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THE ITALO-ABYSSINIAN WAR

GOTTWALD

RESULTS OF 7th CONGRESS C.I.

MANUILSKY

TWO CONGRESSES

HARRY POLLITT

TRADE UNION UNITY IN FRANCE

POLITICAL NOTES, ETC., ETC.

# International

VOLUME XII

# 19

OCTOBER, 1935

THREEPENCE

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Number 19

Published monthly in Russian, German,  
French, Chinese, Spanish and English.

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# THE WAY OF THE PROLETARIAT OF THE SOVIET UNION IS THE WAY OF SALVATION OF THE WORKING PEOPLE FROM CAPITALIST SLAVERY, IMPERIALIST WARS AND FASCISM

**Set Up the United Front of the Proletariat! Convert it into the People's Anti-Fascist Front!**

**Appeal of the E.C.C.I. for the XVIII Anniversary of the October Revolution.**

**To all Proletarians! To all Toilers!**

**E**IGHTEEN years ago, when the nations were drowning in blood, and suffering the unspeakable horrors and misfortunes of war, the revolt of the working class in Russia pointed out a new road to exhausted humanity—the road of Peace, Socialism and Freedom. The voice of Lenin uttered the mighty call to the nations:—

“The Workers' and Peasants' Government, created by the revolution of November 6 and 7 and based on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, proposes that all the warring nations and their governments should start immediate negotiations for a just and democratic peace.”

The peoples of Russia took the revolutionary way out of the imperialist war.

This victory was won because the proletariat, led by the Party of the Bolsheviks, was able to rally the toilers and lead them in the fight for the overthrow of capitalism, in the fight for the proletarian dictatorship.

This was a victory for the international proletariat.

The guns that bombarded the Winter Palace of the Russian tsars, where the government of war, the government of the capitalists and landlords had taken refuge, aroused the masses in all countries. The outbreak of the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants, the soldiers and sailors, who cursed the war, compelled the imperialist governments to put an end to the world slaughter.

Imperialism mobilised all the forces of reaction against the young proletarian republic. The gaunt hand of famine, directed by the international bourgeoisie, fastened itself on the throat of the land of the Soviets. Mustering all their strength, the workers and peasants of the land of the Soviets beat off the interventionists and the whiteguard hordes and set about the great work of building a new, socialist society.

This was a victory for the international proletariat.

The liberation of the workers from exploitation opened the way for a swift growth of productive forces based on public ownership. Under the leadership of the great Stalin, the Soviet Union was transformed from a weak and backward country into a powerful industrial socialist power. In a merciless fight against the class enemy who endeavoured to frustrate the work of socialist construction, the

proletariat of the U.S.S.R. achieved the all-round consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship. It created the invincible and glorious Red Army and armed it with the most modern technical equipment for the defence of the conquests of the great proletarian revolution and for the defence of the cause of peace. The U.S.S.R. has become an impregnable stronghold of the proletarians, toilers and whole nations against a new imperialist slaughter, against fascism and the capitalist offensive.

This is a tremendous victory for the international proletariat.

But on five-sixths of the globe the proletariat has not yet succeeded in overthrowing the power of capital. That is why the bourgeoisie is able to intensify the exploitation and plunder of the toiling masses, that is why it is wreaking vengeance on them by means of a fascist terror, that is why it is subjecting them to new imperialist wars. The proletarians and peoples of the world are now filled with profound alarm. Italian fascism, the instigator of war, is enslaving the Abyssinian people with the help of fire and sword. British imperialism, in defence of its colonial rule, is threatening to extend the arena of war. The military fascist clique of Japan, having occupied a large part of China, is continuing to throttle the Chinese people and is preparing for further conquests in the Far East. The fascist dictatorship in Germany, which has become the centre of international counter-revolution, has become a menace to the peace and independence of the neighbouring countries and is striving to involve Europe in war.

In the face of insolent international reaction and the growing danger of a world war, the toilers of all countries are rallying more closely around the U.S.S.R., which by its consistent policy of peace and exposure of imperialist plans is preventing the imperialists starting a new world war. What would happen to the peoples of Europe, what would happen in distant Asia and all over the world, were it not for the great and powerful Soviet Union! The mighty proletarian power is the prime factor of peace. To defend the Soviet Union is to defend the cause of peace.

Workers and toilers of the world, all who hate fascism and all who love peace!

At this the eighteenth anniversary of the Great Proletarian Revolution in the U.S.S.R., the Communist International appeals to you to unite your forces in order to put a stop to the war in Abyssinia, to defend the Chinese people and to wage a joint struggle against imperialist war and fascism.

Only your united action can put an end to the predatory wars in Abyssinia and China, call a halt to the frenzy of the fascist terror, restrain the capitalist offensive and transfer the burden of the crisis to the backs of the exploiters.

Three years have elapsed since capitalist economy reached its lowest ebb, but nowhere has the bourgeoisie entered on a new rise of capitalism. Now, when the social consequences of the crisis have developed to the full, the misery, poverty and sufferings of the toilers are immeasurable in their extent.

Surrounded by the capitalist chaos, the country where a socialist system prevails—the U.S.S.R.—is as solid as a rock. The land of the Soviets meets the eighteenth anniversary of the Great Proletarian Revolution with tremendous achievements.

The Second Five-Year Plan is being successfully fulfilled. Socialist industry is growing. The productivity of socialist labour is increasing. Vast numbers of workers are mastering the most up-to-date technique. The standard of living and culture of the toilers is steadily rising. Agriculture, at one time backward and semi-barbaric, has become one of the most highly organised sections of the socialist economy of the Soviet Union. The tremendous development of collective farming and the unprecedented speed with which agricultural work is being performed guarantee the further improvement of the welfare of the masses. The ration system has been abolished in the U.S.S.R. and food prices are rapidly falling, whereas in fascist Germany prices are unrestrainedly rising and starvation is knocking at the door of the toilers.

The example of the U.S.S.R. is convincing millions of people that socialism means the fullest satisfaction of the needs of the masses, that socialism is a new and higher form of human civilisation. Socialism means the rapid development of the creative forces of the liberated nationalities. It means the emancipation of millions of women. It means millions of scholars and university students. It means literacy for the whole people. It means books and newspapers printed in millions of copies. It means the blossoming of culture, science and art. It means an intimate contact between men of science and the masses of their socialist country. It means a new system in which the most valuable capital of all is man, the creator of socialism, and himself the great aim of socialism.

At the same time, the toiling masses of the capitalist countries are learning by their own experience that capitalism means slavery and fascist darkness. In the capitalist world, the bourgeoisie, in order to save its rotten system, is resorting to the barbarous methods of fascism. Fascism tramples on the elementary rights of the working class and the toilers. In fascist Germany the most degraded and bestial chauvinism prevails, the theory of the dominant race, which implies unceasing war between the nations. Never in the darkest period of the Middle Ages has man, his dignity and his striving for freedom been so humiliated. In fascist countries the people are only dirt under the feet of the "superior race" of financial magnates and fascist drill-sergeants.

Socialism alone can bring genuine freedom to mankind. Only in the U.S.S.R., and for the first time in history, is the rule of the people being established, the rule of the workers and collective farmers, who have become the sovereign masters of their country. Only the Soviet Government, only the dictatorship of the working class, can ensure truly equal and direct suffrage, the fullest form of proletarian democracy, based on the Socialist reconstruction of the country. Only as a result of the destruction of the exploiting classes, only in an obstinate struggle for the annihilation of capitalist elements was proletarian democracy in the U.S.S.R. able to grow and will it continue to grow and gain in strength. And millions of toilers in the capitalist countries, having suffered from the bankruptcy of the old bourgeois democracy, and witnessing the triumphant growth of the new proletarian democracy, are more and more turning their gaze towards the U.S.S.R., the real bulwark of freedom of the nations.

The victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. is inflaming the hatred for capitalism and arousing the revolutionary activity of all those who in the capitalist world are suffering from unemployment, hunger, ruthless fascist tyranny and cynical contempt for the exploited and oppressed.

**Proletarians and toilers of the world!**

The peoples are thirsting for emancipation from capitalist slavery. The peoples do not want imperialist wars. Nothing will ever reconcile them to fascism. The way of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. is the only true way, the only certain way of emancipation of the toilers from capitalist slavery, imperialist wars and fascism.

Proletarians, class brothers, close your ranks! Fight for proletarian unity, the banner of which was raised aloft by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International! Forge the united labour front! Draw into it all labour organisations that are prepared to fight the common class enemy. Turn it into a people's anti-fascist front against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war. United pro-

letarian action was cemented by the blood jointly spilt in the armed struggles of the Austrian and Spanish proletarians; it was forged in the mighty united front actions of the French workers against fascism. In the common struggles in Asturias, Vienna and Paris was achieved the fraternal unity of the Communist and Social-Democratic workers. Strengthen this unity, despite the resistance of the reactionary elements in the labour movement. Follow the example of the victorious struggle of the

workers of the U.S.S.R., who under the leadership of the great Party of Lenin and Stalin were able to overthrow capitalism, establish a Soviet Government and achieve the final and irrevocable victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.

Long live the great proletarian revolution in the U.S.S.R.!

Long live Soviet Government all over the world!

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE  
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

## THE ITALO-ABYSSINIAN WAR, UNITED WORKING-CLASS ACTION, AND THE POSITION OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

By K. GOTTWALD.

**T**HE onslaught of Italian fascism on the Abyssinian people is a fresh and serious warning to the international working-class. Just think . . . this war is not a bolt from the blue. Preparations for it went on for many months, before the eyes of the whole world. And these preparations were carried on with the insolent cynicism of which only bestial fascism is capable. The rapacious nature of the war is clearly obvious to everybody. The whole world is filled with indignation against the fascist aggressor, and with sympathy for the Abyssinian people who are being attacked. And yet Mussolini was able to risk such a bloody adventure, all the consequences of which it is difficult to foresee as yet. It is the right, and even the duty of the international proletariat to raise the following question: how did it happen, and was it not possible to AVERT this war?

In his reply to the debate at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, Comrade Dimitrov determinedly rejected the fatalistic viewpoint of the inevitability of imperialist wars, when he said:

"It is true that imperialist wars are a product of capitalism, that only by overthrowing capitalism can there be an end to all wars, BUT IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT THE TOILING MASSES CAN PREVENT IMPERIALIST WAR BY THEIR MILITANT ACTION." (My emphasis. K.G.)

Yes, of course, the present war in Africa could also have been averted. But the most important and prime condition necessary for this was UNITED ACTION by the WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS AND MILITANT ACTION ON THE PART OF THE TOILING MASSES. In his telegram to the Socialist Labour International, dated October 7, 1935, Comrade Dimitrov emphasised this point in the following serious declaration:

"The international working-class has been unable to prevent this war just as it was unable to prevent German Fascism coming to power, because its organisations did not act unitedly and in solidarity. As a result, the working-class was not in a position to launch a mighty people's movement of all peace-loving classes and peoples against the incendiaries of war, thus erecting an unsurmountable wall against war."

And, indeed, just imagine for one moment that it had been possible to organise joint action in due time by all working-class organisations both in individual countries and on an international scale. Would this not have had an enormous influence over all other sections of the population? And would it not have attracted in their millions, the masses of peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals—in short, the majority of the population—into a broad front of peace? And had this broad peace front, not restricting its activities merely to appeals to the League of Nations, begun to carry out INDEPENDENT ANTI-WAR DEMONSTRATIONS AND IN PARTICULAR HAD SERIOUSLY OCCUPIED ITSELF WITH PREPARING SUCH ACTION AS WOULD HAVE LED TO THE ACTUAL ISOLATION OF THE FASCIST AGGRESSOR—then who would try to assert that this would not have influenced the trend of events? In the face of such an international mobilisation of forces, operating in favour of peace, Mussolini would have thought twice, or even more before giving the order to advance against Abyssinia. In the face of action of THIS KIND on the part of the front of the forces striving for peace, the various capitalist governments in the League of Nations would have been forced to act OPPORTUNELY AND ENERGETICALLY against the fascist aggressor, and this, in turn, would have restrained his warlike efforts. But it was not possible, unfortunately, to secure such action by the peace

front, and so mankind is now face to face with the accomplished fact of a new bloody war.

The Communist International gave the warning in time, sounded the alarm, offered a hand to the Labour and Socialist International in time, and proposed an alliance for joint struggle against war and for peace. Thus, on the eve of May 1 of this year, the Comintern made a proposal to the Labour and Socialist International to arrange joint May-day demonstrations under the slogan of peace, and emphasised in particular the menace of war in Abyssinia. The entire Seventh Congress of the Comintern was, as we know, one fiery appeal for united action by the working-class. When the menace of war became immediate, on September 25, the Comintern renewed its proposal. And on October 7, when the first Italian bombs were already bursting over the Abyssinian villages, Comrade Dimitrov once more telegraphed to the Secretariat of the Socialist International as follows:

"Now that so much time has already been lost, it is all the more our duty and yours at this moment to put a stop to military action and prevent the war from spreading to other parts of the world.

"Any further delay in bringing about united action against the war that has already begun would be fatal."

The Executive Committee of the Socialist International took up the Comintern proposal only on October 12, i.e., somewhat late. But, as the saying goes, better late than never. According to the official report, representatives of seventeen countries were present at that session of the Executive. The representatives of the MAJORITY OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WERE IN FAVOUR of the Comintern proposal. Only representatives of five parties were AGAINST. But although the majority of the parties declared IN FAVOUR of accepting our proposal, although this was demanded by a hitherto unprecedented number of Social-Democratic workers and organisations in different countries, although the war declared by Italy was already at its height and it was therefore ABSOLUTELY essential for united action to be undertaken by the international proletariat, the Executive Committee of the Socialist International nevertheless decided not to accept the proposal of the Comintern.

Who inspired it to adopt such a fatal decision? Who has once more rejected the outstretched hand, who in the hour of direful danger has undermined the possibility of international united working-class action? Who have taken upon themselves such a heavy responsibility and by behaving like strikebreakers, real STRIKEBREAKERS indeed, have encouraged all the fascist war instigators to attempt still further bloody adventures? The official report of the Executive of the Socialist

International itself points to those who are the culprits. The report states the following:

"As regards the proposals of the Comintern regarding an interview with the four delegates appointed by the latter, the Socialist Parties of England, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Czechoslovakia declared that they could not endorse the adoption of this proposal for the following reasons: firstly, in view of the composition of the Comintern delegation, and secondly because they reject every kind of united action with the Communist Parties of these countries and all other kinds of action by the two Internationals. The Executive Committee which is compelled to take account of the opinions of these big working-class parties cannot accept the invitation of the Comintern."

Thus, it was the representatives of the British Labour Party and of the Social-Democratic Parties of Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Czechoslovakia who were responsible for the rejection of our proposal. It is they who are preventing any possibility of joint action between the two Internationals, and, moreover, at a moment when blood is being shed, when it is a question of saving the lives of tens of thousands of peace-loving Abyssinians and Italian soldiers, when an end should be put to this bloodbath, and steps taken to prevent it from spreading to other parts of the world. People like these should be summoned to the court of the working-class, and first and foremost before the court of the workers of their own parties! Do you want to know their names? Here they are: J. COMPTON, G. DALLAS, H. DALTON, V. GILLIES, from England; I. STIVIN, F. SOUCUP, A. SCHEFER from Czechoslovakia; I. V. ALBARA, K. VOERING from Holland; Z. HÖGLUND, R. LINDSTRÖM from Sweden; V. CHRISTENSEN from Denmark.

How can this sort of behaviour on the part of the Social-Democratic leaders of these five countries be explained. Is it not a fact that these leaders also pass resolutions of protest against the Italian war in Abyssinia? Is it not a fact that they are also against the war and demand severe measures against the fascist aggressor? How can we interpret the fact that they reject united working-class action against the war? "To accept the proposal of the Communist International would mean to harm the working-class movement in our own country"—this is what the arguments amount to of those who, although they talk a lot about the struggle against war, are against unity in this struggle. On a closer examination of the whole affair we can prove that there is something quite different behind the dark deeds of the reactionary leaders!

England is now on the eve of the elections. The leaders of the Labour Party assert that a united front with the Communists "would compromise" them in the eyes of the petty-bourgeoisie and restrict the election prospects of the Labour Party. An argument which is radically wrong.

If there is anything which can compromise the leaders of the Labour Party in the eyes of the masses it is their own policy of dragging at the tail of the policy of the "National Government," and their splitting activities inside the working-class. On the contrary, this policy does not strengthen but rather weakens the possibilities of the labourites in the elections. The establishment of unity of action of the English proletariat, joint action on the part of the working-class organisations of all kinds against the war and against the home and foreign policy of the National Government in England, as is the case in France, would attract the masses of the petty bourgeoisie to the side of the working-class and would lead to the defeat of the National Government in the elections. Why is it that the Labour leaders, who have themselves issued the slogan that the National Government must be defeated and that a Labour Government must be brought into power, do not choose this plain and simple road proposed by the English Communists? Why is it that the Labour leaders, with their splitting policy in the ranks of the working-class and their support for British imperialism widen the prospects of the National Government itself at the elections? For the simple reason that the reactionary leaders of the Labour Party do not want to compromise themselves in the eyes of the British BOURGEOISIE, because they prefer collaboration with the BOURGEOISIE to the establishment of united working-class action.

In Czechoslovakia, the leaders of Social-Democracy belong, with the bourgeoisie, to one governmental coalition. They point out that if they were to establish a united front with the Communists they would have to resign from the government. The Czechoslovak BOURGEOISIE do, indeed, confront them with this problem. But can this be a reason for maintaining the split in the ranks of the working-class in Czechoslovakia? The ministers belonging to Czechoslovak Social Democracy give us the following reply: "If we resign from the government, our places will be taken by the fascists, and so we have to do everything possible to remain in the government." Such an attitude to the question can be adopted only by people who are hopelessly dependent upon the bourgeoisie. If they were to unite their ranks in the course of the struggle, the working-class of Czechoslovakia, with the establishment of united action, would be in a position to draw the toiling peasantry and intellectuals away from the influence of the big bourgeoisie in a comparatively short space of time, and would have at their disposal sufficient strength not only to prevent the fascists from entering the government, but also to develop an extensive struggle for a people's

front government. In this direction broad prospects await the toiling population of Czechoslovakia. But the policy of the reactionary leaders of Czechoslovakia Social-Democracy, on the contrary, is bringing the working-class to a deadlock. Now, already, the reactionary section of the governmental coalition is beginning to bring down its fist heavier upon the table, and to confront the Social-Democratic leaders with the dilemma of swallowing what they are given, or famishing! "If you don't want to obey, then clear out, others will take your places." But if things continue in this way, and the Socialist workers and organisations are unable to call their reactionary leaders to order, then the fascists may indeed come to power, and the scattered working-class will not be in a position to prevent them. The way to avert fascist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia is to take the road of united working-class action, the road of the people's front, as proposed by the Communists. Why do the reactionary leaders of Social-Democracy reject this road? Simply because taking this road would compromise them in the eyes of the Czech BOURGEOISIE, would mean that they would have to give up the policy of collaboration with the BOURGEOISIE, while collaboration with the bourgeoisie is obviously dearer to these people than the vital interests of the working-class.

From what has been said it is clear that the reactionary section of the leaders of the British Labour Party and of the Social-Democratic Parties of Czechoslovakia, Holland, Denmark and Sweden, by their repeated refusals to accept the proposal of the Comintern, are sabotaging not only the struggle of the INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT against war, but also the struggle for the immediate interests of THE TOILING MASSES OF THEIR OWN COUNTRIES. For these leaders, to continue collaboration with the bourgeoisie is of more importance than the interests of the proletariat. This alone can be the explanation of their behaviour, and nothing else. And what does this lead to? Of what benefit are declarations against war, if at the same time obstacles are put in the way of uniting the workers and working-class organisations for joint struggle against war? Obviously only the fascist war instigators can gain from this. Who can be the gainer by, on the one hand, shouting about the need to defeat the National Government in the elections and, on the other, following the trail of this same National Government and preventing the possibility of united action by the proletariat against it and its policy? Obviously only the bourgeois reactionary parties, the National Government and the British fascists. Who can gain any benefit from lots of talk about one's desire to prevent the advent of power of the

fascists in Czechoslovakia, while at the same time serving those who are engaged in plots with the fascists, and on the other hand from violent protestations against the united working-class front? Obviously only the enemies of the toiling people.

It can be recorded with satisfaction that there were people to be found in the Executive of the Labour and Socialist International who spoke in favour of the Comintern proposal. This must be considered A SUCCESS from the point of view of all who aim at united working-class action and who are fighting for it. This is proof of the fact that the idea of united action and joint struggle is steadily making headway in the ranks of the Socialist LEADERS as well. We welcome every step of these leaders on the road towards the united front and real unity of action, which millions are insisting upon to-day (and which millions are demanding to-day), and we shall support them in this. But it is in the interests of this cause that we must now openly indicate the WEAK SIDE of the actions of those who were in favour of the Comintern proposals being accepted by the Executive Committee of the Labour and Socialist International.

How is the Socialist worker, the honest supporter of united action to understand you when you declare in favour of accepting that which you are convinced is right, and then, in the end you vote for the resolution which rejects your own proposals? And the more so since the majority were actually in favour of this proposal. For this was just the position at the Executive Committee of the Socialist International: according to the official report seventeen parties were represented, of which five were against accepting the Comintern proposal and the rest were in favour; while the resolution rejecting the Comintern proposal was accepted unanimously with one abstention. Don't you think there is an absence of consistency here? Consistent capitulation as soon as the opponents of the united front bring their fists down upon the table cannot be considered consistent behaviour.

