robert Oppenheimer, was tested successfully in July 1945, just 1 month before the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.





The Truth about Hiroshima and Nagasaki



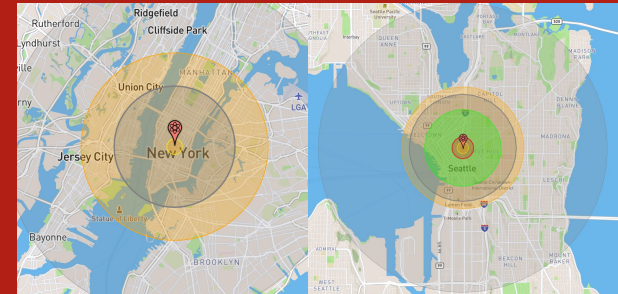
The Atomic Bombings

Hiroshima

- On August 6th, 1945, at 08:15 Hiroshima time, a enriched uranium fission bomb called “Little Boy”, was dropped from the Enola Gay B-29 Bomber over Hiroshima. It detonated about 1 mile above the city.
- Little Boy detonated with a force of about 16,000 tons of TNT. 1 mile in all directions was completely destroyed, and fires spread for about 4.6 miles. Over 60% of the city was destroyed. Wood and paper homes were vaporized and only concrete buildings built to withstand earthquakes remained
- Over 140,000 people were killed by this bomb, many from radiation poisoning in the months following the attack.



Hiroshima before and after



Blast compared to NYC and Seattle



Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima

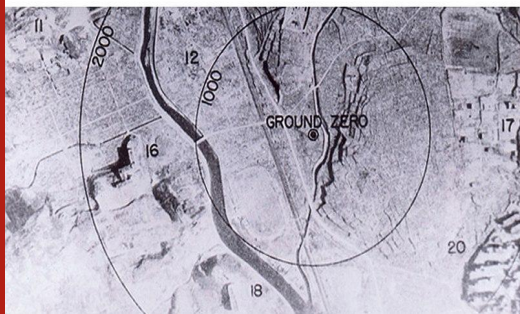




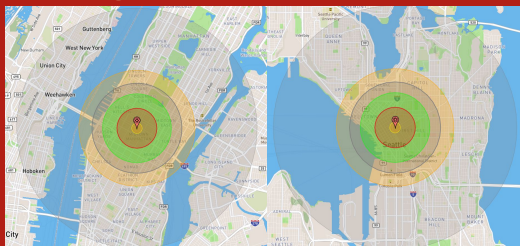
The Atomic Bombings

Nagasaki

- At 11:01 Japanese time, the plutonium bomb known as “Fat Man” was released and detonated at 11:02 with a force of 21,000 tons of TNT.
- Total destruction occurred for 1 mile in all directions and fires spread ~2 mi south.
- Over 80,000 people were killed in the attack and much of the valley was destroyed.
- Ironically, the explosion occurred over the Urakami Tenshudo Catholic Church, the largest Catholic Cathedral in Asia.



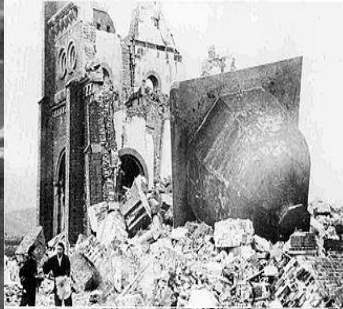
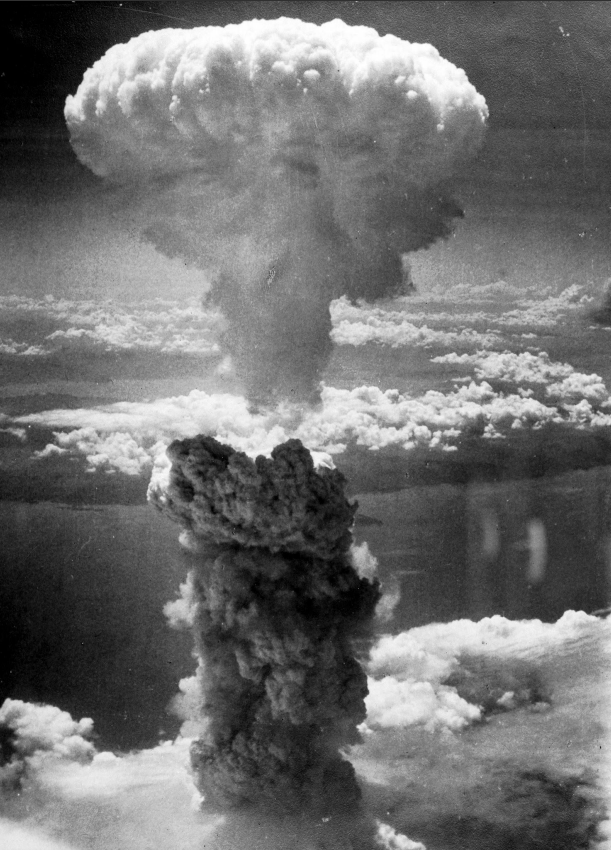
Nagasaki before and after