You justify your retreat before the opponents of united action by the following phrase in the Executive Committee resolution:

"The Executive Committee of the Second International which is compelled to take account of the opinions of these big working-class parties, cannot accept the invitation of the Comintern."

Does it not seem to you that the supporters of united action in the ranks of the Socialist International (and you know as well as we do that many members of the parties whose leaders have rejected the Comintern proposals are also supporters of unity) are perfectly justified in asking

themselves why the Executive Committee only took account of the opinions of the OPPONENTS OF THE UNITED FRONT, and did not take into consideration the viewpoint of the SUPPORTERS OF THE UNITED FRONT? The more so since the latter constitute the MAJORITY. Is not force, and the arbitrariness of the reactionary minority in relation to the majority evident here? The fact that reactionary leaders are prepared at any price, even by force to defend their viewpoint which is harmful to the working-class of the whole world—will of course surprise nobody. These leaders use analogous methods at home against the members of their own organisations. But what is surprising is that not only do you not condemn this reactionary arbitrariness, but justify it in every possible way.

You might, perhaps, make the following objection: if the Executive Committee were to accept the proposal of the Comintern against the will of the leaders of these five parties, it would mean a split in the Labour and Socialist International, a thing which you want to avoid. But since when has the right to veto operated in any labour organisation? An organisation of this kind would be undermined and rendered incapable of doing anything from the very outset. For any member could come out and declare: since things are not going my way, I shall destroy the whole organisation. And if the others who constitute the majority, were always to retreat before such a veto and threats of this kind, and to say: all right, let it be your way so long as we keep together, then what would happen in the long run? It would mean that in their own organisation they would be superfluous, and have no weight at all.

You are probably right when you assert that even had the Executive Committee of the Socialist International accepted the Comintern proposal, it would have been unable to compel the leading organs of the above-mentioned five parties to act jointly with the Communist Parties in their respective countries. However, in our opinion, a decision of this kind on the part of the Socialist International would answer the desires of the majority of the Socialist workers in the countries mentioned as well, would strengthen their struggle for united working-class action and would in the last analysis compel the leading organs of these Social-Democratic Parties as well to adopt another, a positive viewpoint. But now, if one may express it so, a "legal situation" has arisen in the Socialist International, where each party can decide FOR ITSELF as to whether it will establish a united front or not. The resolution of the Executive Committee of the Socialist International of October 12, 1935, clearly emphasises this point:



"The resolution of the Executive Committee of the Labour and Socialist International, dated November 17, 1934, which allows the parties affiliated to it TO DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES whether or not they conclude a united front agreement with the Communist Parties of the respective countries remains in force."

But even if we agree that DE BROUCKERE, the Belgian, cannot force ALBARDA, from Holland, to enter into a united front in Holland, there is nothing to prevent De Brouckere himself, in his own party in Belgium, from encouraging and operating united action. We can readily understand that Otto Bauer, the Austrian, is not able to persuade STIVIN of Czechoslovakia not to place obstacles in the way of the united front in Czechoslovakia. But we completely fail to understand why Otto Bauer, in his last article which also advocates the united front "in world politics" hesitates at the formation of a united front in Austria. It is true that Wels, the German, is unable to force a positive viewpoint regarding united working-class action in England upon Dalton, the Englishman. But Wels doubtless has sufficient power and influence inside his own Social-Democratic Party to achieve the establishment of the united front in Germany.

And so, friends, in Brussels, you spoke in favour of accepting the Comintern proposals. Very good. This is in the interests of the workers' cause. We welcome your action. But you voted for the resolution which rejected your own proposals. That was not good. That, if you will allow us to say so, was inconsistent, and we cannot under any circumstances agree with it. But be that as it may. You explain your action by stating that the opponents of the united front did not agree with you and that you have to take account of their viewpoint. Of course, it is right to take account of the opinions of others. But to subordinate yourselves to an opinion with which you do not agree is not right, and what is more, it is wrong to justify and excuse the viewpoint with which you are not in agreement. But let that rest. You point out that even though the attitude of the Executive Committee of the Socialist International were positive towards the Comintern proposal, it would not be strong enough to get the same positive attitude evinced by the five parties whose leaders were against the Comintern proposals. That is a pity, and we regret it. But let that be. It is now important for us to find common ground where the reactionary opponents of the united front cannot disturb you, namely in YOUR OWN COUNTRIES. For the time being these people have prevented unity of action on an INTERNATIONAL scale. We shall continue to fight

unswervingly for international unity. But we shall most speedily achieve this through establishing the united front in SEPARATE COUNTRIES, as in France. It would be logical for all the Socialist Parties, whose representatives to the Executive Committee of the Socialist International were in favour of the Comintern proposals, to follow the example of the Socialist Party of France. More so, since the resolution of their own International affords them the right to do so, while the decision on this question depends exclusively upon these parties themselves.

In rejecting the proposal of the Comintern, the Executive Committee of the Socialist International refers to the fact that it had ITSELF decided to take the necessary steps against war. We find the following in the resolution of the Executive Committee:

"At a joint meeting held on October 12, 1935, the Executive Committee of the Labour and Socialist International in full agreement with the International Federation of Trade Unions adopted a decision covering a series of steps to be taken to ensure a successful struggle against the fascist drive against Abyssinia and against the war danger in Europe."

What are these measures? The decision of the Executive FIRST OF ALL expresses satisfaction at the fact that the League of Nations declared Italy to be the aggressor. SECONDLY, the Executive Committee demands that the League of Nations should apply "immediate sanctions" against the attacking side. THIRDLY, it assures the League of Nations of the "most energetic support from its organisations in the application of sanctions." FOURTHLY, it wishes the League of Nations to inform Mussolini and his government "that when a peace treaty is finally concluded on the basis of its aggression, there will be no advantages for Mussolini." The decision of the Executive Committee ENDS with the assurance that the Socialist International and the Amsterdam Trade Union International "sets the moral force of the working-class and the might of its organisations at the disposal of the League of Nations in defence of peace and justice." This is all, full stop!

What do all these "measures" amount to? They amount to the following, to appealing to the LEAGUE OF NATIONS to adopt measures of one kind or another; to supporting the LEAGUE OF NATIONS in measures of one kind or another; to placing the working-class organisations at the disposal of the League of Nations for purposes of one kind or another. This means, TO MAKE THE ENTIRE STRUGGLE AGAINST WAR DEPENDENT UPON THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. THUS, THE WORLD WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT, THE MOVEMENT OF ALL PEOPLES AGAINST THE WAR AND ON BEHALF OF PEACE, IS REDUCED TO THE

ROLE OF AN APPENDAGE, A LACKEY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

If the League of Nations would only give the minimum of guarantees that it would always, everywhere and in all cases, defend the cause of peace in the most consistent fashion, we could at any rate understand the viewpoint of the Executive Committee of the Socialist International. The League of Nations, it is clear, is not to-day what it was, say, five years ago. The Soviet Union, the only workers' state in the world, now belongs to the League of Nations. The two chief war instigators, fascist Germany and militarist Japan, are outside the League of Nations. The third chief war instigator, Fascist Italy, has now been declared the aggressor by the League of Nations. And of course a front has been formed inside the League of Nations of those capitalist states which for one reason or other do not want a war for a new division of the globe. All this is true. Nevertheless, the League of Nations remains still a body in which the majority is composed of CAPITALIST AND IMPERIALIST STATES. And the international proletariat CANNOT HAND OVER the decision of its fate and the fate of world peace to these factors. Therefore, the line of the Executive Committee of the Socialist International is incomprehensible and incorrect when it urges the international working-class movement IN THAT DIRECTION. It is just the same as advising the traveller to follow 'a will-o'-the-wisp. Where would we be leading him? Into a swamp, to destruction.

We Communists of course, also want the League of Nations to adopt all economic and financial sanctions against fascist Italy, and against any other imperialist instigator of war. We, Communists, will naturally not reject such a weapon, as PRESSURE upon individual governments and upon the League of Nations, to FORCE them to act as the people demand. But what can have most effect upon the Ministers who hold portfolios in different governments and, consequently, upon their representatives in Geneva? The leaders of the Socialist International tell the workers to draw up and to pass resolutions demanding that their governments and the League of Nations adopt sanctions against Italy, that everything will end at that point. If this were the position in actual practice, everything would be quite simple. But unfortunately, the position is not so simple. Many resolutions have already been written. But Mussolini continues to wage war and to obtain from abroad munitions and all other material requisite for the conduct of warfare. Is it not clear that the proper effect cannot be obtained from DECLARATORY demands alone presented to individual capitalist governments, and, thereby to the League of Nations? Is it not obvious that the

International working-class must choose ANOTHER method, another means of action, that on the one hand they must do their utmost with their own forces to paralyse the fascist aggressor and, on the other hand, by means of this INDEPENDENT ACTION, at the same time compel both the governments of their own countries and the League of Nations to adopt proper and effective measures against the fascist aggressor? And this method is the UNITY OF INDEPENDENT ANTI-WAR ACTION BY THE WORKERS OF ALL POLITICAL OPINIONS AND OF ALL OPPONENTS OF WAR. Here, of especial importance are all the measures adopted and carried out by working-class organisations in pursuance of the slogan: NOT A SINGLE TRAIN, NOT A SINGLE SHIP IN SUPPORT OF THE ITALIAN WAR IN ABYSSINIA. Those who want to bring pressure to bear upon the capitalist governments and the League of Nations in which there is a capitalist majority, must BY THE FORCE OF PROLETARIAN ACTION, confront them with the ACCOMPLISHED FACT, because only by doing so can they be forced to act energetically in the interests of peace. Only in this event will the international working-class movement not be an appendage, a slave of the League of Nations, but a DRIVING FORCE which will have a decisive influence on the trend of events.

However, it was just upon the most important questions of the INDEPENDENT ANTI-WAR ACTION OF THE WORKING-CLASS that the Socialist International and the Amsterdam Trade Union International failed to adopt any concrete decisions. All the more irresponsible is the refusal to accept the proposal of the Comintern to organise a joint anti-war campaign. This refusal aims at declining to adopt any anti-war action AT ALL.

There is no reason to doubt that the reactionary leaders of the Socialist International, in rejecting joint action by the two Internationals, have delivered a heavy blow against the international anti-war movement, have encouraged all the fascist war instigators to new bloody adventures and have thus taken upon themselves a serious responsibility before the whole of the working-class. However, the opponents of the united front make a mistake if they imagine that their refusal exhausts the whole question of international united action. Nothing of the kind! This question is being raised to-day by millions and tens of millions of people. A handful of reactionary leaders can delay, postpone or complicate a positive solution of this question, but it is not within their power to prevent it finally. The question of international unity of action will be solved! And will be solved in the AFFIRMATIVE!

The number of supporters of the united front is steadily growing in the camp of the Socialist

International. We have proof of this in the fact that only the representatives of five parties, dared to say "no" in such a serious situation. But in these five parties as well there are not a few supporters of the united front, and in these parties resistance to the clique of reactionary leaders is growing. It is essential that all who are striving for united working-class action should use their united forces to secure the realisation of the will of the supporters of the united front inside the Socialist Parties. The working class cannot allow a handful of reactionary leaders to bring disruption into its ranks at such a serious historical moment.

Because of the splitting work and the sabotage of the opponents of united front, the anti-war campaign of the toiling masses is not being developed properly, as the situation requires. Therefore the advocates of peace and of united action must multiply their efforts. If as a result of the resistance of the representatives of the five Social-Democratic Parties it has not yet been possible to reach agreement between the two Inter-

nationals on the question of international action against war, it must be arrived at on a national scale and in the districts. And what is required is not mere agreement but **ENERGETIC** action. All the supporters of peace must take account of the following: if international public opinion, if all the classes and peoples who stand for peace prove unable to-day to offer energetic resistance to the Italian warmongers in the bloody business in which they are engaged, then the warmongers in other parts of the world will be encouraged very quickly to follow the example of this war adventure, and then the present Italian war in Abyssinia may become the prelude to a new world war. If this is to be avoided, it is essential, **AT ALL COSTS**, in all localities, in all countries and throughout the whole world, to bring about united working-class action. The entire international Communist movement must strive to achieve this end, day in and day out, stubbornly, untiringly, and regardless of all difficulties. We shall not withdraw. International united working-class action will be achieved!

## THE RESULTS OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Report of Comrade Manuilsky at Meetings of Leading Party Workers in  
Moscow and Leningrad.

### PART I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

**T**HE 7th Congress of the Communist International came together on the verge of a great turn in the lives of the peoples, a great turn in the relation of forces between the Socialist world and the capitalist world, a turn in the inter-relationships between the capitalist states, a turn in the alignment of class forces in each separate country, a turn in the world working-class movement, and in the liberation movement of all toilers.

IN THE U.S.S.R., UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE C.P.S.U. AND ITS LENINIST CENTRAL COMMITTEE, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MIGHTY LEADER OF THE TOILERS, COMRADE STALIN, SOCIALISM IS VICTORIOUS FINALLY AND IRREVOCABLY. This victory has strengthened the land of the proletarian dictatorship economically and politically, and is opening up very wide prospects of the further socialist industrialisation of the U.S.S.R., and of an unheard-of advance in the material and cultural well-being of the masses. It has firmly won the support of the widest masses of the people for socialism, has strengthened the position of the

international proletariat and of all toilers in their struggle against the offensive of capital, fascism and the menace of imperialist war. The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is revolutionising the toiling masses and calling forth a mighty movement for socialism throughout the whole of the capitalist world.

IN THE CAPITALIST WORLD, MOVES HAVE TAKEN PLACE OF AN INTERNATIONAL AND INTERNAL CHARACTER, under the destructive influence of the world economic crisis. The world economic crisis has been raging for about six years, intensifying the exploitation of the working class to a tremendous degree. It has increased the unemployed army many times, has overwhelmed millions of peasant farms and ruined entire countries and peoples. It is difficult to express in words the terrible distress which the crisis has brought to the masses of the people. These calamities are having a particularly hard effect on the conditions of the masses at the present time, when the social and political consequences of the economic crisis are being displayed to the full.

But at the same time certain changes have been marked in the very development of the world economic crisis. Undoubtedly a CERTAIN IMPROVEMENT IS TO BE OBSERVED IN THE ECONOMIC SITUATION as compared with 1932, but this improvement is of a very uneven character. There are countries where production has passed beyond the pre-crisis level of 1929; there is another type of big country, such as the U.S.A. and Germany, where production has only reached 86-87 per cent. of the pre-crisis level; and, finally, in such countries as France, Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia and Switzerland, production is marking time around the lowest point reached by the crisis.

On the basis of these data can we draw the conclusion that the capitalist world has emerged from the phase of depression, and that the economic crisis has been left behind? No! We cannot make such a conclusion to-day. We must not do this because, even in those countries which have passed beyond the level of production of 1929, signs are to be observed of a new onslaught of the crisis. If we take 1929 as the index of the highest point reached by production in the pre-crisis period, then world production in the year 1932 amounted to 66 per cent. of that year, while now, in the first half year of 1935, the figure is 86 per cent. It is as though the world crisis is HALFWAY between the lowest point reached by the year 1932 and the high pre-crisis level of 1929. The agrarian crisis continues, although in a somewhat modified form; world foreign trade, by comparison with 1929, has been cut down by two-thirds; although the financial crisis is not of such a sharp form as in the years passed, it has not been overcome. This may be seen not only in the inflation in Italy and in the devaluation of the currency in Belgium, but also in the threat at devaluation in Germany and France. The general post-war crisis of capitalism has not only not been weakened, but has been deepened and sharpened as a result of the world economic crisis.

It is, however, not excluded that a further improvement of the condition of capitalist economy will take place in the near future. But, even if capitalism succeeded in temporarily improving the economic situation, it will not succeed either in achieving that relative stabilisation which followed on the first round of wars and revolutions, nor in overcoming its general post-war crisis. Capitalism is like a sick person doomed to death, whose general condition grows continually worse, although there are periods when the hopelessly sick person feels better.

The feverish preparation of imperialist war also bears witness to the general worsening of the condition of capitalism. A regrouping of the capi-

talist states has taken place, which is expressed in the wrecking of the Versailles system and in the collapse of the Washington agreement. Germany, the victim of the imperialist Versailles, and surrounded by the sympathy of the world working class, no longer exists, but a Germany exists which is the buttress of fascist obscurantism and reaction, which has established a barbarous régime on the bones of the German workers, and which elicits the burning hatred of the toilers throughout the world. Weimar Germany no longer exists, but there is a fascist Germany which threatens to crush other peoples, which is feverishly arming itself, the instigator of new imperialist wars, furiously preparing war against the land of the Soviets. France, the chief inspirer of Versailles, and which for many years stood at the head of the preparations for a crusade against the U.S.S.R., has suffered defeat not only in respect to its Versailles policy, but also in respect to its policy of intrigue against the land of the Soviets, and has been compelled to collaborate with the U.S.S.R. in preserving peace. The Little Entente countries, which were utilised after the world war by French imperialism as a barrier against the international influence of the U.S.S.R., are more and more turning against fascist Germany, which threatens their independence, and are seeking support against the aggression of German imperialism in the land of the Soviets grown strong. The imperialist countries, which are not interested in war to-day, cannot, in face of the growing aggressiveness of the imperialist-fascist countries, Germany and Japan, and in the recent period, Italy, ignore the U.S.S.R., which is the bulwark of peace and the liberty of the peoples.

In the Far East, the Washington Agreement, which, throughout the entire post-war period determined the relationship of forces in the Pacific Ocean, has been annulled. By its occupation of Manchuria and its offensive on Northern China, military-fascist Japan has opened up the beginning of a new division of the globe. Japan is feverishly developing its war industry, is concentrating its military forces in the districts of Manchuria and Northern China, is building strategic roads directed towards the boundaries of the U.S.S.R., and out of the Chinese territory it has seized, is creating a jumping-off ground for an offensive on the land of the Soviets. It is not the League of Nations now which is the main source of imperialist wars, but those states which are breaking with it in order to free their hands so as to carry on robber wars, namely, Germany and Japan, which have left the League of Nations, and Italy, which is preparing to leave it.

Corresponding to Versailles and Washington on

the arena of international relations, there is taking place in the internal relations of the capitalist states the collapse of bourgeois democracy and the rise of a fascist movement. And this coincidence is not accidental, for the ripening of the conditions for imperialist wars is indissolubly connected with the intensification of political reaction. In Germany, in the centre of Europe, fascism has come to power and has established the most ferocious and terrorist régime, directed against the toilers. The ruling classes of Austria and Spain have followed the example of Germany. In all capitalist countries, the fascist offensive on the vital interests and elementary rights of the toilers is developing. The capitalist world, as a result of the world economic crisis, has slid down a few stages more on the road to reaction, which strangles the peoples, and has brought back to life, in the 20th century, the days of the inquisition, torture, the stake and mass murder.

Under the influence of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., under the influence of the consequences of the economic crisis in the capitalist world, the war which has begun in the Far East, and the advent of fascism to power in Central Europe, A CHANGE IS DEVELOPING IN THE MINDS OF THE WIDEST MASSES OF THE WORKING CLASS AND FIRST AND FOREMOST AMONGST THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC WORKERS OF THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS. This change is materially expressed in THE RISE IN THE FIGHTING CAPACITY of the working class as regards the struggle against fascism and war, witness of which are the scope of the anti-fascist movement in France and the armed struggles in Austria and Spain. A further expression of this change is to be seen in THE MIGHTY MOVEMENT FOR UNITED ACTION in all sections of the working class, independent of what party and trade union they belong to. Although this movement for unity is now only in the very first stages of its development, it will inevitably grow and gather strength; the decisions of our 7th World Congress will assist to a tremendous degree in bringing further successes to this movement.

This change is also manifested in THE CRISIS OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL. We have in view the political suicide of the German Social-Democratic Party, which not only cleared the way for fascism by the policy it pursued, but which, at the moment when Hitler came to power, capitulated and showed that it was not only not a Socialist Party, but was not a Democratic Party.

We also have in view the collapse of another most powerful party of the Second International, namely, the "Left" Austrian Social-Democratic Party, at the expense of which the Communist Party of Austria has increased its ranks in the last year and a half, and which has, in the conditions

of fascist terror, become a mass party to-day, with 16,000 members, whereas, prior to February, 1934, it only had between 3,000 and 4,000 members in its ranks.

We have in view further the growing differentiation in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Parties, the crystallisation within them of a Left Wing, which more and more sharply declares against class collaboration between the upper ranks of these parties and the bourgeoisie, and in favour of united action between the masses of workers in these parties, and the Communists.

Finally, the change in the working-class movement is to be seen in the way the sections of the Communist International have grown strong politically and organisationally. Now, there is practically not a single party in the Communist International which has not either doubled or trebled its membership in the last two years. Even the Parties which have borne the terrible blows of fascism, such as, for instance, the German Communist Party, which has declined numerically, nevertheless have preserved a wide mass basis in spite of the terror. Fresh sections of workers who have hitherto stood outside of any politics, are being drawn into the Communist movement. We have not had during all the years since the end of the world war, and the beginning of the October Revolution, such a movement towards Communism as we have at the present time.

Such are the basic moves in the international situation and in the working-class movement which defined the basic tactical lines of the decisions of the 7th Congress of the Communist International.

WHAT IS THE ESSENCE OF THESE TACTICAL LINES OF THE 7TH CONGRESS? The successes of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., which strengthen the position of the world proletariat in the struggle against capitalism. The collapse of capitalist stabilisation which rendered the conditions of the bourgeoisie difficult (and continues to render them more difficult). The beginning of the passage of the main masses of the working class to the position of the class struggle. The growing urge of the social-democratic workers for the united front with the Communist Party—all these points are transforming the international working class INTO AN ACTIVE FORCE capable of exerting decisive influence over the course of events within the various countries and on the world arena. The proletariat cannot now be satisfied by merely negating capitalism in a propagandist fashion, but, basing itself on the U.S.S.R., must carry through a policy of revolutionary activity profoundly hostile to the notorious policy of "reforming" the capitalist system as carried through by social-democracy, which transformed the working class into an element dragging at the tail of the bourgeoisie.

The policy of revolutionary activity is a policy of weakening the position of the bourgeoisie, of undermining the imperialist measures of the latter, and the onslaught on the U.S.S.R. being prepared by them. It is a policy of destroying their offensive on the toilers, and their efforts to give their dictatorship a fascist form; it is a policy of strengthening THE POSITION OF THE PROLETARIAT. The concentrated expression of the internal and external aggressiveness of the bourgeoisie is to be seen to-day in fascism and war, and, when fighting against all forms of the bourgeois dictatorship, the proletariat must concentrate all their forces for the struggle against fascism as their worst enemy. In carrying on the struggle against the menace of imperialist war, the proletariat must concentrate their main fire against those states which are to-day the instigators and inciters of war. In this struggle, the proletariat must utilise all the contradictions of the imperialist states on the international arena, and contradictions among the various groups of the bourgeoisie on the internal arena, IN A REVOLUTIONARY MANNER, not allowing themselves to be utilised by the bourgeoisie and thereby have their position weakened.

In the struggle against fascism and war, the proletariat are duty bound to extend the front of all possible allies, to such social groupings, classes and nations, as are by no means the supporters of the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor supporters of the social revolution. There can be no doubt that such a purposeful policy of the proletariat, their active interference in the course of events, will turn those sections of the toilers to its side who, under the influence of the fruitless policy of social-democracy, have wavered in the direction of reaction and ensured the victory of fascism in a number of capitalist states.

But all this demands of the Communist Parties that they make a corresponding re-orientation. They must break with their old propagandist line to the effect that the Communists in the working-class movement are only a fighting revolutionary opposition in respect to the mass social-democratic parties and the mass reformist trade unions, bearing no responsibility as to what takes place in the working-class. It is precisely because the Social-Democratic and reformist policy has gone bankrupt that it becomes possible for the Communists now, more than ever before, to carry through the revolutionary policy of the proletariat, and, at the same time, it is precisely on them that the responsibility for the fate of the working-class movement now lies. They cannot be mere organisations for the propaganda of Communist ideas; they must become the most important factor in the political life of their respective countries and throughout the world. By their policy of revolu-

tionary activity of the proletariat, they must secure the liquidation of the consequences of those defeats suffered by the working-class, to which the Social-Democratic policy led; they must lead the working-class out of its condition of isolation and secure tangible successes in the struggle of the masses against capital, fascism and war, and prepare the conditions for the final victory of the working-class over capitalism. Against the Social-Democratic hopelessness and lack of perspective, they must set the active perspective of struggle and victory, a perspective which raises the faith of the working-class in their own strength and implants in their minds the idea that the present rulers of the capitalist countries are temporary people—that the real masters of the world are the proletariat. Herein lies the essence of the decisions of the 7th Congress.

Let us examine the basic lines of our Congress in greater detail.

### I. The Victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.

Our Congress was a Congress of SOCIALISM VICTORIOUS IN THE U.S.S.R.

What does this victory of Socialism imply from the point of view of our internal relations? It opens up A NEW PHASE in the development of our country. What constitute the specific peculiarities of this phase? Firstly, the fact that the further development of the productive forces of our Socialist economy is taking place and will increasingly take place without those tremendous difficulties which hindered the growth of Socialist economy in the first years of the reconstruction period, not to speak of the restoration period. The level reached in the Socialist industrialisation of our country enables us to overcome the elements of spontaneity in the remnants of capitalist economy and to raise the socialist planning of our national economy to a higher level than hitherto. Now, it is the PEOPLE who are building socialism who are the decisive force in our further advance along the path of new socialist conquests. The Stalinist slogan to the effect that "cadres decide everything" represents that leap which, to use the words of Engels, our socialist country is making out of the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom! And this means that a number of difficulties which depended either on objective conditions (the backwardness of our country, technically and economically), or were connected with the reshaping of the economic group of small producers, have been left behind. Difficulties still remain, arising either out of the necessity of overcoming the remnants of capitalism in economics and in the minds of the people, or else of the circumstance that we are surrounded by capitalist countries.

Secondly, by the socialist industrialisation of our country, we have prepared the conditions for raising the material and cultural level of the masses to such a height as is unattainable by any capitalist country in the world. Our Party and the Soviet Government now place in the centre of their attention THE QUESTION OF CARE FOR THE HUMAN BEING, and are advancing to the forefront that fundamental task of socialism, on the successful solution of which, in the last analysis, depends the passage of tremendous masses of human beings to the side of socialism.

And, if hitherto, our difficulties on the one hand, and the fact of the insufficiently rapid rise in the material standards of living of the masses, on the other hand, to a certain extent held back the masses from turning to socialism, now, however, in the new stage of our development, the attractive power of socialism is increasing, and socialism will more and more rapidly win millions of toiling people throughout the globe to its banner.

Thirdly, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. has brought about tremendous advances in the social and political spheres in our country and has advanced the construction of the classless socialist society far forward. These advances which have extended the social basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat, strengthen the latter and thereby strengthen the position of the international working-class in their struggle against the bourgeoisie. These advances have enabled the workers' and peasants' government, by decision of the 7th Congress of Soviets, to extend the bounds of the proletarian dictatorship still wider, thereby destroying the prejudices of the backward sections in the capitalist countries in relation to the proletarian dictatorship. These advances, which intensify the social and class uniformity of the Red Army, raise the defensive power of our country to a tremendously high level. Finally, they deepen the abyss between the socialist society, where class contradictions are more and more disappearing, and the capitalist world, where these contradictions grow ever greater.

IN THE SPHERE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. has increased the relative importance of socialist economy in the entire system of world economy, thereby weakening the position of capitalism. While this victory strengthens the proletarian state, it transforms the U.S.S.R. into a most powerful force in world politics as a whole. The rôle of the U.S.S.R. as A FACTOR OF PEACE AMONG THE PEOPLES is growing. The

peace policy of the Soviet Union is the policy of the entire international working-class and of all toilers—who hate imperialist wars, and who are engaged in a struggle against them. Thanks to this policy, the U.S.S.R. is becoming a centre around which the classes, nations, peoples and states which do not desire war, and which are not interested in it, are mustered against war. The rôle of the U.S.S.R. AS THE BUTTRESS OF THE FREEDOM OF THE PEOPLES is growing. All the anti-fascist forces of the world instinctively turn to the U.S.S.R. as to the land of the most developed proletarian democracy. The peoples of those states where the relics of bourgeois-democratic liberties are still maintained are turning their glances towards the U.S.S.R. The peoples who are crucified by the fascist dictatorship see the source of their liberty in the U.S.S.R. All those who defend human culture and are enemies of fascist barbarism are linking up their hopes with the U.S.S.R. The consciousness that there is a country where the proletariat has created a powerful working-class state increases manifold the forces of the international working-class, and serves as a source to raise their fighting power.

In 1927, Comrade Stalin said that the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. would CALL FORTH A MIGHTY MOVEMENT FOR SOCIALISM IN ALL CAPITALIST COUNTRIES, and that in this sense it would be not only a victory for socialism in one separate country, but a VICTORY ON A WORLD SCALE. We, comrades, are fortunate enough to be alive in the epoch of this rising movement for socialism throughout the world, which no fascist terror and no wars can stop. Therefore, the resolutions of the 7th Congress link up the new stage in the development of the world proletarian revolution with the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. And, therefore, the perspective of the entire development of the world working-class movement is inseparable from the further victories of socialism in the U.S.S.R. Therefore, all the focal points of this movement, all its tactical tasks, revolve around the central point of the consolidation of the U.S.S.R. AS THE BASIS ON THE WORLD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION.

#### **11. A Congress of the Struggle Against Fascism, the Worst Enemy of the Working Class.**

But against socialism in the U.S.S.R., which is growing stronger with every day that passes, there stands capitalism in decay. Against the state of the proletarian dictatorship of the land of the Soviets, there stand the states of bourgeois dictatorship in the capitalist countries. Against proletarian democracy, there stands fascism and its most barbarous variety, German national socialism. The international working-class are mustering their forces around the U.S.S.R. as the

buttress of freedom and liberty, as the fortress of the world proletarian revolution, and are mobilising all their forces against fascism, and primarily German fascism, as the seat of war, of unbridled capitalist oppression and bourgeois counter-revolution. The 7th Congress directed its main fire against fascism. It was a Congress expressing the tremendous anti-fascist wrath of the masses of the people, a Congress mobilising the workers, peasants and small urban toilers on the widest possible scale, a Congress mobilising the nations and peoples suppressed by imperialism.

Some people think that by concentrating our main fire against fascism we are weakening our struggle against the bourgeoisie as a class. Such an assertion is equal to somebody asserting that, by fighting against imperialism, we are thereby lowering the hatred of the masses against the capitalist order. Can any successful struggle be carried on against capitalism, if we do not sharpen the struggle against fascism? No! It is not possible, for fascism is more and more becoming the dominant political form of capitalism in the period of its general crisis. Humane and democratic capitalism no longer exists, but there is a capitalism which is barbarous and reactionary, a fascist capitalism, imperialist capitalism. Can a successful struggle be conducted against the bourgeoisie as a class, without directing our main fire against fascism? No! It is not possible, for fascism is the open and cynical form of the dictatorship of the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic and the most imperialistic elements of finance capitalism. By undermining the power of these elements, we undermine the position of the bourgeoisie as a class, for the bourgeoisie as a class are bound by indissoluble bonds to the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic and the most imperialistic elements of finance capital.

Some people think that when we raise the question of the united front between the Communists and Social-Democrats for the struggle against fascism, that we are revising the Leninist estimate of the rôle of Social-Democracy as the main social support of the bourgeoisie, that we are thereby rejecting the Stalinist thesis to the effect that the fascists and social-democracy are not antipodes, but are twins. Is this so? Had social-democracy in Germany and Austria not been the main social support of the bourgeoisie, but the antipodes of fascism, fascism would not have come to power either in Germany or in Austria. To have ceased being the social support of the bourgeoisie and become the antipodes of fascism, meant not systematic retreat and capitulation to fascism, but a struggle against it, meant not to direct their blows against the Communists when fascism

attacked the working-class, but the establishment of a fighting alliance with the Communists for the struggle against fascism. But, by its entire policy of class-collaboration, which cleared the road for fascism, social-democracy demonstrated the correctness of the thesis to the effect that social-democracy was not "the antipodes, but the twin of fascism." By its entire policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie, which assisted in disillusioning the masses in bourgeois democracy, and in favouring the development of the fascist movement, social-democracy confirmed the correctness of Lenin's estimate of social-democracy as being the main social support of the bourgeoisie. It was precisely because it was the TWIN of fascism and THE MAIN SOCIAL SUPPORT OF THE BOURGEOISIE, that social-democracy led the masses of the workers to defeat in central Europe, and assisted the offensive of fascist reaction throughout the world. Thanks to this policy of systematic retreat before fascism, social-democracy in Austria and Germany placed itself in the position of being a party hounded and persecuted, and, thanks to this policy, hundreds of thousands of social-democratic workers and their organisations have now been outlawed. It is precisely because the working-class, not only in Austria and Germany, but throughout the capitalist world, are beginning to break with the policy of the social-democratic twins, and are passing over to a policy which is the antipodes of fascism, that they are demanding, because of this, that social-democracy should cease being the main social support of the bourgeoisie. This is the point of the developing united front movement throughout the world.

And the Communists would be empty doctrinaires, and not revolutionaries, if they did not take account of the movements taking place in the ranks of the working-class and the social-democratic parties, if they did not, by their united front tactics, help the best elements in these parties and among these masses to find their way to the fighting policy which is the antipodes of fascism and to put an end to the social-democratic parties being used by the bourgeoisie as their social support. And it is precisely because fascism is the concentration point of all the hatred of the working-class and the toilers for capitalism, accumulated over centuries, that we Communists make it the main target of the fighting action of the working-class. By behaving thus, we not only do not relegate our struggle against other forms of bourgeois dictatorship to a secondary place, but, on the contrary, by rallying the masses against fascism, we prepare the crushing of capitalism with all its forms of bourgeois dictatorship.



But, declares social-democracy, by behaving in this way, the Comintern is altering its former attitude to bourgeois democracy—from an opponent of bourgeois democracy, it has become its defender. Is this true? No! Comrades, it is not true. We Communists were never absolute defenders of bourgeois democracy after the fashion of the social-democratic leaders, nor were we absolute opponents of it after the fashion of the anarchists.

We have approached the question of bourgeois democracy like revolutionary dialecticians, pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. For instance, in the years of the German revolution, in 1918-1919, when a struggle was going on as to whether Germany should be a bourgeois republic or a Soviet republic, and when Noske shot workers down in the name of the defence of the bourgeois republic, at that period, bourgeois democracy was the banner around which all the counter-revolutionary elements in Germany gathered their forces. The same was the position with the slogan of the Constituent Assembly directly following our October Revolution. The Constituent Assembly would have been a step backwards by comparison with Soviet power, would have been a decisive stage along the path towards the restoration of capitalism in our country, and therefore the Bolsheviks disbanded the Constituent Assembly, because the Mensheviks, Social-Revolutionaries (S.R.s) and the followers of Kolchak and Denikin mustered their forces around it. Had we come forward in defence of bourgeois democracy under these conditions, it would have meant coming forward in defence of the bourgeois counter-revolution against the proletarian revolution.

The position now is quite different. Now the proletariat in the majority of countries are not faced with the question of bourgeois democracy or proletarian dictatorship, but with that of bourgeois democracy or fascism. Now, the slogan of bourgeois democracy is a step forward by comparison with fascism; now, under this slogan of the struggle against fascism, wider sections of the people can be drawn into the movement than under the slogan of the direct struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. Therefore, the Communists are absolutely correct when, in a number of fascist countries or in countries moving in the direction of fascism, they advance the demand of the calling of national constituent assemblies, with a view to rallying the masses against fascism.

But the Communists would have committed a crime before the working-class had they utilised the criterion applied in approaching bourgeois democracy in the revolutionary period, in the period of capitalist stabilisation as well as when bourgeois democracy was not threatened directly

by the fascist menace, and when it and not fascism represented the main form of social reaction, and when the bourgeoisie operated their domination by its means and not by means of fascism. In this period the working-class carried on the struggle against the Weimar Republic, not because it was a republic but because it was a bourgeois republic which strangled the strikes of the working-class, and which shot down workers' demonstrations with the hands of Zorgebel, and disbanded such anti-fascist organisations as that of the Red Front Fighters' Union and cast revolutionary workers into jail.

However, neither the Communists nor the working-class of Germany could maintain such a negative position in relation to the Weimar republic when the fascist movement began to develop at a stormy pace, and when the menace of the seizure of power by fascism began to come to a head. And if we can now criticise the position of our brother Communist Party of Germany it is for the fact that it was late in changing its front in relation to the Weimar republic, by continuing to repeat old phrases when the situation had changed.

If the Communists prefer bourgeois democracy to fascism, say the Social-Democrats, then consequently they also become supporters of the policy of the "lesser evil." Yes, we Communists prefer the "lesser evil" to the greater evil. But it is not this that divides us from Social-Democracy. We expose the Social-Democratic policy of the "lesser evil" because it MEANT THE BETRAYAL OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AND DIRECT ASSISTANCE OF FASCISM. Call to mind the position of German Social-Democracy in the period of the Bruening government, a government which prepared the advent of the fascists to power. This government issued decrees which cut down wages, which reduced the political rights of the workers and which brought the Weimar republic closer to fascism. German Social-Democracy supported these decrees in the name of the policy of the "lesser evil." But was such the line of behaviour of the French Communists and Socialists in relation to the French Bruening, the Doumergue government? No! They fought against similar decrees in France and by their united front struggle secured the overthrow of the Doumergue government and inflicted defeat on the French bourgeoisie. German Social-Democracy formed a bloc with Bruening against the Communists, whereas the working-class Socialists and Communists of France formed a bloc against Doumergue. Herein lies the difference.

In face of fascist violence German Social-Democracy demoralised the masses by calling on them to remain within the bounds of legality, and therefore did not defend bourgeois democracy but handed it over to fascism to tear to bits, while the

French Communists who did not reject Parliamentary methods of struggle, and set extra parliamentary means of struggle to the forefront, therefore defended bourgeois democracy in deeds and not words, and inflicted defeat on fascism. It is for this reason that we have different results in Germany and France.

### III. A Congress of Struggle Against Imperialist War, for Peace, and in Defence of the U.S.S.R.

But the international working-class has grounds of foreign policy for concentrating the entire force of its blow against fascism. All modern big capitalist states, both fascist and bourgeois-democratic, are imperialist states, but it is the fascist governments which operate the most aggressive imperialist policy, and cynically trample on all agreements and introduce the bandit methods applied in their home policy into the sphere of international relations.

The growing menace of a world imperialist war leads to the differentiation of all the forces of classes, peoples and states, into two camps, namely the WAR CAMP and the PEACE CAMP. FASCISM is the CENTRE of the FORCES which are working for war and for speeding up its outbreak; in Europe the most reactionary and aggressive form of fascism is Hitler Germany, and in Asia, military-fascist Japan. Never as at the present time have the masses of the people, workers, peasants, urban toilers and all honest supporters of peace, felt so sharply that fascism means war. Germany is now threatening all its neighbours in its efforts to secure the hegemony in Europe. Japan which has announced the special mission of Japanese imperialism in Asia, is already carrying on war in China. Both Japan and Germany are directing the main force of their aggression against the U.S.S.R. Italy stands armed to the teeth on the borders of Abyssinia, attempting to secure its position in the Mediterranean Sea.

THE U.S.S.R. is the CENTRE of the forces which are fighting against war and its instigators, and is rallying not only the international proletariat around itself, but also other classes as well as the weak nations and peoples which do not want war.

In these conditions the 7th Congress of the Comintern did not adopt the point of view that an EQUAL AND LIKE responsibility falls on all the capitalist states, as regards unloosening imperialist war, but CONCENTRATED ITS BLOW against the fascist instigators of war, namely Germany, Japan and Italy.

But we may be told that this line of the 7th Congress is akin to the position of those who during the first imperialist war, on the basis of blue, white and yellow books, etc., sought for the "main culprit" responsible for beginning the war, whereas

in actual fact all the imperialist participants in that war bore an equal and mutual responsibility for it. It is stupid to compare the situation that existed during the first imperialist war of 1914, with the present situation. Now, the U.S.S.R. exists, a country where Socialism is victorious, and which fundamentally alters the purpose of imperialist contradictions. Now, the division of the globe into the world of Socialism and the world of Capitalism is the main contradiction in the world. The world proletariat now have something to defend namely, their own proletarian state. On the other hand, fascism now exists, which is the most rabid form of bourgeois reaction and imperialist aggression, and which brings enslavement to its own and other peoples, and is directed against the U.S.S.R., the land where socialism is victorious. All this did not exist in the period of the first world imperialist war. How, then, is it possible to establish an abstract "level" in approaching the menace of imperialist war at the present day? Now, THE INTERESTS OF THE DEFENCE OF THE U.S.S.R. determine the basic line of the world proletariat in relation to war, whereas in 1914 the best proletarian revolutionaries stood for the defeat of their own imperialist governments in the war. Now, the position of the struggle against Germany, Japan and Italy, as the instigators of world war, is a really revolutionary position, one in the interests of the world proletariat, in the interests of the preservation of peace among the peoples, whereas in 1914, the theory of the "culprits" served as a cover for the imperialist aims of the bourgeoisie of their respective countries. In the struggle for peace what is now needed is a PROFOUNDLY concrete approach to the position of the various countries corresponding to the regroupings that are taking place in the camp of the capitalist states.

The old criterion with which we approached the relations between the capitalist states in the period of the establishment of Versailles, is now of no use. The question therefore of our attitude towards the League of Nations takes on a new guise.

There can be no doubt that the League of Nations bears the full responsibility for the position which has now arisen in the capitalist world. The League of Nations as the bearer of the Versailles system, fed German fascism and has led to the menace of a new imperialist war.

But now, when the Versailles system is falling to pieces, the rôle of the League of Nations as a weapon of the policy of Versailles has been reduced to a considerable degree. The exit of two of the most aggressive fascist states, namely Germany and Japan, from the League of Nations and the fact that the U.S.S.R. has joined it, all this changes

the character of the League of Nations. The possibility now arises of setting the capitalist states which are members of the League of Nations against the fascist warmongers, the possibility arises of utilising the League of Nations in the interests of the preservation of peace. Just as the masses, by their actions within their respective countries, exert pressure on the parliaments and compel them to adopt various measures, so it is possible for the masses to exert pressure on the League of Nations and so to bring about the preservation of peace in the sphere of international relations.