Blast compared to NYC and Seattle



Atomic Bombing of Nagasaki





Why did we drop the A-bombs on Japan?

Preemptive Nuclear War

- As the Second World War approached its end, FDR died in April of 1945 and the Nazis surrendered in May of 1945, the imperialists in the United States and United Kingdom were already looking to subvert the diplomacy made with the USSR during the war and was preparing to fight a war with the Soviet Union following WW2, and to use the end of WW2 to do so.
- Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed with nuclear weapons to test them on a civilian center. Cities like Tokyo or Osaka were ash at that point, but an untouched city like Hiroshima would provide the US with a civilian center to assess the impacts of an atomic weapon on.
- Leslie R. Groves, the director of the Manhattan Project, ordered a post-attack assessment report, which confirmed Hiroshima was chosen because it was “relatively untouched by previous bombing, in order that the effect of a single atomic-bomb could be determined.”





Why did we drop the A-bombs on Japan?

No Military Significance, No US-led Victory

- The military significance of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was very low. In Hiroshima, there was the Second General Army Headquarters and Chugoku Military Police Headquarters and only ~7k-20k troops were killed in this attack. Nagasaki had Mitsubishi factories, including arms manufacturing, but only ~9,000 troops were killed in this attack.
- Neither bombing brought about the Japanese surrender, even with atomic blackmail following Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nor did they noticeably impair what was left of the Japanese war machine.
- Japan was trying to figure out a way to surrender to the Soviets before Hokkaido was invaded and the foundation of Japan was broken. They were losing the war and had suffered catastrophic incendiary bombing in 67 cities. Losing 2 more to big bombs rather than thousands of smaller ones didn't seem to make much difference at that point.





The Decision to Use the Atom Bomb

Gar Alperovitz

... The question was what to do about Russia.

The answer given by the president and his advisors is not in doubt. As previously noted, documents made public in 1960 show that on July 23rd, 1945, Truman had sent a cable drafted by Byrnes [James Byrnes, Secretary of State] Chiang Kai-shek requesting that he not make any further concessions to Russia.

As Byrnes subsequently explained, the goal was:

"...to encourage the Chinese to continue negotiations after the adjournment of the Potsdam conference. I had some fear that if they did not Stalin might immediately end the war...On the other hand, if Stalin and Chiang were still negotiating, it might delay Soviet entrance and the Japanese might surrender. The president was in a cord with that view. "

Byrnes said he was most anxious to get the Japanese affair over with before the Russians got in, with particular reference to Dairen and Port Arthur [both cities combined and are now known as Luda. The Soviet Union turned Dairen over to the Communist Chinese Party in 1950 asking no recompense]. Once in there [the Soviet Union], he felt it would not be easy to get them out. With all this in mind, Byrnes was in favor of Soong's [Chinese Foreign Minister] return to Moscow, which he proposes to do in order to keep the conversation on this subject going.

Now, apparently worried that Stalin might become impatient with the continued stalling, or that Soong might yield, on August 5th, 1945, Truman and Byrnes sent further instructions to Averill Harriman [Secretary of Commerce] requesting that "no agreement be made involving further concessions by China."