Making its starting point this concrete approach to the rôle of the various states, the Congress adopted an exceptionally important decision as regards the defence of small peoples and weak states, the independence of which is threatened by fascist aggression. It would be incorrect to place the small peoples and powerful imperialist robber states in the same category on the grounds that both of these are capitalist states. The 7th Congress, therefore, announced the right of the small peoples and the weak states "to defend their national independence" against the onslaught of big imperialist states. The Congress, with all the power at its disposal, stressed the fact that war by the national bourgeoisie of such a country against an imperialist aggressor can take the CHARACTER OF A NATIONAL-LIBERATION WAR, and it would be the duty of the Communists in such a case to actively interfere in the armed struggle for national independence, to be in the front ranks of the struggle, and to assist in every possible way in bringing about the defeat of the imperialist enemy. But then, the Communists must, firstly, strive to transform the war for national independence into A REAL WAR OF THE PEOPLE, after the example of the Chinese Soviets, must aim at arming the entire people so as to carry on the war in a Jacobin and revolutionary fashion.

Secondly, with a view to drawing in the entire toiling people into the widest, most effective and revolutionary defence against the imperialist enemy, the Communists must fight with all their power to EXTEND THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES OF THE MASSES OF THE PEOPLE, TO CONSOLIDATE THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE WORKERS, PEASANTS AND THE ENTIRE LABOURING POPULATION, AND TO ENSURE FULL AND REAL EQUALITY for the national minorities. Unless this condition is fulfilled, victory of a people's war is impossible.

And, thirdly, the Communists will have to call on the entire people to KEEP A SHARP EYE ON THEIR OWN BOURGEOISIE, and to organise the toiling masses against those who are traitors to their native land and people. The Communists must,

in such a war, expose the national bourgeoisie, not because they carry on the war, but because they carry it on with insufficient determination and energy, with worthless capitalist means, striving to come to an agreement with the imperialist enemy out of fear of the masses of the people.

But not only must there not be a "levelling" attitude in our approach to the peculiarities of each separate country; neither must it exist in the tactics of the Communist Parties who are engaged in activity in absolutely varying conditions. The tactics of the Communist Party which is in power, and the tactics of the Communist Parties which are only advancing to the conquest of power by the working-class, may not be identical on all occasions, whereas in 1914, when the U.S.S.R. did not yet exist, defeatism was the tactics obligatory on proletarian revolutionaries in all countries which took part in the war.

In his report at the 7th Congress, Comrade Ercoli showed that the position of the Communist Party which is in power in the land of proletarian dictatorship, and the position of the Communists who are organising the working-class for the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, may not coincide.

Call to mind, comrades, how the bourgeoisie recently, followed by the Socialists, attempted to find "contradictions" between the declaration made by Comrade Stalin in his talk with Laval and the position of the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries, especially of the French Communist Party, which voted against war credits and against the military measures of their "own" bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie and the Socialist press falsely asserted that the declaration made by Comrade Stalin which serves the cause of peace between the peoples, would not be understood by the French proletariat.

How did the toiling masses, and primarily the workers of France, reply to this assertion. Did they understand that the policy of peace pursued by the U.S.S.R. and directed against fascist aggression, serves the interests of all peoples, the interests of strengthening the position of the proletariat? Ten days after the publication of the news of the conversation between Comrade Stalin and Laval municipal council elections took place in Paris and its suburbs. The French working-class and the wide masses of the toilers replied by so increasing the number of votes cast for the Communists as to exceed all expectations. By their votes the toilers of France stressed the point that they fully endorsed the policy of peace as carried through by the proletariat of the Soviet Union, and perfectly well understood the difference between the position of the Soviet Union and the position of the French Communists.

And what is the position of the French Communists?

The French proletariat are vitally interested in the strictest observation of the Franco-Soviet agreement, which serves the interests of general peace, against the fascist warmongers. But the French proletariat and the French Communists concluded no agreements whatsoever with their "own" bourgeoisie. The French bourgeoisie may attempt at any moment to advance their army against the working-class. This army serves not only to defend France against German fascism, but also serves the imperialist aims of suppressing the colonial peoples. Among the French officers there are a number of fascist elements who are dreaming of a fascist coup d'état in the country, and who are striving to bring about an agreement with German fascism at the expense of the people of France. Therefore, the French Communists declare that they will vote against war credits, against all measures of a military character carried through by the French bourgeoisie. At the same time they expose and will insistently continue to expose to the wide masses the zig-zags and waverings of the bourgeois politicians of the fascist and semi-fascist brand who attempt to come to an agreement with German Fascism.

Here, comrades, is another example, which shows the special position occupied by the Party which is in power, a position which if not understood, can lead one to make a whole number of mistakes when working out the tactical line. I refer to the slogan of the boycott of Italy in connection with the Italo-Abyssinian conflict.

The Second and Amsterdam Internationals advance the demand to the League of Nations that sanctions should be applied to fascist Italy as the violator of peace. But can they guarantee that all the states belonging to the League of Nations will apply such sanctions to Italy in a REALLY COLLECTIVE FASHION, really conscientiously and without deceit? Of course not. But all the reactionary elements of Social Democracy demand of the proletarian state that it should apply sanctions first and foremost.

But imagine that the bourgeois states do not operate such sanctions, and that the U.S.S.R. will be the only state to follow the advice of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals. Who would gain from this? The capitalist states which would continue to maintain relations with Italy. Who would lose from this? Not Italy, but the U.S.S.R. In actual fact, the boycott would be turned not against fascist Italy but against the Socialist Land of the Soviets. Such a measure as the closing of the Suez Canal demanded by the Second and Amsterdam International follows

the line of the interests of British imperialism, which is displaying a very suspicious love for the "independence" of Abyssinia. But the Communists have no desire to drag at the tail of the policy of Italian fascism nor to be in tow to British imperialism. Will it not be better, therefore, if the Communists transfer the main weight of their activity to the independent action of the masses under the slogan of "Not a single train, nor a single ship, for the support of the Italian war in Abyssinia," without of course, refusing to exert pressure on the League of Nations as a subordinate means of struggle.

This is the position as regards differences in tactics.

The new situation demands that the question of the PERSPECTIVES OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE TOILERS AGAINST WAR be raised in a somewhat different fashion. The old stock phrases which taste of pure propaganda are of no use in this case. It is an undoubted fact that as long as CAPITALISM EXISTS, WARS ARE INEVITABLE, but it is also indubitable that we cannot satisfy ourselves with this statement of an absolutely correct thesis, and fold our arms in a fatalistic fashion and wait for a new imperialist war. We have greater possibilities now for carrying on a successful struggle against imperialist wars than on the eve of 1914. There now exists a state of the proletarian dictatorship which stands on guard in defence of peace and which is growing stronger with every day that passes. This state now has a powerful Red Army, as a weapon of the struggle of the international proletariat for peace. There now exists a world party of the working-class in the shape of the Communist International, which will not give way in face of war as the pre-war International did. Following the experience of the war of 1914-1918, a specially profound hatred of war is now developing and extending among the masses of the workers, in a situation where the war danger is growing. The world proletariat now base themselves on the U.S.S.R. and make use of the contradictions between the capitalist states, and it is thus possible for them to establish a people's front on a very wide scale against war, including in this front not only other classes but also weak nations and peoples, the independence of which is threatened by war. Now, thanks to the peace policy of the Soviet Union, the international proletariat are able, in the struggle against war, to make use of the position adopted by those big states which for various reasons do not desire or are afraid of war. And all this demands of the Communist Parties that they not only conduct propaganda against war but also a real anti-war policy, the most important condition of which is the mustering of all the forces

of the working-class. Unless such a mustering of the forces of the proletariat takes place, it will be impossible to carry on a successful struggle against war or to carry on a struggle against fascism which is now kindling the flames of war.

#### **IV. A Congress of Struggle for the Unity of the Working Class Movement.**

##### **A. The United Front.**

That is why our Congress was a Congress of struggle for the UNITY of the international working-class movement, for UNITY OF ACTION, for TRADE UNION UNITY and for POLITICAL UNITY. Let us first consider questions of the united front. The essence of the united front lies not in formal agreement between two parties (Communist and social-democratic) which suspend the struggle against each other, during the period of the operation of the agreement concluded in order to divide up "spheres of influence" in the labour movement. There, so to speak, is your sector — here is mine,—let us not interfere with each other so that we may live quietly, in a neighbourly fashion without any commotion and offence. This is how the question can be placed by petty-bourgeois people, who treasure their own quiet and unperturbed lives, but not by people who serve the interests of the working-class. Agreements and pacts are secondary matters. The main point about the united front is joint action by the workers of various political trends against capital, the common enemy, ACTION PRESUPPOSING THE TRANSITION OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC WORKERS TO THE POSITION OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE. Without such a basis, without the CLASS STRUGGLE, there can be no united front. And, in as much as great masses of workers in the capitalist countries are organised in the social-democratic parties and the reformist trade unions, and, since these masses are bound by the party and trade union discipline of these organisations, agreements with the latter are consequently necessary to unleash the struggle of the masses through the united front against the offensive of capital, fascism and war.

Neither must we imagine that the main thing in the united front is the exposure of the reactionary elements of social-democracy. Exposure of those elements who disrupt the struggle of the working-class is necessary, because it is impossible to carry on a successful struggle against capital unless resistance is offered to the strikebreakers who defend the interests of capital. But the exposure of such elements is not an end in itself,—it is subordinate to the main aim of the united front, namely, the mobilisation of the working masses for the struggle against fascism.

The united front movement in France has pro-

vided an example of what in actual fact, the united front should be.

You remember, comrades, how this movement unfolded. It began with the modest anti-war movement organised by the late Barbusse, a movement which developed intense activity after the advent to power of Hitler in Germany. The mad orgy of the fascist régime in Germany, which has clearly shown WHAT fascism has in store for the working masses, the revival of activity by the French fascists encouraged by the easy victory of fascism in Germany, the feverish armament of German fascism which increased the alarm of the toiling masses of France as to the possibility of war, the growing gravitation of the latter towards the U.S.S.R., which became especially intensified after the change in the anti-Soviet line of the French Government—all this created favourable ground for the development of the anti-fascist movement. On February 6, 1934, the French fascists, whose ranks were as yet insufficiently consolidated, decided to test their forces and to secure the overthrow of the parliamentary government. To this end French fascism made use of the sensational case of the adventurer Stavisky, and came out into the streets under the slogan of the struggle against parliamentary corruption. A truly curious spectacle. The bearers of the most corrupt movement financed by the big capitalist magnates coming forward as the guardians of stern incorruptibility!

The radical Daladier government called the police and gendarmes to its defence and to protect parliament which the fascists threatened to destroy. The result was several killed and several dozen wounded. All the forces of reaction raised the cry that "They are shooting at the people!" Workers, you see, may be shot at, but it is forbidden to touch the white-guard scum who destroy the workers' districts.

At the first moments, there was brief confusion in the ranks of the Communist Party. The fascist slogan "Down with the Daladier Government—the government of murderers!" did not at first meet with sufficient resistance from the Communist Party. In some places the Communists echoed the fascist cry for the overthrow of the Daladier government. But the Communist Party quickly got its bearings in the situation, and began to criticise Daladier not for having fired, but for NOT HAVING FIRED ENOUGH, for having CAPITULATED before the pressure of the fascist mob, for having burst into tears and resigned after he had learned of the clash between the police and gendarmes, on the one hand, and the fascist conspirators on the other hand. But what can we do—such is the "heroism" of the present descendants of Mirabeau

in defence of the bourgeois republic, who fear taking decisive action more than they fear fire.

Had the working-class not been wide awake, this republic would have been betrayed, and betrayed at the hands of the republicans. The working-class felt that it would depend upon its own determination in the struggle against fascism how determined the republican elements of the French population would be. On the 9th of February, at the call of the Communist Party, the Paris proletariat arranged a counter-demonstration against fascism. In spite of the fact that the Socialist Party called upon its members not to participate in this Communist demonstration, the Socialist workers were on the Square of the Republic fighting valiantly along with the Communists against the police. Without pacts and agreements, in the situation red hot with political passions, the workers of Paris realised the united front in spite of the resistance of the Socialist leaders.

The sentiments of the workers throughout the rest of France were such that the leaders of the Socialist Party and reformist trade unions understood the necessity of giving them an outlet, otherwise the indignation of the masses would burst over their heads. For this reason the reformist Confederation of Labour called a general strike of February 12th, and the Unitarian Confederation of Labour, which was preparing a political strike for February 7th, in its turn called on the workers to participate in the general strike. Seldom has any strike in the history of the working-class movement taken place in such an atmosphere of sympathy from the widest mass of the population as did the strike of February 12th, which covered about four million people and began at the same time as the armed struggle of the Austrian workers. Revolution was in the air. The bourgeoisie felt that the rope had tightened to the breaking point and that the working class would not permit fascism to come to power without struggle.

The February days were a TURNING POINT in the working class movement of Europe, one which determined the transition from the OFFENSIVE OF FASCISM TO THE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE OF THE PROLETARIAT. They undermined the self-confidence of the bourgeoisie and raised the confidence of the proletariat in their own forces. They marked a sharp turn of the socialist and reformist workers toward the position of the class struggle. In the fire of struggle they laid the basis for that unity of action which could not be broken down by any devices. At the Congress of the Socialist Party in Toulouse, in the spring of 1934, almost a third of the delegates voted for sending a delegation to Moscow to engage in negotiations regarding the establishment of unity of action. In

actual fact, this vote by the upper section of the socialist leaders bears witness to the fact that BELOW, THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE MASSES OF THE RANK AND FILE SOCIALISTS are for the united front.

Nevertheless, while the leaders of the socialists could no longer break down the movement of the united front, they still could, by their resistance, slow it down. It is well-known that on great fighting days the socialist workers break party "discipline" with more ease than in the period of a certain lull following on heated battles. For this reason the Communist Party strove to secure the conclusion of a formal pact with the leaders of the Socialist Party on united action. The right section of the Socialist Party manoeuvred by setting the slogan of the organisational fusion of both parties against the slogan of the united fighting front. The Communist Party exposed this very crude manoeuvre of the opponents of the united front by putting forward concrete points as the platform for organisational unification, which subsequently became the decisions of the Seventh Congress on the question of the political unity of the working class movement. On the 27th of July, 1934, a pact regarding unity of action between both parties was signed. Did this pact give positive results? Without a doubt. The working class and toilers of France have gained from unity of action, while the bourgeoisie and fascism have lost.

Unity of action has aided the French proletariat to beat back the first attacks of fascism in France, to liquidate the Doumergue government the government preparing a fascist dictatorship, and to weaken the onslaught of capital on the standard of living of the masses, particularly of the civil servants and workers employed in governmental and municipal enterprises. The establishment of the united fighting front served as the starting point for a tremendous movement in favour of trade union unity, which led to the unification of a whole series of trade union organisations, particularly among railroad workers, and which prepared the unification of both confederations in a single confederation of labour. The united front was the basis of the people's fighting front against the offensive of capital, fascism and war, a people's front, which has succeeded in becoming the centre of gravity of the anti-fascist forces among the other classes of the population. The French proletariat, by their experiences, have enriched the entire world working class movement, showing it that TIMELY action (as distinct from Austria and Spain) against fascism enables unnecessary sacrifice and bitter defeat to be avoided. And, finally, the united front movement in France has placed the question of unity

on the order of the day of the entire international working class movement. International social-democracy can no longer wriggle out of the united front demanded by million of workers all over the world.

### **B. Trade Union Unity.**

The reformists cannot now wriggle out of the question of trade union unity which has become the DECISIVE TASK facing the entire international working class following the Seventh Congress. And this is not a task of the FAR FUTURE, BUT A BURNING QUESTION OF TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW; the practical solution of which will show how far we are able to fight for the carrying into life of the new tactical turn indicated by the Seventh Congress.

The solution of this task demands of us all the more persistence, energy and skilful approach, since in this field, in the field of the unification of the trade unions, the difficulties are greater and our successes as yet by far smaller, than in the realisation of the united front in the political field. And this is to be explained by the fact that while in comparison with the social-democratic party—our parties, in the majority of cases, represent a sufficiently considerable force, capable of exerting great pressure on social-democracy—in the trade union field we are weak. We have no large red unions in the capitalist countries of Europe, except in France and Czecho-Slovakia. But even in these countries the relative strength of the red unions, as compared with the reformist trade unions, is less advantageous for us than the relation of forces between the Communist and Socialist Parties. However, thanks to the fact that the red trade unions in France were stronger than in other capitalist countries, they succeeded in breaking down the resistance of the reformist Confederation of Labour and in moving far ahead in the matter of the unification of the trade unions. But we cannot say this of the other countries, where the Communists are now paying for sectarian mistakes committed over a series of years. We are lagging in respect to trade union unity, in carrying out the united front in the economic field, because we did not work as we should have done in the reformist trade unions.

Another reason why the united front is developing more slowly in the trade union movement is that it is easier to develop political struggles under the conditions of the economic crises, when there is an enormous unemployed army, than to organise strikes.

All these reasons have made it possible hitherto for the reformist trade union leaders to hold back the more rapid development of the united front in the sphere of the trade union movement. But this circumstance in its turn has been a brake on

the further development and organisational consolidation of united front activity. The international united fighting front would have made enormous strides forward if it had been possible to bring about trade union unity.

The opponents of trade union unity are to-day trying to base their position, a position disastrous to the working class, on the alleged fact that such unity would not add much to the forces already in the Amsterdam International. These people usually advance the following argument: the Amsterdam organisation has about nine million members and the Profintern in the capitalist countries has a little more than one million, and this would allegedly give a total number of ten millions.

But such a way of placing the question is absolutely incorrect; it is purely mechanical. It reduces a problem of tremendous class significance to an empty arithmetical game. But, comrades, the unity of the working class movement is not arithmetic, it is a more complicated matter. Yes, and reformist arithmetic substitutes subtraction for addition. For some reason it "subtracts" the nineteen-and-a-half million members of the Profintern covered by the Soviet trade unions from the total sum. These nineteen-and-a-half millions represent not only themselves, but a country where socialism is victorious, a country where the proletariat is in power, and which utilises this power in defence of the world proletariat. Just think, what a force the world labour movement would represent if, in place of the reformist subtraction, we were to occupy ourselves with the revolutionary addition of all the forces of the organised working class. If we were to end the "division" which the bourgeoisie have succeeded in bringing about in the ranks of the organised working class movement, we would "multiply" the forces of this movement. And we would multiply these forces because we would approach the unity of the working class movement, not in an arithmetical, but in a political fashion.

The revolutionary trade unions would bring new life into the Amsterdam trade union movement, would activate it. The abolition of the split in the ranks of the trade unions would enable the working class to come out against the capitalist offensive as a single, consolidated, disciplined army; the capitalists would not be able to play on the split among the workers and utilise one section of the working class against another, and, under correct guidance, a single trade union movement would in most cases, insure a successful outcome of the struggle for the immediate demands of the workers. The mere fact of unification would give rise to great enthusiasm, not

only among the organised, but also among the unorganised masses of workers, and this, together with the practical and tangible gains achieved in the struggle for immediate demands would, as a result of unification, entail a mighty influx of the very wide masses of unorganised workers into the unified trade unions. The French experience has already shown that in those places where trade union unity had been actually achieved, as, for example, among the railroad men, the urge of the unorganised workers for the trade unions immediately grows, while the preservation of the split in the trade union movement not only hinders the development of united action, but also recruitment into the trade unions.

In the event of the establishment of a single trade union centre on the basis of the fusion of the Amsterdam International with the Profintern, numerous autonomous, anarcho-sindicalist and Christian trade unions would be compelled to co-ordinate their action with the large united trade unions, and in many cases would not even be able to reject the establishment of trade union unity. The latter point is particularly important for Spain, where there is an important anarcho-sindicalist movement, and for Czecho-Slovakia, where several trade union centres exist.

The adherents of pure arithmetic further do not see beyond the extent to which unity would raise the authority of the trade unions in the eyes of the unorganised workers, the extent to which it would increase the confidence of the working class in their organisations. Such a rise in the level of organisation of the working class, such an increase in its fighting spirit, in its faith in its own forces, and such co-ordination in its struggle against capital would serve as a mighty barrier against fascism which is striving by all means—terror, bribery, social-demagogy and slander to sow confusion in the ranks of the workers and to demoralise them.

We do not put forward any conditions for the realisation of trade union unity. We only wish the unified trade unions to actually defend the economic interests of the working class, that the trade unions should not be transformed into organs of collaboration with the bourgeoisie contrary to their class purpose. And if this is adopted, then the question of trade union democracy will be automatically solved. Why is there no such democracy in the reformist trade unions? Why is the will of the masses of the rank and file in the trade unions crudely falsified? Why are individual members and entire organisations most devoted to the cause of the working class expelled? Because the reactionary reformist union leaders carry out a policy that corresponds neither to the class interests of the workers nor

to their desires. If this policy is changed, if the trade unions become organs of class struggle, no one will need to suppress the will of the masses nor to expel the most active adherents of the class struggle. And we, Communists, say openly and directly to millions of workers that **UNLESS THE BLOC WITH THE BOURGEOISIE IS BROKEN** there can be neither **STABLE TRADE UNION UNITY**, NOR **TRADE UNION DEMOCRACY**.

### **C. A Single Party.**

BUT WHILE A MERE BREAK OF THE BLOC WITH THE BOURGEOISIE is sufficient for the realisation and stabilisation of trade union unity, this is still not sufficient for political unity, which is a higher form of unity than the unification of the trade unions. The consolidation of the forces of the working class into a single political party is a much more difficult and complex task than the realisation of trade union unity. It arouses great doubts in our own ranks. What! Unite with the social-democrats!—ask some comrades perplexedly, but why, then, did we carry on an irreconcilable struggle against social-democracy throughout the entire post-war period? What was the need for all the tremendous amount of work done to bolshevise the Sections of the Comintern, when we fought in our own ranks against opportunist deviations, that is, against the slightest deviations of the unstable elements in the direction of the social-democracy? Are we not reducing to nought the whole of our political struggle of the past? No, comrades, we are not.

Had we not carried on the struggle during the entire post-war period against social-democracy, against all sorts of deviations in our ranks, for the bolshevisation of the Communist Parties, then we would never be able to set the question of a single party as we are doing at the present time. By our struggle against all forms of opportunism we have steered the parties and established the basic Communist framework, thanks to which we can now courageously take into our hands the initiative of establishing a single working class political party.

In 1920, when Lenin wrote the twenty-one points (conditions), we could not approach the question of working class political unity as we do now. Why? Because at that time what we had in the capitalist countries were rather propagandist Communist groups, than Parties tested in struggle and enriched by Bolshevik Party experience. Recall the situation in one of the largest and most advanced of our sections of that period—the German Communist Party in 1920, after the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, which was torn by internal disagreements with the Left, with national-bolshevism, and with



the rights of the Paul Levy type, and with its huge ballast of social-democratic remnants and waverings. Or let us call to mind the example of Hungary in 1919; as a result of the fusion of the young Communist Party of Hungary, politically still untempered and organisationally weak, with the big social-democratic organisation, the Communist vanguard was dissolved in the petty-bourgeois elements of the social-democratic organisation, and this was one of the most important reasons for the collapse of Soviet Power in Hungary.

Now, as a result of the many years of struggle for the bolshevisation of our Parties which have achieved iron unity in their ranks, have been tested in the fire of great class struggles in many countries, and have undergone the test of underground activity, we can, in the given concrete situation, raise the question of the establishment of a single revolutionary party of the proletariat, IN A NEW WAY.

And such a statement of the question of the political unity of the working class movement is without fault from the point of view of PRINCIPLE. We Communists are the party of the proletarian dictatorship. But unless the forces of the working class are united in the economic as well as in the political field, it is impossible to achieve the victory of the proletariat. The split in the ranks of the working class movement only plays into the hands of the bourgeoisie and enables the latter to prevent the victory of the proletariat. On the other hand, by the very fact of carrying on the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, the Communists prepare the complete realisation of proletarian unity, because it is only under the dictatorship of the proletariat that the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat will be liquidated and all possibilities of splitting the working class will disappear. It is for this reason that the Communists are the real bearers of the unity of the working class movement.

But can a party which stands for class collaboration with the bourgeoisie say the same thing about itself? By class collaboration with the bourgeoisie such a party splits the proletariat, thereby strengthening the position of the bourgeoisie, facilitating the defeat of the proletariat, and disrupting the victory of the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. Anyone who, like these reactionary elements of social-democracy, continues now as well to stand for class collaboration, cannot fail to be an enemy of the unity of the working class movement, a conscious splitter of its ranks.

That is why only we, Communists, have the right to raise the banner of political unity of the

working class movement, the banner of a single revolutionary party of the proletariat.

But we, Communists, are not for unity of any kind, are not for unity at any price. Of what use is the fact that the Labour Party is "united," if this "unity" is utilised by the reactionary leaders of this party to support the policy of the bourgeoisie? Prior to the February events, Austrian social-democracy also prided itself on its "unity," but this unity did not stand the test in the first serious class battle. Such formal unity is to the detriment of the proletariat, it only hinders the transition of the social-democratic workers to the position of the class struggle out of fear of undermining such ostentatious unity. We Communists are for organised political unity on the basis of principle. We stand for such a united party of the working class as unswervingly serves its interests, the interests of the struggle for the PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION.

For this reason the Seventh Congress declared that the creation of such a Party is possible only under the condition of

"COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE FROM THE BOURGEOISIE AND THE COMPLETE SEVERANCE OF THE BLOC BETWEEN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND THE BOURGEOISIE, on condition that UNITY OF ACTION be first brought about, that the necessity of the REVOLUTIONARY OVERTHROW OF THE RULE OF THE BOURGEOISIE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE FORM OF SOVIETS be recognised, the support of one's own bourgeoisie in IMPERIALIST WAR be rejected, and that the party be constructed on the basis of DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM which ensures unity of will and action and has been tested by the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks." (From the Resolution on the Report of Comrade Dimitrov).

If we ponder over the conditions put forward by the Seventh Congress for the political unification of the workers' parties, then it becomes clear that we are faced with the basic contents of the programme of the Communist International. We do not advance the demand for the formal recognition of the programme of the Comintern as a condition for unity because we want by making a correct approach to the social-democratic workers to render it easier for them to outlive many social-democratic prejudices, at the same time hindering the counter-agitation of the reactionary elements of social-democracy against the slogan of a single party. We do not add to the conditions advanced by the Seventh Congress the demand that they should express their attitude toward the Soviet Union, because a sincere recognition of the "dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of the Soviets" also determines their position and relation towards the U.S.S.R. We do not put forward the demand for the struggle against the colonial policy of their own bourgeoisie because "the rejection of support for their own bourgeoisie in

imperialist war" presupposes, as something self-understood, the struggle of the Party against the most arrogant and cynical form of imperialist policy, namely, colonial policy.

We are frequently asked why we now put forward five conditions of unity and not 21, as at the time of the Second Congress of the Comintern. We are doing this because the five conditions advanced by the Seventh Congress cover the 21 conditions of the Second Congress, because the Comintern is not now threatened by the danger of being overwhelmed by centrism, because the working class has undergone the post-war experience of the policy not only of Right German social-democracy, but also of "Left" Austrian social-democracy, because there is not as yet an "influx" of social-democratic leaders into the ranks of the Comintern, but there are only indications so far of an influx of social-democratic workers to Communism, because our five conditions fully correspond to the thoughts and feelings of these workers.

Will it be bad if a discussion develops within the ranks of social-democratic parties on the basis of the five conditions formulated by the Congress?

No, it will not be bad.

Will it be bad if hundreds of thousands of social-democratic workers will declare that the programme of Party unity as advanced by the Communist International is the programme for which our class brothers have suffered in Germany, Austria and Spain, in battles and defeats, and for which we are ready to struggle? No, it will be good.

Do the five conditions correspond to the interests of the very widest strata of the proletariat? Yes, they do, and for this reason: they will serve as a political platform for these strata in their struggle against the reactionary section of social-democracy, which resists all forms of unity—unity in action, trade union unity and political unity. Does this way of presenting the question regarding a single party give a perspective to the united front movement? Yes, it does. Without such a perspective the united front movement is as though without a rudder, because the Marxist-Leninists have always connected every movement for partial demands with our final aims. And the inter-relation between the united front and a single party reflects the inter-relationships between partial demands and the final aim.

Two staffs in the movement are now inevitable,

but this is a temporary situation conditioned by the split in the working class. The entire experience of the world working class and its struggles indicates that **UNITY OF LEADERSHIP IS AN ELEMENTARY CONDITION FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE STRUGGLE**. For this reason, by carrying on the struggle to the utmost for the development of the united front, the Communists will thereby prepare the conditions for all forms of unity of the working-class movement, conditions for the creation of a single staff of this movement in the shape of a single Party. The apprehension expressed by our comrades in regard to unity with the social-democrats is quite justifiable and has a basis, but frequently the comrades who express these apprehensions make an undialectical approach both to social-democracy as well as to the question of a single party. They take social-democracy as it was yesterday, or as it is to-day, without taking account of the processes of revolutionisation which are taking place among the masses of the members of the social-democratic parties; they regard unification itself from the point of view of a "fixed" relation of forces between the Communists and social-democrats in the working-class movement. And this, comrades, is incorrect.

We must not view the question of a single party from the point of view of the position of yesterday or even of to-day in the Labour movement. We must take the formation of a single party as a living dialectical process of struggle. We shall unite not with the social-democrats of yesterday, nor with people who are still floundering and wavering to-day, but with those class brothers of ours, who, on the experience of the struggle cemented together by bloodshed alongside the Communists, will become convinced of our correctness and of the correctness of the programme and tactics of the Communist International. The slogan of a single party is not a slogan of a combination between those who are at the top, it is a slogan of the struggle of the masses, of struggle which is stubborn, and hard, and which remoulds people and resurrects them in a revolutionary manner. We place this slogan before the masses because the Communist movement has reached maturity, because it can now set itself the task not only of Bolshevising the Communist Parties, but of **BOLSHEVISING** the working class. Herein lies the political significance of the slogan of a single Party.

*(To be concluded)*

# THE MARGATE AND BRIGHTON CONGRESSES

By HARRY POLLITT.

THE Trades Union Congress which was held at Margate in September, and the Labour Party Conference held at Brighton in the first week of October, can be said to have conducted their deliberations in a "threshold of war" situation, and the President of the Trades Union Congress was correct when he stated in his opening remarks, "Congress meets once more under the shadow of war."

These were the last annual conferences of the most important mass organisations of the British workers to be held before the General Election. But the main aim that both these conferences should have had in mind — that of preparing and organising the defeat of the National Government at the election and the return of a Labour Government—was completely lost sight of. Those who spoke at the conference were occupied by the Abyssinian situation practically to the exclusion of all else. And it was not seen that the carrying out of a correct policy in the defence of Abyssinia and the preservation of the peace of the world requires that it be allied with the fight to achieve the workers' demands against the employers and the National Government, and could have become the basis FOR DEVELOPING A POWERFUL MASS MOVEMENT AGAINST THE LINE OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AS A WHOLE.

In neither of these conferences did this character of the workers' struggle receive any attention. The consequence was that whilst there was undoubtedly anti-war feeling in both conferences, many delegates were profoundly disquieted at the thought that their leaders were putting forward a policy in regard to Abyssinia that completely tied up the Labour Movement behind the National Government. And these fears were not unfounded. Let us call to mind the active participation of the Labour leaders in the May Jubilee celebration of the accession of King George, a celebration which was part of the National Government's political preparations for war, and through which it succeeded to a very considerable extent in improving its political position throughout the country.

Also the fact that the *Daily Herald* day after day gave fulsome praise of the National Government's policy at Geneva, strengthening the general illusion that the National Government desired to create of itself as the defender of peace and the obstacle to Italian fascist aggression in Abyssinia. Many examples could be given from the line of the *Daily Herald* and from speeches of Labour leaders in connection with this. Perhaps the best

to support the point we are making—and it is in no way an isolated instance—is the editorial from the *Daily Herald* of September 12th, headed "The Voice of Britain," which dealt specifically with Sir Samuel Hoare's Geneva speech:

"Irrespective of Party, irrespective of domestic conflicts, the overwhelming majority of the Nation is firmly behind the Government in the stand it has now taken on this issue."

This editorial did not vary from the line that ran through the speech of the President of the Trades Union Congress in dealing with the Abyssinian situation, or in the opening and concluding remarks of Sir Walter Citrine, the Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, for in neither of these speeches could one word be found criticising the National Government or ascribing to it the responsibility for the present international situation; no attempt was made to show how it has acted as a pacemaker for war, especially in its line of collaboration with Hitler Germany and the signing of the German Naval Agreement. Both speeches gave a lead for the complete identification of the Trade Union movement with National Government policy, no differentiation was made, no independent plans outlined; the line was imperialist and not the slightest indication was given of the active policy THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT COULD PURSUE in the fight to preserve the peace of the world.

The main point of the declaration on Abyssinia that the Margate Trades Union Congress adopted reads as follows:

"United and determined in its opposition to the policy of imperialist aggression, this Congress calls upon the British Government in co-operation with other nations represented at the Council and Assembly of the League to use all the necessary measures provided by the Covenant to prevent Italy's unjust and rapacious attack upon the territory of a fellow member of the League. The Congress pledges its full support of any action consistent with the principles and statutes of the League to restrain the Italian Government and to uphold the authority of the League in enforcing peace." (Trade Union Congress, 67th Annual Report, page 346.)

Readers, in carefully noting the Congress declaration will not be slow in observing the following: there is not a single suggestion of working-class action that could be carried out by engineers, railwaymen, dockers and seamen; no proposals are made for international working-class action; no suggestions are there that the two Trade Union Internationals should be brought together in a joint united international Trade Union campaign in which the whole forces of the organised Trade Unionists of the world could be mobilised to pre-

serve peace. Every word in this declaration is directed towards bringing the Labour Movement behind the policy of the National Government and all that its policy represents at the present time.

It is also necessary to draw particular attention to the last paragraph of the declaration. Instead of clearly defining where the Trades Union Congress stood on the vital question of the independence of the colonial countries, it simply falls behind all the current imperialist propaganda that is now being served up to help in the defeat of the colonial masses, which says in effect that the imperialist robbers are anxious by "amicable means" to arrive at a more equitable distribution of the available resources of the world. This declaration, and especially Mr. Bevin's speech, opens out a perspective of a kind of round table conference, where there will be carved up and parcelled out by the Big Powers the raw materials and resources of colonial countries without any suggestion or regard to the desires of the peoples of these countries. It is a suggestion with which the working-class movement has absolutely nothing in common, and the negation of everything associated with the struggle against imperialism.

The policy of the General Council, as expounded by Sir Walter Citrine, did not go through without challenge. The Left wing delegates brought out many important points and criticisms and made practical proposals which, whilst receiving good support from the delegates, were defeated by the operation of the bloc vote.

After much discussion the Declaration was adopted: 2,962,000 voted for, 177,000 voted against.

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It is important to note during the debates at the Trade Union Congress and the Brighton Labour Party Conference, the extent to which the hatred of fascism was revealed, especially on the part of the Trade Unionists.

Trade Union speaker after speaker mounted the rostrum, both at Margate and at Brighton, and in passionate tones denounced the destruction of the Trade Union movement of Germany and the murder of Trade Union leaders.

We have to note the existence of this deep feeling and more seriously endeavour to organise it in a positive anti-fascist direction. Unless this is done it can be diverted to serve the imperialist aims of the National Government, a danger against which the Communist Party is continually fighting, and not without effect, as subsequent developments within the Labour movement have shown.

The Margate decision on Sanctions aroused a tremendous controversy throughout the working-class movement, and the divergence of views

became clearer by the time the Labour Party Conference opened in Brighton. It has been interesting to observe the differences in the speeches of certain Labour leaders such as Mr. Morrison and Mr. Greenwood as compared with those of Citrine and Bevin in the intervening period between Margate and Brighton. The disquiet that was manifesting itself amongst the organised workers at the fear of being tied behind the National Government, compelled a certain change in the speeches of these leaders. Criticism of the National Government crept in, and Mr. Morrison in particular began to develop more and more the point of utilising the present situation as a medium for developing the struggle for the return of a Labour Government at the coming General Election.

We can say that the effect of the propaganda of the line of the Communist Party in the columns of the *Daily Worker*, the mass sales of our pamphlets, and at the meetings that the Party organised, succeeded in arousing the mass pressure which had its effect upon the Labour Party. The masses will never forget what this National Government has meant to them, how it has worsened their conditions, imposed the Means Test on them, brought into operation the new Unemployment Act, made big cuts in their wages, led the armaments race, developed its pro-Hitler policy. The workers hate and distrust the National Government. That is why they are fearful about supporting any policy that seems in the slightest way to indicate support for the National Government, and whilst their anti-fascist feeling is clearly reflected in the huge vote that has been given for sanctions against the war of Italian fascism in Abyssinia, it would be the most profound political error to suppose that those who were voting in this manner were in any way identifying themselves with any aspect of National Government policy either at home or abroad.

The debate at the Margate Trades Union Congress brought home to the Communist Party the imperative necessity of doing everything possible to get its line thoroughly understood amongst the mass of the workers in order that influence might be brought to bear upon the Labour Party Conference which was to meet four weeks after the Trades Union Congress and to ensure that a clearer class line could be adopted at Brighton.

The Communist Party pointed out that the National Government is an imperialist Government taking a line in regard to Abyssinia that is taken only because vital British imperialist interests are at stake; that the National Government — because of its interests in the Sudan, Egypt, India — opposes the aggressive policy of Mussolini in regard to Abyssinia because it would, if he was

allowed to carry it through, be a menace to the vital interests of British imperialism; that the attitude of the National Government in the League of Nations as outlined in Sir Samuel Hoare's speech, is absolutely different from the attitude it took when Japan was doing the same thing in Manchuria that Italian Fascism wants to do in Abyssinia. (Even while Hoare was mouthing protestations of peace, British bombing planes were murdering the peoples on the North-West frontier of India.)

The Communist Party declared that the resistance of the people of Abyssinia to Italian Fascism is absolutely justified, and its character is that of a war of liberation, in which it is the duty of the peoples of the world who hate and fear the advance of fascism and war to give them every assistance.

The Communist Party has explained that it was insufficiently realised that combined working-class direct action for the preservation of peace and bringing about unity of all forms of action and resistance against Mussolini would result in two very important political facts:

1. The strengthening of the people of Abyssinia and the colonial peoples all over the world in the fight against imperialism, and—
2. The strengthening of the fight against fascism in Italy and Germany, BECAUSE OF THE KNOWLEDGE THE PEOPLES OF THESE TWO COUNTRIES WILL HAVE OF THE MEASURES THE REST OF THE WORLD IS WILLING TO TAKE TO PREVENT THE ADVANCE OF FASCISM.

We can only successfully carry through such a line when it is accompanied by the most ruthless exposure of the policy of our own Government. Therefore, the Communist Party advanced in this situation the following demands:

1. Stoppage of all war materials to Italy and refusal to load or unload any Italian ships at present in British ports.
2. No loans to Italy.
3. Removal of the ban on export of arms to the Abyssinian people in order that they can adequately defend themselves against imperialist aggression.
4. Closing Suez Canal to all Italian transport.
5. Raising funds to assist the anti-fascists in Italy itself.
6. Demand for the surrender of all British mandates and British imperialist interests in Abyssinia.
7. The British Council of Labour to convene an emergency International conference of all working-class organisations to mobilise world-wide support to defend the independence of Abyssinia.
8. Immediate organisation of a nation-wide campaign of meetings, demonstrations, mass deputations to the Italian Embassy and Consulates throughout Britain, demanding the withdrawal of all Italian armed forces from Abyssinian territory.
9. Mass distribution of leaflets, especially among the workers in war and transport industries and among the armed forces, calling for solidarity with the Abyssinian people.
10. Election of Workers' Control Commission in the war industries to supervise all war material contracts.
11. Support for the policy of sanctions as a means

of preventing Italian fascists going to war against the Abyssinian people, and redoubled efforts to organise the defeat of the National Government and secure the return of a Labour Government on the basis of united struggle for the preservation of peace, the defence of democracy, and the improvement of the conditions of the workers.

We did not set our main task of organising energetic action by the working class on an international scale, and of stopping the production and transport of arms for Italy, etc., against the subordinate slogans demanding that the government and the League of Nations adopt collective economic and financial sanctions against Italian fascism, in defence of the Abyssinian people. The viewpoint of the Communists on this question is absolutely clear. "It is true that imperialist war is the product of capitalism, that only the overthrow of capitalism will put an end to all wars, but it is also true that by their militant actions, the toiling masses can prevent imperialist war" (Dimitrov). Basing themselves upon the peace policy of the Soviet Union, and developing independent action against imperialist war on the basis of the united front, the working class can draw all toilers and entire peoples into the struggle against the fascist instigators of war. In this connection, pacts for the maintenance of peace, the statutes of the League of Nations, and non-aggression pacts, are all factors postponing war. But the guarantee of the complete abolition of imperialist wars is provided by proletarian revolution alone and by the abolition of the prime cause of all wars—capitalism.

In the debate on Sanctions at the Brighton Conference of the Labour Party a similar resolution was adopted to that adopted at the Trade Union Congress at Margate. And in this resolution nothing is said about the independent struggle of the working class against the Italian war on Abyssinia. At the Labour Party Conference, however, the lines of the fight became sharper in the sense that the Conference manifested three distinct tendencies on this issue. The line of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party which was for Sanctions without any criticism of National Government policy, or any advocacy of separate class action by the workers was along exactly the same lines as the Trades Union Congress. (In point of fact, the Executive Committee refused to allow a declaration against the imperialist aims of the National Government to be introduced.)

Then there was the purely pacifist point of view expounded by George Lansbury, Dr. Salter and Lord Ponsonby, and the line of the Socialist League as outlined by Sir Stafford Cripps and William Mellor. In connection with the latter point of view it needs to be said that the representatives of the Socialist League were revealed as

being completely isolated from the feelings of the mass of the delegates who attended this conference.