The first days of August now took on the air of a frenzied race for time. As Soong prepared to meet with Stalin on August 7th, the specially trained 509th Composite Group of the 20th Air Force waited for the weather to clear over target cities in Japan. The July 25th order to General Spatz had set the bombing for "after about" August 3rd.

How long could the Red Army be stalled on a Manchurian border? If the weather cleared, long enough for the weapon to be used against Hiroshima on August 6th?

Many scholars have studied these papers and have found them particularly illuminating in connection with Byrnes' strategy towards the Russians during the Potsdam conference.

Three days prior to the bombing of Hiroshima Walter Brown [associate of Byrnes] noted:

"Aboard the USS Augusta/

President, Lahey, JFB [Byrnes] agreed Japan looking for peace. President afraid they will sue for peace through Russia instead of some country like Sweden."



The Decision to Use the Atom Bomb

Gar Alperovitz

How some of the nation's top military leaders viewed the use of the atomic bomb:

“I had been conscious of a feeling of depression and so I voiced to the Secretary of War, Henry Stimpson, my grave misgivings, first, on the basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly, because I thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon. Who's employment was, I thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives.”

Dwight D. Eisenhower

General, United States army

“The use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. And being the first to use it, we had adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the dark ages. I was not taught to make war in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children.

William D. Leahy

Fleet admiral, United States Navy

Chief of Staff to President Truman

“It always appeared to us that, atomic bomb or no atomic bond, the Japanese were already on the verge of collapse.”

Henry H. Arnold

Commanding General

United States Army Air Forces



Discussion & New Members Introductions



New Member Introductions

- What is your name, pronouns and state (or country/territory)?
- Where do you work? Is it unionized?
- How did you find out about the People's School?
- What do you think about tonight's class?



Atomic Aftermath & The Present Day Nuclear Threat



Soviet Victory in World War 2

Soviet Invasion Forced Japanese Surrender

- As agreed to multiple times dating back to 1943, the Soviets declared war on Japan on August 7th, 1945 and on August 9th, 1945 the Khingan–Mukden, Harbin–Kirin, and Sungari Offensive Operations began in Manchuria. On August 11th, 1945, the Sakhalin Islands were invaded. On August 13th, Korea was invaded. On August 18th, the Kuril Islands were invaded. On September 2nd, 1945, Japan surrendered.
- The Japanese leadership already afraid of a Soviet attack because:
 - The Japanese forces were all mostly focused south to deal with the other allies, and little was left in the north to defend against a Soviet invasion since they never had to.
 - The Soviet invasion was feared to be particularly brutal, seeing what they had done to defeat Nazi Germany in the west.
 - A Soviet invasion of Hokkaido would've broke the foundation of the Japan, according to the Japanese.
 - The Soviets were part of the allies, and could not be a mediator for surrender.

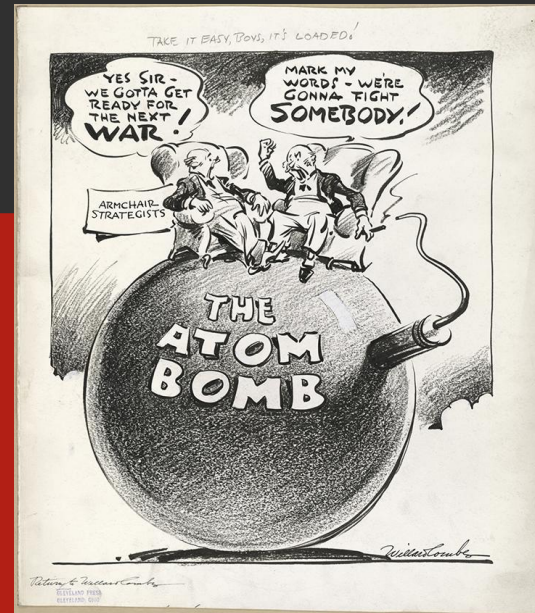




Dawn of the Atomic Age

How the Atomic Bombings Changed the World.

- Trinity, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were shots heard around the world. The United States had invented and used a new type of weapon entirely, a weapon that could destroy whole cities or whole bases. They built it, tested it, used it on civilian centers and created a narrative that it ended the deadliest war in human history, and now, was the only nation in possession of a nuclear weapon. The United States had atomic monopoly, and therefore held significantly larger power on the world stage.
- Luckily, atomic scientists did recognize the needs of the post-war world, and information from the Manhattan Project was successfully relayed to Soviet scientists who were already engaged in their nuclear program. In 1948, American atomic monopoly was shattered when the Soviets successfully tested RDS-1, a plutonium bomb with a force of ~21 kilotons of TNT like that used at Nagasaki, at a site in the Kazakh SSR.
- This created Mutually Assured Destruction, and though the world has lived in fear of nuclear war between the US and USSR or Russia/China, the lack of atomic monopoly has ensured that no nuclear weapon was used on another nation since 1945. Nagasaki is still the last atomic bombing in war.



RDS-1



Present Day Nuclear Threat

An URGENT Need to Stop Nuclear War

- Humanity is very lucky to have not seen an offensive nuclear attack since Nagasaki. We've seen the world come to the brink of nuclear warfare in 1962 with the International Missile Crisis. We've seen a lot of nuclear close calls and nuclear blackmail, but we've never used the bomb on each other since 1945.
- Today the situation is deteriorating and the United States and NATO are becoming recklessly closer to a Third World War with Russia and China. The United States has nuclear weapons in Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy and Turkey. The Russian Federation has nuclear weapons in Belarus. Recently Russia suspended participation in all nuclear arms treaties by Feb 2023, and Putin claimed US officials were considering restarting American nuclear tests, which they had been according to multiple US outlets as far back as 2019.
- With depleted uranium rounds being used in the War in Ukraine, suggestions of providing nuclear weapons to Ukraine, the imminent situation with Taiwan and the Middle East and US possibly looking to restart nuclear testing, the threat of nuclear war is the closest it has been since 1962. This, combined with fascism and militarism arising again, makes the work of anti-imperialism and anti-fascism the most important task of every person, and the ultra-left and liberal efforts to divide the anti-imperialist movement so criminally disgusting. The ultra-left is objectively aiding western imperialism. We say **STOP NUCLEAR WAR** and **STOP NATO!**
- Per the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, we are still online 90 seconds to Midnight. Midnight being nuclear war and destruction.





Nuclear War Simulation - *This video may not be accurate, only meant to show you the destruction of nuclear war*



Scene from "The Day After"



Book References:

- List of Book References:

Hiroshima - John Hersey

I Was There - William D. Leahy

Speaking Frankly - James F. Byrnes

All in one Lifetime - James F. Byrnes

Prompt and Utter Destruction - J. Samuel Walker

Hiroshima Nagasaki - Paul Ham

Journey To The Missouri - Toshikazu Kase

Racing the Enemy - Tsuyoshi Hasegawa

American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer - Kai Bird and
Martin J. Sherwin

Bomber Offensive - Arthur Harris

Henry L. Stimson: The First Wise Man - David F. Schmitz

Memoirs of Harry S. Truman



Discussion & Wrap Up



Announcements

- PCUSA Cell Chairs need to call members of their cells to remind them about attendance.
- The next issue of New Masses (2026) has begun production. If you have art you want us to feature, email it to info@partyofcommunistsusa.net.



<https://aafc.us.org/>

Asian-American Friendship Congress

The Asian American Friendship Congress (AAFC) is an organization dedicated to struggling against racism and negative perception of Asian peoples.

We recognize that the prejudice experienced by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) is exacerbated by the corporate elites to create a wedge between working AAPI people and the rest of the American population.

We aim to educate the American people on AAPI history in order to demystify prejudices, stereotypes, and negative perceptions of the AAPI community. We also hope to foster closer bonds between the American people and the nations of East Asia and Southeast Asia. The AAFC seeks to normalize relations with these emerging Asian economies, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China.

The AAFC also seeks to promote and preserve the diverse cultures which Asian immigrants have brought to our shores. These rich cultural aspects include cuisine, music, art, and languages



Volunteers Needed!