The line of the Socialist League was a negative line. The representatives of the Socialist League asserted that nothing could be done to defend the Abyssinian people, that the English working class have nothing left to do but to sit at home and study the causes of the war which is leading to the enslavement of the Abyssinian people. This position not only amounts to complete passivity, but affords tremendous practical support to the National Government. What is fundamentally the same position but with the addition of a campaign of calumny against the Comintern, has been adopted by the Independent Labour Party. Behind a veil of revolutionary phrases, the leaders of both these organisations are actually helping the war aggressors and the policy of the National Government which is directed against the U.S.S.R. Sir Stafford Cripps, for example, tells his audience at the Brighton Labour Party Conference that he has now "changed his mind about the League of Nations" and recognises now that it is an "international burglars' union," forgetting the existence of the Soviet Union, whose rôle inside the League of Nations has been one that has filled with gratitude all who strive for peace all over the world. This deliberate omission of the rôle of the Soviet Union in the League of Nations is not accidental either on the part of the Socialist League or of the Independent Labour Party. Cripps was for the League of Nations when the Soviet Union was outside the League; he is against the League when the Soviet Union is a member of it. Fortunately for the British working-class movement, such organisations, with no mass connections, or mass influence, or record of mass struggles in any part of the country, are of very little significance at the present time.

In this critically urgent situation the Communist Party of Great Britain issued a letter to the Labour Party proposing that the Labour Party should take the initiative in calling a conference of the Second and Communist Internationals for the purpose of framing a common policy of joint international action to defend the independence of Abyssinia.

Then came the appeal of Comrade Dimitrov on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Communist International proposing an immediate conference between the two Internationals, in which he said:

"The common action of the two internationals would mobilise the working-class and would secure the support of the forces of peace among other classes of the population. It would draw whole peoples into the fight for peace. It would call forth an international movement against war of such a power that the League of Nations, under its pressure, would be compelled to undertake really effective action against the aggression of Italian fascism and German fascism. It is not yet too

late to prevent the terrible catastrophe into which the fascist criminals want to hurl mankind. To-morrow this may no longer be possible."

On the eve of their National Conference the Labour Party replied to the C.P.G.B. and declared that in their opinion no useful purpose would be served by such a conference as that proposed. The torn and mutilated bodies of thousands of Abyssinian people bear witness to part of the price that has been paid for this criminal refusal to lift a finger to bring together in a united movement the organised forces of the workers of the whole world.

While the Labour Party Conference was in session, Italy commenced its bloody war in Abyssinia. Its bombing planes wiped out thousands and dropped the message on those who were still left, "Accept Italian Friendship or die." The horror that seized every decent minded citizen compelled us to make a last effort to try and get the Labour leaders to use their influence in the international labour movement to secure a suitable decision.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain instructed me to send a telegram to the Chairman of the Labour Party Conference, as well as to a number of very prominent trade union leaders, which read as follows:

"Chairman, Labour Party Conference, the Dome, Brighton. London Evening newspapers declare 'Adowa bombed, hundreds dead.' We beg you in the interests of humanity at once agree proposal Dimitrov for common action between Labour and Socialist International and Communist International stop it would draw peoples of world into fight prevent any further slaughter defenceless people of Abyssinia and would prevent any further extension terrible catastrophe into which the fascist criminals want to hurl mankind stop workers of world if organised for common action can exert power compel immediate operation sanctions against Mussolini stop Will not British Labour leaders even at this late hour bring the two Internationals together stop Only your influence now prevents this being done stop We appeal to you in all sincerity in this fateful hour of mankind that you now take initiative in achieving workers' international unity that can save the world—Harry Pollitt."

The Press reported the next day that the Executive Committee of the Labour Party had a special meeting to consider the situation, that they had passed a resolution demanding that Parliament be convened, but had refused to agree to the suggestion for common action between the two Internationals on the grounds "that it was against their declared policy."

These leaders are anxious to summon a capitalist Parliament together, but are not to do anything to bring together the powerful forces of the workers of the world.

No wonder that Comrade Dimitrov in his further appeal to the Second International writes:

"Any further delay in bringing about united action in

the struggle against the war that has already begun would be fatal. Anyone who still hesitates or delays, in this grave hour, to unite all the forces of the working-class and all the toilers, and to employ all means so that Italian military action against Abyssinia should be stopped, that the war should not spread to other parts of the world and should not become the prelude to a new world slaughter, ASSUMES AN HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY BEFORE THE WORLD PROLETARIAT" (our emphasis).

We are very conscious of our responsibility in this situation. We have not done half that the situation demands from us in trying to organise a really effective mass backing for the appeal of the Communist International. We must face this undeniable fact.

The British Labour leaders still play their rôle of sabotaging common action between the two Internationals only because the Communist Party of Great Britain has not yet succeeded in breaking through to the broad masses with its united front propaganda, and has failed to develop the mass pressure that could compel the leaders to accept proposals that now so strongly commend themselves to many sections of the Second International itself.

Our National Party Conference held on October 5th, 6th and 7th self-critically examined the causes of these weaknesses, and set itself to overcome them in the shortest possible space of time.

We undertook the task of bringing about the most effective mobilisation of the Party we have ever yet attempted. Every single member and local is being brought into action behind the campaign for the independence of Abyssinia, and the Manifesto that the Conference issued struck the note of this campaign where it stated:

"PEOPLE OF BRITAIN!

Demand that the League of Nations applies sanctions now against Italy. Stop all fuel and war materials being sent to Italy. Stop all loans and other forms of assistance being sent to Italy. Refuse to load and unload all Italian ships, or to transport Italian Blackshirts from Britain to Italy. Close the Suez Canal now to all Italian shipping.

WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT!

You belong to a mighty Labour movement. You wield tremendous power. You can force the National Government to act at Geneva in the way that you desire. You can ensure that the British Labour movement accepts the proposals of the Communist International for an immediate conference of the two working-class Internationals to work out a common programme and campaign that can restore and preserve the peace of the world!"

Because of the war question and the discussion created by the issue of sanctions, other important issues did not receive the attention they demanded at the Trades Union Congress. Nevertheless, some important debates took place on such questions as the right of members of the Communist Party to hold official positions in the trade unions. In fact, it is worthy of note in passing that at every recent Trades Union Congress it is stated

that "Communism has been killed." Yet when the next Trades Union Congress is held, we find an increased amount of time taken up in discussing the issues that are brought forward by the policy of the Communist Party. It was on the debates initiated by our members or supporters that the most interesting discussions took place, covering such subjects as workers' democracy inside the trade unions, the united front, the movement to co-ordinate wage demands along common lines, and the fight for international trade union unity.

On all these questions the Margate Congress indicated that there is a growing movement inside the trade unions AGAINST class collaboration, which expresses itself specifically in the character of the votes and statements made during the debate on the fights of Communists within the trade unions.

In the past year, the General Council, through what is popularly known in Britain as "The Black Circular" had endeavoured to get the Trade Unions to alter their rules and constitutions so that any members of the Communist Party would be declared ineligible to hold any official position in the unions. This dictatorial attitude had been strongly resisted, and some of the most important trade unions, had already taken decisions at their Annual Conference not to operate such a policy.

When the question came to be debated, Citrine made a statement on behalf of the General Council which was virtually a climb down from their previous position in so far as this policy of discrimination affected the trade unions, but not in regard to Trades Councils.

In the course of the speeches some interesting references were made. We will quote John Bromley, Secretary of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers, Drivers and Firemen, and Will Lawther, Vice-President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain:

"But I do say this for my Executive and my union, that our experience with our Communist members has been a singularly happy one. We have always known where they would be in a strike. That, I am proud to say, is something that I know with regard to all our members. They have been effective and very courageous, and that they have not only fought for themselves, but also for others. — John Bromley (Sec. A.S.L.E. & F.)

Mr. Lawther said:

"Let me say frankly that the miners are going to stand no interference in the democratic method of electing their officials. We say to Congress we are entitled to elect those officials that we believe are best fitted to carry out the duties of the organisation, and we regard it as absolutely tragic that at this moment when we are discussing this paragraph, members of our organisation in South Wales are in prison because of their activities."

"We have suffered far more during the last four years from our one-time friends of the Right than from what are presumed to be our enemies of the Left, and because

of that we are very much alarmed at this policy now being put forward, and we ask the Congress unanimously to reject what, after all, the General Council themselves through the General Secretary admit does not mean everything."—Will Lawther (M.F.G.B.)

The voting on the policy of the General Council on this question was as follows: for the General Council—1,869,000; against—1,427,000. This is a very significant vote, and we believe it is the result of the better methods of work inside the trade unions that have been carried out by the Communist Party, and the firm determination of the active trade unionists to do nothing that could lead to splitting the forces within the trade union movement.

Only the most bigoted anti-Communists any longer peddle the pernicious propaganda that the Communists are out to destroy the trade unions. The workers and many trade union leaders know only too well that the aim of the Communist Party is to strengthen the trade unions, and make them fighting class organs of millions of working men and women.

The Margate Congress took important decisions on the miners' fight for increased wages, but it took no action to try and unite the wage demands that are being put forward by the miners, engineers and railwaymen. This grave weakness is the result of the deep sectionalism that prevails in the trade union movement in Britain, and in spite of the lead given by Mr. Conley, the then President of the Trades Union Congress, at the Trades Union Congress in 1934 for common action in wage questions, nothing of a practical character has been done to unite the forces of the trade unions in a common movement to secure their demands.

Neither was it seen at Margate or Brighton that if the whole resources of the Labour movement were now seriously bent on organising a united campaign to secure increased wages for the miners, railwaymen, engineers, and extra winter relief for the unemployed, such a forceful mass movement could be developed, that as we pressed forward our fight for the independence of Abyssinia and against the imperialist aims of the National Government, we could bring about a political situation in this country in which the united power of the whole working class movement could decisively defeat the National Government and return a Labour Government.

This main and supreme aim of the movement was entirely missing at this vital stage, and there was no attempt to organise this fight on a common front. That is why so many delegates were rightly disquieted at the policy of their leaders, they only saw the movement being tied up behind the National Government.

But the campaign now being conducted by the

Communist Party for the fulfilment of the aim we have set out above is meeting with increasing success and will draw more and more workers into active participation.

Mention must also be made of the important telegram of fraternal greetings that was sent to the Trades Union Congress from the Central Council of the All-Russian Trade Union movement, and which received such a warm and enthusiastic welcome from the delegates. This telegram read as follows:

Sir Walter Citrine (General Secretary):  
"Moscow. To the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, Margate, Kent.

The All-Union Central Committee of Trade Unions of the U.S.S.R., representing 19,500,000 trade unionists, send fraternal greetings to the 67th British Trades Union Congress now being held at Margate, confident that your Congress will help forward the unification of all working-class forces throughout the world to retard the advance of fascism and war."

It was subsequently the subject of a very favourable comment by influential trade union leaders, all of whom were glad that the first step had been taken to break the ice that had for so long separated the Trade Union movements of Britain and the Soviet Union, and we believe that from this telegram it will be possible to bring about a closer understanding in the new situation that we face to-day between what are undoubtedly the most important trade union movements in the world. This, in turn, can be helpful in leading to international developments that will bring about better prospects of unification between the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Red International of Labour Unions, as well as the respective International Trade Secretariats.

The President of the Trades Union Congress at Margate paid a notable tribute to the Peace Policy of the Soviet Union, and also at Brighton one heard expressions of similar character. We will quote from the President's speech, because it is the first time that there has been such an official recognition of the rôle that the Peace Policy of the Soviet Union represents:

"When our Congress met last year, the hope was expressed that the Soviet Union would soon enter the League of Nations. The chairman stated his belief that the presence of that great working-class power in the League would strengthen every element there that is working for peace. The U.S.S.R. has now joined the League and I hope we can count it as one of the most powerful factors operating against international fascism . . .

"To preserve peace in Eastern Europe Soviet Russia and France jointly proposed an Eastern European pact of mutual assistance within the framework of the League of Nations, to include among others both Germany and Poland. Germany, however, has so far refused to join this proposed pact, though she professes to be a sincere supporter of its Western counterpart, the Locarno Pact. The Soviet Union has, therefore, pending the adequate strengthening of the League of Nations Covenant, concluded pacts of mutual assistance with France and



Czecho-Slovakia; and we can welcome these agreements as being in accordance with the statutes and the spirit of the League."

Now this kind of utterance cannot be separated from the general swing to the Left that is beginning to manifest itself throughout the Labour movement. It also strikes a blow (even if the blow is struck by those who themselves have formerly been so assiduous, in this direction) at the propaganda that there is no difference between the Workers' Dictatorship and the fascist dictatorship and that because of this, united action between the labour movement, which believes in democracy, and the Communist movement was impossible.

Experience is breaking down this dangerous type of propaganda. More and more it is being realised that unless unity in action can be achieved, then fascism and war will triumph. But once unity in action is established, as in France, then a mighty movement begins to develop that draws in its train not only every section of the working-class but large sections of the middle class. Citrine in attacking the fight for the united front at Margate did so on the grounds of the results of the Saar Plebiscite. He was very careful not to state what had been achieved in France, in Spain, in Austria, etc.

None better than the labour leaders of Britain know the ferment that has been created inside the ranks of the Second International by the successes of the united front in France and a number of other countries. They know the new sense of political values that is being created, they are

aware of the new strength of class consciousness that is being developed, and of how the workers are re-examining the entire conception of class collaboration.

Therefore, the British Labour leaders still fiercely fight against any attempt to bring about unity in action whether in Britain itself or on an international scale.

But against this line the rank-and-file are making firm moves forward. The Labour leaders believe that association with the Communist Party would lose them votes in the General Election. The rank-and-file know that the Communist Party stands for the fight to defeat the National Government and return a Labour Government that under the pressure of the masses would extend the possibilities for the fight against capitalism.

The decisions of the Margate and Brighton Conferences entirely leave out of account this main task now standing before the British working-class movement. We will permit ourselves to express the opinion that as a result of the way the Communist Party is organising to bring about the defeat of the National Government, the way it will help to return Labour candidates in places where no Communist is standing, much will be done to break down the remaining barriers to united action that still exist in Britain.

The effect that this will have on the whole international working-class movement is very great, and the Communist Party will endeavour to fulfil in the shortest space of time its grave responsibilities to the international proletariat.

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## NOTICE.

The Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the Editorial Board of the journal, the *Communist International*, have decided to enlarge the size of the journal and issue it as a monthly instead of a bi-monthly magazine as previously. The price of each issue will remain the same. Subscribers will have their subscriptions extended accordingly.

Now, more than ever before, it is urgent that every reader does his share to spread the journal to ever wider circles.

*Editorial Board of the "Communist International."*

# TRADE UNION UNITY IN FRANCE

By GERE.

**T**HE French proletariat, the pioneers of the achievement of united front action between the Communist and Socialist Parties as well as of the establishment of a broad people's front against fascism and war, have set a fresh example to the proletarians of the whole world in the struggle for the united front. On September 27, exactly 14 months after the signature of the pact for unity of action between the Communist Party of France and the French Socialist Party, an agreement was arrived at between the Unitary General Confederation of Labour (C.G.T.U.) and the General Confederation of Labour, the reformist C.G.T., for the realisation of trade union unity in the immediate months to come.

This agreement did not drop from the skies, neither did the pact signed a year ago between the Communist and Socialist Parties. The trade union agreement is the result of the achievement of the united front action and of putting it into practice, the result of a stubborn, prolonged, and persistent struggle on the part of the French Communists and the members of the C.G.T.U. (revolutionary) trade unions which met with wide support among the members of the C.G.T. Many were the difficulties, and many the obstacles which arose and had to be overcome subsequently, before the leaders of the C.G.T. entered into an agreement on the question of uniting the two trade union centres.

It required the experience of the mass anti-fascist action of the Communist and Socialist workers on February 9, 1934, the experiences of the biggest general strike in the history of the French working class movement on February 12, in which about 4½ million proletarians took part, it needed a year of united front action, and the positive experience acquired by the French working class after February, 1934, in the great class battles waged on the initiative of the Communist Party of France, before the working masses organised in the C.G.T. forced their leaders to agree to the unification of the trade unions.

It is a fact that the French working class has accumulated more experiences in the class struggle during the last two years than during the entire post-war period. The tremendous merit of the Communist Party of France lies in just this, that having drawn correct and opportune conclusions from the German, Austrian and Spanish events, in the face of the huge menace of fascism, it came forward as the pioneer and organiser of unity among the working class, and made it possible for the French proletariat to convince themselves on the basis of their own experience of the effectiveness of the united front and of its use to them, and that by

rallying all their forces into one mighty fist directed against fascism, war and the capitalist offensive they could wage a successful struggle. The fruits of these experiences of the working class are now to be seen in the agreement arrived at to establish trade union unity.

The agreement of September 27, arrived at between both trade union organisations, is an addition to and the culmination of the process of unification which was being realised every day, without the consent of the leaders of the C.G.T. and frequently in opposition to their decisions, between separate trade unions of the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U., and which later almost entirely covered certain unions and federations. In spite of the fact that Jouhaux, the general secretary of the C.G.T., frequently spoke against the establishment of united trade unions on the basis of the fusions of the parallel local trade union organisations, the movement from below in favour of uniting the trade unions grew at a stormy pace. When the agreement was concluded, there already existed over 650 united trade unions covering among the railwaymen alone about 100,000 workers out of a total of 120,000 organised in the two big federations of the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U.

The leaders of the C.G.T. were also against unity of action between the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U.; they declared that unity of action in the form of agreements between trade unions would be an obstacle to the realisation of organic trade union unity. However, as we know, in spite of the negative position adopted by the majority of the leaders of the C.G.T., unity of action was brought about between many unions belonging to both trade union centres, although to a lesser degree than that between the Communist and Socialist Parties. The unions covering the railwaymen, the metal workers, the workers employed in the Brest and Toulon arsenals, and the governmental and municipal clerks, as well as the trade union council of the Paris district, came to agreement among themselves on several occasions, and together waged a struggle against the capitalist offensive, against the emergency laws, and fascism. It was this partial realisation of the united front which brought the members of the parallel trade unions closer together, and paved the way for the fusion of the trade unions.

It will therefore be correct to say THAT AGREEMENT ON THE QUESTION OF TRADE UNION UNITY WAS PREPARED FOR BY THE REALISATION OF THE UNITED FRONT BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST PARTIES, BY THE UNITED FRONT OF ACTION ESTABLISHED BETWEEN SEPARATE TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE UNION AMALGAMATIONS, AND FINALLY, BY THE ACTUAL,

PARTIAL FUSION OF TRADE UNIONS ACHIEVED AS A RESULT OF JOINT STRUGGLE. This movement, as well as the correct, skilful and consistent struggle of the C.G.T.U. and of the Communists to bring about trade union unity, a struggle which convinced all honest workers and officials of the fact that the "unitarians" and the Communists were not defending the interests of their own "attic," but were defending the interests of the whole of the working class, that they were in actual fact the most sincere, most loyal, fighters for trade union unity—all this brought about a situation inside the C.G.T. itself wherein entire federations of the C.G.T., and these such as were of the widest mass character (for example the clerks' federation and the federation of workers employed in state enterprises) demanded that an end should be put to the tactics of the C.G.T. leadership, of perpetually delaying the realisation of trade union unity.

Why was it, however, that the realisation of trade union unity cost so much labour and energy, why was it that despite the fact that agreement has already been reached, difficulties still stand in the way of the revolutionary working class in this sphere? Why is it that the united front action between the Communist and Socialist Parties was arrived at a year earlier than agreement regarding trade union unity? The fact that this question has been raised leads us back to an analysis of the character of the difficulties which our French comrades have had to overcome themselves, and which they will have to overcome in part. Communists and revolutionary workers carrying on the struggle to bring about trade union unity in other capitalist countries are already encountering these difficulties in some places, and will not infrequently continue to meet with them.

It was possible for the struggle of the Communist Party to establish a united front with the Socialist Party more easily and rapidly to lead to positive results primarily because the relations of forces between the Communist and Socialist Parties is more advantageous to the Communist Party, than the relation of forces between the C.G.T.U. and C.G.T. is for the C.G.T.U. When the united front was being concluded between the two political parties, it was merely a question of coming to agreement on the question of joint action on individual questions, whereas, in the trade union sphere it was a question not only of agreement regarding joint action, but of the complete, organisational, fusion of the two trade union organisations, and this, without doubt, is a more complicated task.

One of the peculiarities of the French trade union movement is the fact that a relatively high percentage of the workers and clerks employed in state and municipal enterprises are organised in the trade unions. This applies in particular to the C.G.T., which organises primarily such categories of workers

and employees, as for example, the railwaymen, transport workers, teachers, postal and telegraph workers, and others. In consequence of the fact that the economic crisis was late in touching France, and that it has been extremely long drawn out, and also because of their fear of serious social and political complications, the French bourgeoisie have been compelled all the time to postpone undertaking a general offensive against the standard of living of these sections of workers and clerks. However, this year, in the face of the menace of the catastrophe threatening the state and its finances the bourgeoisie nevertheless decided to start an offensive, so as to restore order in the seriously undermined finances of the state at the expense of over a million clerks and workers belonging to the categories mentioned.

The workers and clerks learned something from this general attack of the bourgeoisie. The masses organised in the C.G.T. began to give a better hearing to the voice of the Communists and "unitarians" who called for a united front, and began to carry on a struggle together with the Communists and the unitarian trade unions. The state and municipal employees, railwaymen and teachers felt the need, on the basis of their own bitter experience, of offering resistance to the capitalist offensive, and, subsequently, compelled their leaders also to change their position as regards trade union unity.

One of the difficulties in achieving trade union unity was also the fact that in their policy of collaborating with the bourgeoisie during the post-war period, the leaders of the C.G.T. went still further than the leaders of the Socialist Party. Some of the politicians of the C.G.T. held and still hold state jobs, as for example, in the Supreme Economic Council, or in the League of Nations. Their connection with the bourgeoisie and with the bourgeois state apparatus was always in many respects more direct than the connections of the leaders of the Socialist Party, who with all their general support of the bourgeois governments in the post-war period did not, however, join coalition governments. One must admit that inside the leadership of the C.G.T. the influence of the extreme right wing of the Socialist Party which split off from the party, the influence of the so-called "neo-Socialists," was always stronger than the influence of the Left Socialist supporters of the united front with the Communists. Clearly, in conditions like these, much greater difficulties had to be overcome for trade union unity to be achieved than for the establishment of united front action between the two political parties.

In addition to all this, the Communists were hardly ever members of the C.G.T. trade unions, but considered it their duty to join only the C.G.T.U. It can readily be understood that since the Communists were outside the ranks of the C.G.T. they could only defend their position on the question of

trade union unity before the workers of the C.G.T. unions, from outside these unions.

Finally, the more rapid development of the united front in the trade union sphere is hindered by the fact that during the crisis it is more difficult to lead economic battles. Yet the masses of the workers, on the basis of the experience gained in the struggle for their everyday demands, are becoming more and more convinced of the need for establishing the united front and trade union unity at all costs.

The leaders of the C.G.T. presented the C.G.T.U. with a number of demands, as conditions for bringing about trade union unity. First and foremost they demanded that the "leading rôle of the Communist Party in respect of the trade unions" should be condemned. The leaders of the C.G.T.U. turned down this demand, not only because they understood full well that it is not the Communist Party that constitutes a danger to the trade union movement, but the class collaboration practised by the leaders of the C.G.T., but also because the Communist Party has never supported the viewpoint that the trade unions should recognise any control from above. However, the Communists are not formalists, and as far as they are concerned, it is the interests of the working class that are most important of all. In the case in point, these interests demanded that all means should be adopted to assist in the realisation of trade union unity. Therefore, while rejecting the demand that the position which the Communist Party was alleged to hold should be condemned, the leaders of the C.G.T.U. adopted ANOTHER formula which demanded autonomy for the trade union movement, that it be "independent of the employers, the government, and political parties." This formula, jointly accepted, at the same time opens the door for possible joint action between the united trade union centre and the political parties. This formula satisfies the Communists and all revolutionaries, since it contains the demand that the trade union movement reject collaboration with the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government. And once the trade unions take their stand on the platform of class struggle, the Communist Party which itself stands for the most consistent class struggle up to the point of the dictatorship of the proletariat, will, without doubt, find a common tongue with THOSE trade unions that in actual practice fulfil their rôle of defenders of the direct interests of the working class.

The Communists were all the more in a position to accept this formula since the agreement categorically ensures that every trade union member has the possibility of carrying on active work outside the trade union for one or other political party. In other words, if the agreement arrived at is observed, it will not be possible to persecute the Communists,

members of the united trade unions, for their activities inside the Communist Party.

Furthermore, the leaders of the C.G.T. demanded that fractions inside the trade unions should be prohibited. The leaders of the C.G.T. put forward this demand as the "final condition," without the acceptance of which, according to the leaders of the C.G.T., any trade union unity was quite outside the question. In order to remove this obstacle, the leaders of the C.G.T.U. agreed to this concession. The Communists working in the C.G.T.U. were able to make this concession by reason of the fact that the platform of agreement accepted jointly categorically declares for inner trade union democracy, for "freedom for every trade union member to defend his own viewpoint inside the trade union on all questions concerning the life and development of the organisation." BUT IF TRADE UNION DEMOCRACY IS GUARANTEED NOT ONLY IN WORDS, BUT IN DEEDS, if Communists are to have an opportunity of defending the position of class struggle inside the united trade unions, there will be less need for the existence of fractions. Moreover, if the Communists in the united trade unions are able to manage affairs properly and consistently defend the interests of the working class, they will, without doubt, always find support among all honest workers. The workers and clerks at present in the C.G.T. have passed through a fine school of united front action during the last few years. It will, without doubt, be more difficult now than formerly to take them again along the road of class collaboration.

The unitary trade unions advanced only one main condition for unity, namely, that THE UNITED TRADE UNION CENTRE SHOULD MAKE ITS PLATFORM THAT OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE, I.E., SHOULD NOT PRACTISE COLLABORATION WITH THE BOURGEOISIE. Two other demands put forward by the "unitarians" were that there should be trade union democracy, and proportional representation in the leading bodies, points which are logically linked up with the first main condition. For the trade unions really to defend the interests of the working masses, the most consistent representatives of the class struggle must be free to defend their viewpoints inside the trade unions, and have corresponding representation in all trade union leading bodies. And the demand that the trade unions should be weapons of the class struggle follows from the very essence of trade unions<sup>s</sup> as the elementary and broadest organisations of the workers, created by the working class in the process of the struggle for their immediate demands. By recognising the need for the trade union movement to be independent of the capitalists and their governments, the leaders of the C.G.T. have thereby taken upon themselves before the masses the obligation to break once and for all with the policy of class collaboration. TRUE, THE COMMUNISTS SHOULD NOT

FOR ONE MOMENT FORGET THAT THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE UNITED TRADE UNIONS WILL FUNCTION NOT AS ORGANS OF CLASS COLLABORATION, BUT AS A WEAPON OF CLASS STRUGGLES, WILL DEPEND PRIMARILY UPON THE ACTIVE, SELF-SACRIFICING WORK OF THE COMMUNISTS THEMSELVES, THAT THIS QUESTION WILL BE DECIDED ONCE AND FOR ALL IN THE DAILY STRUGGLE AGAINST THE CAPITALISTS IN THE FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, MINES, AS WELL AS IN THE DAILY WORK IN THE TRADE UNIONS THEMSELVES.

Not a few difficulties arose when discussing questions of the procedure governing unity, on the question as to the manner and the form in which the trade unions should be fused, as to which body should prepare the unity congress, etc. However, these difficulties have been overcome to a considerable extent.

How, according to the agreement arrived at, will the fusion of the trade unions be brought about? First and foremost, the local parallel trade unions will unite, and then, on the basis of the united trade unions, new federations and regional unions of the new C.G.T. will be created. Finally, not later than the end of January, 1936, A UNITED TRADE UNION CONGRESS SHOULD TAKE PLACE WHICH MUST DECIDE THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE NEW C.G.T., ITS RULES, AND WHICH TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL (AMSTERDAM TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL OR THE PROFINTERN) IT SHOULD BELONG TO. The work of fusing the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U. will be guided by a mixed commission of representatives of the two confederations.

Thus, if the leaders of the C.G.T. put forward no new obstacles in the way of fusing their trade union organisations, unity in the French trade union movement will become an actual fact in a few months' time. In connection with the realisation of trade union unity, new and big tasks arise before the organised proletariat of France, and in particular before its revolutionary vanguard. The French working class, the masses of the workers in the C.G.T., have forced their leaders to agree to unite the trade unions, not merely for the sake of unity as such, but—and the experiences of their struggle taught them this—so as to utilise the united trade unions as a weapon against the capitalist offensive and fascism. Therefore, it is the duty of the revolutionary, class conscious workers who belong to these trade unions, first and foremost to see to it that the united trade unions seriously begin to organise the struggle for the immediate demands of the proletariat, for the abolition of the emergency laws, for increased wages, primarily in those branches of industry where in recent years the capitalists have been successful, in consequence of the split in the trade unions, in lowering the standard of living of the workers. If a struggle on these lines is not organised,

it is inevitable that the masses of workers belonging to the trade unions will be dissatisfied.

The second task which faces the united trade union movement in France is that of ORGANISING THE WORKING CLASS. The C.G.T. has about 800,000 members, according to its own figures, and the C.G.T.U. about 300,000. Together they cover 1,100,000 members. This is a very serious force. However, this figure represents no more than ten per cent. of the entire working class of France. Unity will, without doubt, arouse a great wave of enthusiasm among the unorganised workers. It is therefore now a question of consciously and methodically organising the influx of the working masses into the united C.G.T., and first and foremost the influx of workers from the main branches of industry, as the decisive majority of these workers are outside any trade union organisation.

Finally, irrespective of the decision as to which International the French trade union centre will affiliate to, the French trade unions will fully realise their task of uniting the working class for the struggle for their immediate interests, only if they do not restrict themselves to national limits, but emerge on to the broad international arena and become the backbone of unity in the trade union movement on an international scale. Although the decision regarding the unification of both trade union centres has not yet been carried into life the leading statesmen of the French bourgeoisie are on the alert. The organ of the "Comité des Forges" has printed a warning leading article in which it declares that the Communists and leaders of the C.G.T.U. who made a number of concessions in the interests of establishing trade union unity have not given up their policy of consistent class struggle. All this can be understood. But what can be less understood is the fact that not all the leaders of the Amsterdam International are pleased that the split in the French trade union movement has been abolished; some of them are afraid that the experience of the struggle to establish trade union unity may become a lever for uniting the trade unions in other countries, and also on an international scale. In any case we must not be surprised at the fact that Schevenels, the Secretary of the Amsterdam Trade Union International, in an interview published in the Brussels "People" of October 6th, 1935, instead of expressing his satisfaction at the agreement arrived at, was extremely reserved in his statement about trade union unity in France, and expressed the hope that the agreement arrived at between the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U. "would not influence the attitude towards the Communists of the national trade union section affiliated to Amsterdam." This shows that the secretary of the Amsterdam International still considers that the enemies of the trade union movement are not the capitalists, but the Communists, who are self-

sacrificingly fighting everywhere in defence of the interests of the workers, and who in Germany, Austria and other countries have on more than one occasion laid down their lives in defence of the trade unions. This shows that certain leaders of the Amsterdam International still persist in their endeavours to maintain the split in the trade union movement. However, there is no reason to doubt that just as in France, the Communists and revolutionary elements, with the help of the workers organised in the C.G.T., succeeded in breaking down all obstacles in the way of trade union unity, so they will be able in just the same way in other countries and on an international scale, to show the masses that the line which safeguards the interests of the working class is not the policy of splitting, but of uniting all

trade unions which stand on the platform of the class struggle.

The 7th Congress of the Communist International set before the international revolutionary movement as one of its most decisive tasks, that of bringing about trade union unity on a national and international scale. The agreement arrived at in France is thus THE FIRST GREAT VICTORY FOR THE LINE OF THE 7TH WORLD CONGRESS ON ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT SECTIONS OF THE FRONT OF THE STRUGGLE FOR UNITY AMONG THE WORKING CLASS. BUT THESE ARE ONLY THE FIRST STEPS. THE RESULTS ALREADY OBTAINED IN FRANCE MUST BE CONSOLIDATED, AND THE EXAMPLE OF FRANCE MUST BE USED TO OBTAIN SIMILAR RESULTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS IS THE MAIN THING TO-DAY.

## POLITICAL NOTES

# HOW THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF FRANCE IS FULFILLING THE DECISIONS OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN

By C.S.

**S**INCE the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, the Communist Party of France has boldly begun to operate the decisions of the World Congress. It has directed its efforts mainly towards the struggle for trade union unity and towards drawing the peasant masses into the anti-fascist people's front. The struggle for trade union unity has been crowned with success, and the work of the Communists in the rural districts has already produced some results.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International brought to the forefront the struggle for trade union unity as one of the most urgent tasks confronting the Communists.

When closing the Congress, Comrade Dimitrov, to the unanimous applause of the delegates, said:

"At this Congress we have raised aloft the banner of TRADE UNION UNITY. Communists do not exist on the independent existence of the Red Trade Unions at all costs. We, Communists, want trade union unity. But this unity must be based on actual class struggle and on putting an end, once and for all, to a situation in which the most consistent and determined advocates of trade union unity and of the class struggle are expelled from the trade unions of the Amsterdam International."

The French Communists have been the first to give a splendid confirmation of these words by their activity.

On July 24, the main objections of the leaders of the General Confederation of Labour (reformist, Ed.) to trade union unity, on the question of the independence of the trade unions and on the question of fractions, was overcome. An agree-

ment was reached by the two confederations of labour which emphasised that

"the trade union movement is in all its links guided, and decides the question of its action entirely independent of the employers, the government, political parties, the philosophy of sects or other outside elements."

This is a categorical condemnation of all class collaboration. In the agreement it is stated that neutrality of the trade union movement

"in respect to political parties does not mean independence in relation to the dangers which might threaten the liberties of the people, as reforms already in operation or still to be achieved."

The agreement, which guarantees full democracy and freedom inside the trade unions and freedom of political convictions outside of the trade unions, forbids the formation of fractions inside the unions. The Communists endorsed this concession made by the Unitary Confederation in order not to delay the realisation of trade union unity.

But in examining the practical ways and means of forming a single General Confederation of Labour, rather serious differences cropped up between the two confederations, which threatened to destroy all the efforts previously spent upon achieving unity.

Several conferences were held between representatives of both confederations, where the matter was discussed, and it was only on the eve of their congresses (September, 1935) that agreement was arrived at as to the date for the unity congress. The agenda of the unity congress was to include

all questions pertaining to the formation of and the functions of the United General Confederation of Labour, and also to the establishment of connections between the leading organs in all links of the trade unions in respect to amalgamation under the supervision of a mixed Confederal Commission.

Still another disagreement remained. The Unitary General Confederation of Labour proposed that the leading organs of both Confederations should work together until the unity congress was held. The General Confederation of Labour, on the other hand, insisted that until the unity congress was held the leadership should be given over to a Provisional National Confederal Committee, consisting of representatives of the Trade Union Federations and District Trade Union Councils.

However, the discussions which took place during the congresses of the two federations resulted in common ground being found for agreement. It was decided that a mixed commission would be set up to serve as a connecting link between the leading bodies of both confederations, which, in case of necessity, would issue joint decisions regarding united action, while the National Confederation Committee would serve for the organisation and formulation of the agenda of the unity congress. After unanimity was reached on the forms in which unity would take place, both congresses met together and enthusiastically announced that trade union unity had been achieved.

Thanks to their invariable devotion to the interests of the working class, and their unswerving will to achieve the re-establishment of the unity of the working class movement, the Communists scored a great victory over the enemies of the working class, who based all their hopes on a continuation of the split in the ranks of the working class.

The purpose of the unity congress is to consider the programme, which will determine the orientation of the new General Confederation of Labour, its statutes, and also the question of the affiliation of the new General Confederation of Labour to one or other International organisation. The Communists will express their revolutionary point of view on all these questions. We will uphold our views as we have defended them until now, without any sectarianism, or scholasticism, never for a moment losing sight of the interests of our class, and taking a firm stand on the platform of Bolshevik realism.

We have demonstrated our will for organised trade union unity. The *Peuple*, the organ of the General Confederation of Labour, is raising the question of "moral" unity, as though afraid that

such unity will be difficult to attain in the new Confederation. But we shall also succeed in proving our determination to reach "moral" unity, which, we think, will be inviolable, based on the principles of the class struggle.

If we examine the inter-connections between united action by the workers' parties and the unity of the trade union movement, it can quite clearly be seen that the agreement between the parties, dated July 27, 1934, had a decisive influence over the growth of feeling in favour of uniting both confederations, encouraged the growth of smooth relations between the leading organs of both confederations and, finally, definitely influenced the shaping of the united G.C.T. The fact that trade union unity has been achieved, in turn, is now most favourably influencing the consolidation of joint, united political action.

We should note that there has been a considerable increase in united action since the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. In particular we want to dwell on the creation of a joint platform between our Communist Party of France and the Socialist Party.

A year has elapsed since an exchange took place between the Communist and Socialist Parties of France of the documents which were to serve as a basis on which to elaborate a common platform. At that time there were still profound differences between the two parties, even on questions concerning immediate action. However, under the pressure of events which called for the immediate establishment of unity between the toilers, an agreement was finally reached after long discussions, not only in the conciliation committee, but also among the masses, at meetings, and in the press.

The platform signed by the Communist and the Socialist Parties, and published in *l'Humanité* and *Populaire* on September 23, is an improvement on the pact reached in 1934, in that it gives a much fuller and more accurate definition of the basis of united action between the Communists and Socialists.

The platform especially emphasises the need for strengthening the joint struggle of the Communists and Socialists in defence of the demands of all sections of the toiling population. We especially emphasise the importance of this task in connection with improving the position of the masses and unmasking the social demagogy of the fascists.

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The people's front is growing and gathering strength in spite of difficulties. The organisations which have joined the people's front have begun to work out a programme of this front. Some Socialist Party leaders are displaying narrow-

mindfulness in respect to the realisation of the people's front. The Trotskyist disorganisers of the Socialist ranks are clamouring the more loudly as the attention given them diminishes. They cry: "Clear the radicals out of the people's front!" It is regrettable that these loud phrases of the Trotskyist sect still have their influence over some Socialists. We Communists are perfectly well aware of all the shortcomings of some parties participating in the people's front. But we consider that the best revolutionary is the one who in the struggle against fascism can rally the greatest possible forces round himself, even if they are not absolutely reliable.

Comrade Dimitrov pointed out that an exceedingly important task facing the Communists is "to draw the broad masses of peasants, the masses of the petty bourgeoisie, into the anti-fascist movement, and to devote special attention to their vital needs in working out the programme of the anti-fascist people's front." We have already achieved certain successes along these lines.

For some time a revival of fascist agitation is to be observed in the villages of France. The peasants are discontented. On August 11, delegates of 500 peasant defence committees in the Somme Department decided to start a struggle for the revalorisation\* of farm products and for a moratorium on the debts of the peasants and artisans. Our Party adopted these demands, which it also advanced, because they coincide with the wishes of the broad masses of the toiling peasantry. The Party launched an energetic campaign for the realisation of these demands, and declared that the Communists were ready to fight for the achievement of unity of all peasants on the basis of the struggle for higher prices of farm products and for a moratorium.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of France published an appeal in *l'Humanité* (which was reprinted on posters circulated throughout the country) urging the peasants to unite to secure "aid for French agriculture." This appeal concretely formulates the most vital demands of the peasants, and points out the means of achieving them. The appeal links together the demands and the struggle of the peasants with those of the working class, and shows that the workers' and peasants' demands can be fully realised, if the financial programme of the Communist Party which demands that "the rich must pay," is carried into life.

The Agrarian Party took the initiative in organising peasant demonstrations on September 21, to

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\* Revalorisation means raising the selling prices of peasant farm produce, but this has not to entail an increase in the retail prices of these products since revalorisation has to be achieved by the struggle against speculation and the reduction of transport charges.—Ed.

demand the revalorisation of farm products and a moratorium on debts. The Central Committee of our Party appealed to all peasant groups to unite their forces so that these demonstrations would fully express the determination of the peasant masses. This appeal met with profound repercussions in the rural areas. The fury of the reactionary fascist press showed us that we had struck the right blow. On September 28 the Communist Party published an agrarian programme of action which analyses the situation in each branch of agriculture and proposes measures which can be immediately realised and would enable the peasants to find a way out of the agrarian crisis, by attacking the big landlords and capitalists. The programme also shows the peasants that their demands could be satisfied if they united their forces in the struggle.

With the aid of such a weapon our Party organisations can start a wide campaign to rally and organise the peasant masses and to disrupt the attempts of the fascists to unite the peasants under their banners.

A bye-election took place recently in the district of Poitiers. Our Party polled four times as many votes as it did in 1932. We, of course, are not fully satisfied with this result. The fascist danger in the French villages is very great, as was shown in the second round of the election when the candidate of the people's front, for whose benefit the Communist candidate was withdrawn, received only nine votes more than the reactionary candidate. We must therefore double our efforts to prevent the development of fascism in the countryside.

At a conference of Left Parliamentary groups, held recently, it was proposed in the name of the Communist Party to organise a broad congress of the French peasants under the auspices of the united front. The proposal which was accepted in principle has now to be fulfilled. The leadership of the Communist Party proposed to the Socialist Party to launch a joint campaign in the villages in favour of the peasant demands and in support of peasant demonstrations. At the recent congress of the Socialist Party, specially devoted to the study of agrarian problems, this proposal was accepted. This permits us to expect excellent results in the struggle for the interests of the toiling peasants.

The Communist peasants actively working in the General Confederation of Toiling Peasants (C.G.P.T.) have energetically and realistically set to work to rally the peasant masses. The Agrarian Party has appealed to all political and professional groups of the peasants to participate in the demonstrations of September 21. The C.G.P.T. immediately replied to the appeal and proposed



a joint struggle with the Agrarian Party for the revalorisation of farm products and for a moratorium on peasant debts. The Agrarian Party most likely did not expect such a positive attitude from the C.G.P.T. and gave a somewhat dubious answer to the proposals of the latter. In the localities, however, united action has already been achieved in practice, between many district branches of the C.G.P.T. and of the Agrarian Party. A number of local and district organisations have concluded fighting agreements with big organisations which unite large numbers of toiling peasants of all trends.

Socialist leaders, like Dormoy, criticise our work in unifying the peasant masses regardless of their political trend. They oppose joint action with peasant groups under bourgeois leadership who, they declare, "deserve the fist and not a handshake." We think that if we followed this advice, we would help fascism to strengthen its position in the villages. We do not intend to unite with the leaders of the various peasant organisations, but what we want is unity with the peasant masses belonging to these organisations. It must be borne in mind that almost the absolute majority of organised peasants are concentrated in organisations under bourgeois and often under reactionary leadership. Does that mean that we must leave the peasants entirely in the hands of people who very often are the agents of the landlords and the capitalists? No, if the shortest way of achieving unity with the peasants is an appeal to these organisations, why should we do not do so when it is question of the concrete defence of the interests of the toiling peasants?