We are in need of volunteers for the staff of the People's School! Here's a few roles we need filled:

- People to help manage posting on our social media and podcast platforms
- Video Editors, Audio Editors, Graphic Designers, Artists, Narrators
- Web Controls, Moderators

Email info@peopleschool.us if you're interested and try to attend our next staff meeting if possible.



View From Left Field

<https://viewfromleftfield.libsyn.com>



The Old PSMLS Youtube is now the Youtube of View From Left Field, a podcast of analysis and discussion of current events from a progressive perspective.

Like the Youtube videos and subscribe with 5 star ratings on your podcast platforms.



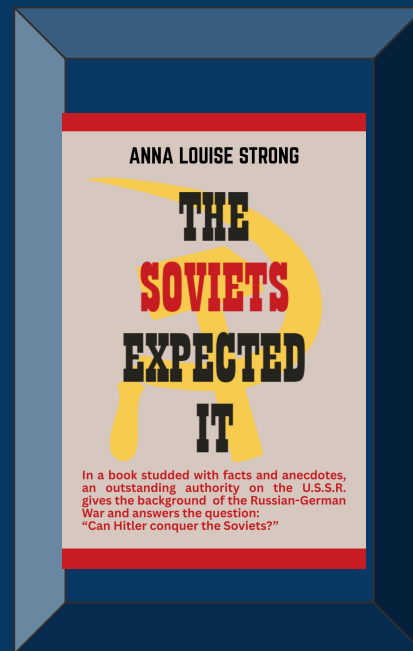
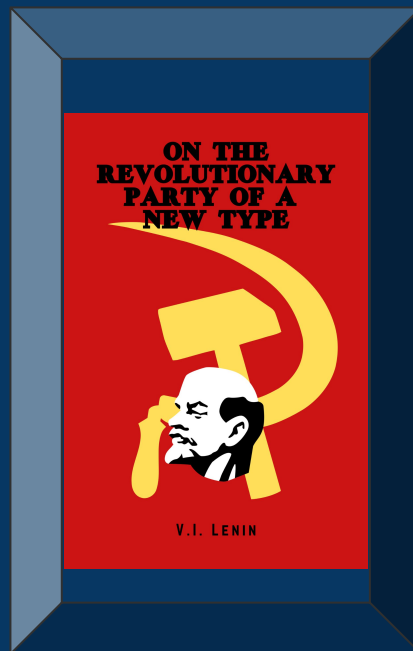
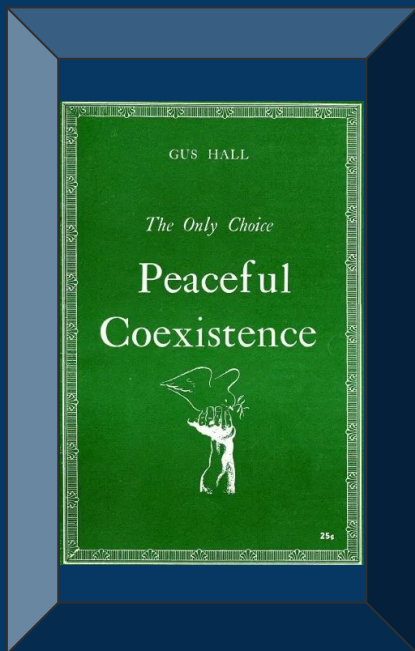


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Relevant Releases



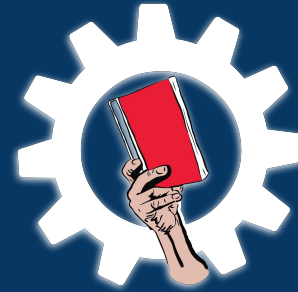


New Outlook Publishers - Volunteers Needed!

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New Outlook Publishers is looking for Volunteers!
NOP is looking for assistance in the following areas:

- Formatters
- Cover Artists



Please reach out to nicka@johnreedcenter.net if interested and attend the next New Outlook Publishers staff meeting.



Harry Bridges School of Labor

luel.us/laborschool/



The Harry Bridges School of Labor is a monthly class covering a variety of topics aimed at building class consciousness among union members. For class schedule and other information, please visit the website at luel.us/laborschool/.





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