We are on the right path. And we can say that by boldly applying the tactics defined by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International we have achieved greater results in the countryside in the last two months than during the whole preceding year.

Our Party has also directed its efforts towards organising a mass struggle against the war of Italian fascism in Abyssinia. In this sphere, however, it must be admitted that we have obtained considerably less significant results than in other spheres of our work. True, right at the beginning of the campaign, in August, the leaders of the Socialist Party were against organising joint action against the menace of Italian aggression in Africa. However, we overcame their resistance and developed broad agitation for the application of economic and financial sanctions against the aggressor—as against the French fascists who demanded that the government support Mussolini. Simultaneously, we organised an energetic campaign to secure international united action against the war on the basis of the proposals of

the Comintern to the Second International. In this way we were to a considerable extent successful in intensifying the desire of the masses in our country for the realisation of the united front on an international scale. The fact that the Executive Committee of the Second International rejected the proposals of the Comintern, called forth profound discontent among the workers of different political trends: several co-ordination committees of Communist and Socialist organisations passed resolutions demanding that united action be adopted on an international scale at the earliest possible moment. However, on the question of the struggle against the war of Italian fascism, we restricted ourselves too long to general appeals and slogans, without organising a mass struggle. Despite the fact that the Communist and Socialist organisations—unitarian and reformist—called upon the workers to stop the transport of goods to Italy, we have still not been able to get concrete action in this sphere. This may be fraught with consequences. If the war of Italian fascism in Abyssinia is not to serve as a prelude to a world conflagration, the fighting capacity of the masses must be increased by raising them to the struggle for the fulfilment of the slogans advanced by their organisations. This is why we must do our utmost to put into practice the instructions of the Seventh Congress in the sphere of the struggle to maintain peace. The successes achieved in the last few months by the C.P. of France do not mean that we have no shortcomings.

We are still not sufficiently popularising the decisions of the Seventh Congress, nor bringing these decisions to the masses. We have as yet not made a sufficiently thorough study of the valuable instructions and contents of the reports and resolutions of the Congress.

Comrade Dimitrov justly pointed out that the Communist Party of France has only taken the first step. The most difficult work is still ahead of us and we shall fulfil this with success only if we thoroughly study the work of the Seventh Congress.

Our Party has shown that it knows how to find its bearings in the present complex situation, and that it is capable of making the necessary tactical turn when the situation so requires. But it is weaker when it comes to explaining to the masses the reasons and the necessity for the tactical turn, to explaining to the masses the perspectives of the development of the struggle. The fact that the experiences of our party helped in the elaboration of the line at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern makes it obligatory on us in a greater measure to increase our study of the organisational and tactical tasks referred to in the deci-

sions of Congress, and to popularise these decisions among the masses.

There is another reason which prompts us to devote much attention to the popularisation of the Seventh Congress. It is exceedingly necessary for us to strengthen our ranks, both ideologically and organisationally. Comrade Dimitrov said:

"The question of cadres is of particular urgency for the additional reason that under our influence the mass united front movement is gaining momentum and bringing forward many thousands of new working class militants. Moreover, it is not only young revolutionary elements, not only workers just becoming revolutionary, who have never before participated in a political movement, that stream into our ranks."

These words of Comrade Dimitrov fully apply to our Party. It is our task to train these new revolutionary elements, to create new cadres. Now in particular, when our Party is extending its activities to the sphere of struggle for the united front, it is essential to consolidate its organisations considerably.

We have not yet eliminated the discrepancy

between our successes in the united front movement and the organisational work of the Party. This discrepancy must be quickly overcome. We must speed up the recruiting of new members, strengthen our lower Party organisations, enlarge the number of Party schools, bring forward new capable and tested fighters. Such are the conditions for organically strengthening the Party.

The Party is growing strong, its membership has reached almost 80,000, and recruiting is going forward at a rate hitherto unprecedented. Our influence among the masses is growing: the circulation of *l'Humanité*, which was 200,000 copies in 1934, now exceeds 240,000 copies on work-days, and 300,000 copies on Sundays. We cannot but note these successes. But in order to fulfil the most important task facing us, namely, of consolidating and extending the anti-fascist mass organisations by covering the whole of the country with a thick network of people's front committees—our Party must become still stronger, both ideologically and organisationally.

## THE BRITISH PARTY AFTER THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE C.I.

By P. KERRIGAN.

**T**HE British Party is carrying out a wide campaign for the explanation and popularisation of the decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the C.I.

A number of pamphlets have been published covering the main speeches delivered at the Congress.\* In addition, the *Daily Worker* has carried a number of articles, outstanding among which was a detailed article by Comrade Pollitt dealing with the application of the decisions of the Seventh Congress to the British situation.

The first series of Conferences and reporting meetings by the British delegates to the Congress were held on September 8 in London, Glasgow, South Wales, Manchester, Bradford, Newcastle, Sheffield and Birmingham. These Conferences were striking successes. Almost fifty per cent. of the delegates who attended came from Labour Party, Trade Union, Co-op. and Socialist Societies.

In London, at the mass demonstration following the reporting conference which was held in Battersea Town Hall, over 1,000 workers were not able to gain admission to the packed hall. The enthusiasm of the audience for the line of the Seventh Congress, which was presented by

Comrades Pollitt and Springhall, can be gauged from the following facts. £70 was taken in the collection. OVER £20 WORTH OF LITERATURE WAS SOLD, including 1,800 PAMPHLETS DEALING WITH THE WORLD CONGRESS. At all the conferences there was the most keen interest, and Labour and T.U. workers put many questions and participated in the discussions. Conferences are being continued in other places and additional ones have already been held in Aberdeen, Kilmarnock, Liverpool, etc.

There was also a special Party Conference in October to discuss the Seventh Congress and extend the Party activity around the Congress decisions.

At the T.U.C. Congress in Margate steps were taken to draw the delegates' and union executives' attention to the Congress decisions. It is significant that Dimitrov's statement on Trade Union Unity, was quoted by the mover of the motion on International Trade Union Unity and indeed this statement of Dimitrov exerted a great influence over a number of speeches at the T.U.C., in spite of the fact that Citrine, in his reply, misquoted Dimitrov. The telegram of greetings from the All-Union Council of Trade Unions, read to the Congress, was heartily endorsed by the

\*See page 1026.

majority of the delegates, and in this, as well as in the discussion on the fight against fascism and war, trade union unity, etc., was heard the response of the masses of British trade unionists to the clarion call of the Seventh World Congress for the united front against fascism and war.

Since then the Party has addressed a letter to all trade unions affiliated to the T.U.C., in which it pledges support to the miners in their wages fight, refutes the Black Circular slanders, declares that Communists will help build the unions, and draws attention of the union E.C.s to "the recent decisions of the C.I., and especially to the speech of Comrade Dimitrov, General Secretary of the Communist International," asking the E.C.s to give serious consideration to this statement.

#### **Result of Party Campaign.**

Can we see at this moment positive results from the Party's efforts to popularise the Seventh Congress and carry through its line? Undoubtedly! The T.U.C. decision, enforcing the Black Circular against the Communists, was passed by only a small majority, and this only after Bevin, leader of the Transport Workers' Union, cast the votes of his union against the Communists, in spite of the previous decision of his own E.C. against the Black Circular. Branches of this union are already protesting against Bevin's action at the Congress. Some of the most important unions (Miners, Railwaymen, Engineers, etc.), have declared their refusal to operate the Black Circular.

In the Party campaign for united working class action to defeat the National Government, an electoral agreement has been arrived at in the Vale of Leven in Scotland. For the County Council and District Council elections in December, the Communist Party has established a united front agreement with the Labour Party and the I.L.P. so that in the ten seats to be contested there will not be a split working class vote and the "moderates" will be faced with one working class candidate in each ward.

In the struggle to unite the T.U. movement in Britain in the fight for wage increases and to bring thousands of unorganised into the unions, the Executive of the United Mine Workers of Scotland is balloting all its members with a recommendation to support the following proposal:

"In view of the present fight of the miners for increased wages and the importance of the statement made by the M.F.G.B. delegation at the Trade Union Congress, we propose that the National Union of Scottish Mineworkers accept all the U.M.S. Branches and members on the basis of full trade union rights and membership."

The statement referred to was made by the Vice-President of the M.F.G.B. in the debate on the "Black Circular," when he declared

"that the miners will stand no interference with their

right to elect the representative they think will best represent them by ballot vote, whether he be a Communist or belongs to any other prescribed body."

There is one other big issue on which it is possible to say that the Congress line has been applied and is giving results. This is the Party's campaign against war and for the defence of Abyssinia. Here in a very difficult situation, the Party has shown its ability to apply in life the resolution of the Seventh Congress. The "Communist Peace Policy" has been embodied in eleven points covering action by the workers for stopping war materials to Italy, support for Abyssinia, closing of the Suez Canal, fight against British mandates, and British imperialist interests in Abyssinia, for mass pressure on the Government, for support for collective sanctions against Italy, etc. The campaign, which has been specially directed against the present foreign policy of the British Government and for Britain adhering to the Franco-Soviet Peace Pact system, has met with a big response among the masses of workers. IT IS SIGNIFICANT OF THE POSITION THAT THE BOOT AND SHOE WORKERS' UNION HAS JUST ISSUED AN INSTRUCTION TO ITS MEMBERS NOT TO WORK ON ORDERS FOR THE ITALIAN ARMY. This is a pointer as to what is possible in other industries and is understood as such by the capitalist press who have launched an attack on the union.

#### **Some Weaknesses.**

It is necessary to make some observations on the weak points in our campaign around the Seventh Congress. There is no indication at the moment of a big drive to recruit new members into the Party on the basis of the Seventh Congress decisions, and this is a very important question for the British Party.

The *Daily Worker* has also some shortcomings in the campaign. The paper does not seem to have a proper plan for popularising and explaining the Congress. There are gaps in the references to the Congress and there could be more features in the paper concretely apply the Congress decisions to problems facing us.

We have not yet commenced to organise regular classes and study circles, not only for the Party members, but for the broad non-Party masses of trade unionists, Labour and Socialist workers where they can systematically work over the Congress decisions and equip themselves for the coming class battles in Britain.

AT THE SAME TIME AS WE NOTE THESE SHORTCOMINGS, WE HAVE TO EMPHASISE THE BIG POSITIVE SIDE OF THE PARTY WORK SINCE THE SEVENTH CONGRESS, AND ON THE BASIS OF THIS WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE PARTY WILL MAKE STILL FURTHER PROGRESS IN CARRYING THE DECISIONS OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESS INTO THE WHOLE LIFE OF THE TOILERS OF BRITAIN.

# THE POPULARISING OF THE DECISIONS OF THE VII CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN AND THE FIRST STEPS MADE TOWARDS THEIR REALISATION BY THE COMMUNIST PARTIES IN SCANDINAVIA

By DENGEL.

## SWEDEN.

THE Central organ of the Communist Party of Sweden, the "Ny Dag," published several articles during the Congress commenting on its work, and published the most important of the speeches at the Congress and its decisions. On the whole, the "Ny Dag" published several dozen articles on questions concerning the Seventh Congress. All these were popular articles written in a spirit not only to keep its readers informed, but also to convince them.

The Social-Democratic press and the bourgeois press has widely responded to the 7th Congress. All the big Swedish newspapers published information concerning the Congress and devoted editorial articles to it. Comrade Dimitrov's report in particular worried the Social-Democratic press. The newspapers representing the extreme Right-wing of Swedish Social-Democracy howled about the "new manoeuvres" of the Comintern, rejecting in advance all possibility of any united front with the Communists. But the largest Social-Democratic newspaper, the Stockholm "Social-Demokraten," issued a famous article on August 18, in which none of the usual insults against the united front were to be found. This article subjects Comrade Dimitrov's report to a careful examination, and comes to the following conclusion:

"We note with interest the signs of a growth of wisdom and the awakening of a realistic sense in the central leadership of Communism. In the face of the fascist danger that is spreading in Europe, it has begun to understand the fundamental value of democratic liberty for which it previously found only words of contempt and jests. It would be a pleasure to be able to believe that a real change of viewpoint is taking place and not merely a change of tactics, forced by circumstances. Here as always the proverb is true: like father, like son; the essence of the theoretical premises define the concrete actions."

This was the first article in a Swedish Social-Democratic newspaper which, in spite of the numerous reservations, nevertheless did not adopt a position of downright rejection of the united front. It must be noted that the Swedish Communist press as a whole reacted correctly towards the Social-Democratic utterances about the 7th Congress. It tried to raise a discussion, and by the calm and convincing tone that it adopted,

aroused the Social-Democratic press to a discussion of the problems of the 7th Congress.

The central organ of the Socialist Party of Sweden (the Kilbom Party) devoted very much space to the 7th Congress. Articles appeared daily in this paper on the questions of the 7th Congress and on the policy of the Comintern. All these articles represented a desperate effort to discredit and attack the most important speeches and decisions of the Congress from the "left." Some of the leaders of the Socialist Party, led by Nils Flyg, blinded with hatred towards the Comintern, are using all means at their disposal to undermine the already existing united front between the Communist and Socialist organisations which has been realised in several localities. These leaders know that the desire of the Socialist workers for unity is growing every day, and that if the sectarian survivals in the Communist Party of Sweden are consistently overcome, it will lead to the realisation of unity in the working-class. It is just for this reason that Flyg and his followers endeavour to frighten the workers with their efforts to discredit the decisions of the 7th Congress, which are alleged to be a "betrayal of the revolutionary principles of Communism," "capitulation to Social-Democracy" and "subordination of the policy of the Comintern to the Soviet Union, now become bourgeois." The Communist press of Sweden does not fall victim to the provocation of the "Folkets Dagblad," and gives its reply to these infuriated attacks with convincing arguments.

The anti-war activities in connection with the Italo-Abyssinian conflict have shown that the Communist Party of Sweden is correctly carrying out the decisions of the 7th Congress. Not so long ago it seemed that joint action was impossible for the Communist and Social-Democratic organisations in Sweden. Utilising the decisions of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals concerning the carrying out of anti-war demonstrations, the Communist Party of Sweden has made an appeal to the local Social-Democratic and trade union organisations. At the same time it is carrying out energetic agitation among the Social-Democratic workers in the trade unions and factories. As a result, in Stockholm, Goeteborg, and many other

industrial centres of the country, joint demonstrations took place. It is particularly noteworthy that even in Goeteborg, where the extreme Right-wing Social-Democratic leaders headed by Richard Lindstroem are to be found, and where the most Right-wing Social-Democratic newspaper, the "Ny Tid," is published, the Social-Democratic workers brought about this joint demonstration in which the Communists took part on an equal footing with the Social-Democratic organisations. The example of Goeteborg has also shown that the realisation of the united front leads to a mighty upsurge of the working-class movement; in the anti-war demonstration about 35,000 people participated. It was therefore a mass demonstration hitherto unprecedented in Goeteborg.

The calm and convincing tone of the Communist press and the leaders of the Communist Party of Sweden in reply to the attacks of the Socialist Party leaders upon the 7th Congress and the appeals of the Communist Party for the united front, resulted in the participation of several local organisations of the Socialist Party in the joint anti-war demonstrations, against the will of the leadership.

This close connection between the Communist workers and the activists, on the one hand, and the officials, members of the Socialist Party and the Left Social-Democratic workers and functionaries, on the other, was also expressed in different recent trade union congresses.

At the seamen's congress, where only a small number of the delegates were those elected on the opposition ticket, this minority together with those Social-Democratic delegates inclined towards the opposition, was successful in electing a new leadership composed in the main of representatives of the opposition. At this congress, as well as at the congresses of the metal workers and of the labourers' union, important decisions were passed against the official reformist policy on questions of the united front and trade union tactics, and in criticising the measures adopted by the Social-Democratic government, etc. In all these cases these decisions were feasible because of the comradely collaboration between the Communists, the Socialists, and the opposition Social-Democrats.

In his report at the 7th Congress, Comrade Dimitrov criticised the Communist Party of Sweden because it had not yet operated the united front sufficiently concretely, and primarily because it had not used the struggle to realise the Social-Democratic government's unfulfilled promises as the basis of the united front. On the questions of Sweden's home policy, the Communist Party of Sweden has not yet fulfilled the directives

of Comrade Dimitrov's report. The successes of the united front in the struggle against imperialist war should make clear to the Communist Party of Sweden that on concrete questions concerning the life of the workers, and on questions of home policy, it must boldly and determinedly appeal to the Social-Democratic workers and organisations, proposing that a united front fight be put up for the realisation of the demands of the workers and of the poor farmers.

#### NORWAY.

The Communist Party of Norway has carried on good work in popularising the 7th Congress. During the 7th Congress the Communist Party of Norway was already organising workers' meetings at which questions of the Congress and in particular Comrade Dimitrov's report were discussed. The press of the Communist Party of Norway—and especially its central organ which is issued only twice a week—has successfully popularised the decisions of the 7th Congress. On August 9, the organ of the Party, "Arbeideren," was already popularising Comrade Dimitrov's report, especially explaining those points in his report where he gave the basis for the new tactical line of the Comintern for our struggle for unity in the working-class, which will give "the working-class an opportunity in alliance with the farmers and the petty bourgeoisie of gaining a victory over fascism."

Several examples go to prove that the Communist Party of Norway has been successful in bringing the decisions of the Congress to the attention of the Social-Democratic workers — members of the Norwegian Labour Party. In one of the industrial districts in the southern part of the country, where there is no Communist organisation at all, one of the local Social-Democratic groups having discussed the results of the 7th Congress, unanimously adopted and despatched to the leadership of the Norwegian Labour Party, a resolution welcoming the decision of the Comintern for the establishment of a united front against fascism, the war danger and the offensive of capital.

In this resolution we find the following:

"We demand collaboration with all the revolutionary forces of the Norwegian working-class, and therefore we propose that negotiations be opened immediately with the Communist Party of Norway for the establishment of a united front of struggle for the following demands: disbanding of the fascist organisations which are preparing for civil war, abolition of the anti-labour legislation, the transfer of the burden of the crisis to the shoulders of the rich, unemployment insurance at the expense of the state and employers, against wage-cuts, and for wage-increases."

We find an expression of the vital interest displayed towards the 7th Congress by the Social-

Democratic workers in the fact also that one of the largest Social-Democratic organisations in the capital of Norway, Oslo, invited one of the leaders of the Communist Party of Norway to make a report on the 7th Congress.

The Congress met with an especially lively response among the working youth of Norway. Masses of young workers themselves demanded that the proletarian youth organisations merge in one united anti-fascist youth organisation.

There is the same desire for unity expressed in the decisions of the representatives of the Norwegian trade unions on the question of international trade union unity. In the resolution passed on the question of affiliating to the Amsterdam International, it says:

"Affiliation should take place on the basis of the principles and premises outlined by our congresses on the question of trade union work, and with the definite intention of striving to gather all the forces of all trade union organisations which stand on the platform of the class struggle."

In Norway, as in Sweden, the united front of struggle against war has been achieved in many localities at the initiative of the Communist Party.

#### DENMARK.

The Communist Party of Denmark has also taken the first steps towards popularising the 7th Congress. On September 10, the Party organised a meeting in which 2,500 participated, and reports were given by delegates to the 7th Congress. But the daily paper of the Party has still not fully coped with the task of popularising the Congress

and its decisions. True, the most important speeches and decisions of the Congress were published, but up to now the Communist Party of Denmark has not been successful in applying these decisions in actual practice in its Party work, or in adapting these to its own country.

In spite of the fact that Comrade Dimitrov sharply criticised the work of the Communist Party of Denmark at the 7th Congress, no real change has yet been made there. The Communist Party of Denmark has still made no serious attempt to set up the united front with the Social-Democratic workers and organisations on the basis of concrete problems inside the country as, for example, the struggle against fascist elements in the big farmers' organisations of Denmark, the struggle against the increasing cost of living, or the struggle against the war danger.

The leader of the Party, Comrade Axel Larsen, in his speech at the 7th Congress, stated that the Communist Party of Denmark still limits itself, in the main, to one-sided negative criticism of the policy of Social-Democracy. But despite his self-critical declaration, there is no determined change to be observed in the direction of giving up negative criticism and taking a definite course to set up a united front with the Social-Democratic workers and organisations in a struggle against fascism and the war danger, against the continuing offensive upon the standard of living of the working-class and of the poor farmers. It is not enough for the Communist Party of Denmark to welcome the decisions of the 7th Congress: it must, at least, begin to carry them out.

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# THE POPULARISATION IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN

By G. FRIEDRICH.

THE 7th Congress of the Comintern aroused tremendous interest in Czecho-Slovakia, especially among the toiling masses. Among the workers, this widespread interest in the 7th Congress assumed the form of an ever-growing urge towards the united front. The Congress aroused such a wide echo among the toiling masses that, for example, the leaders of the Czech Socialist Party (the Benes Party), who had silently ignored the united front proposal of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia for many weeks, were forced under the pressure of the masses to consider this proposal. The Czech Social-Democratic press was compelled to devote a series of extensive articles to a discussion with the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia, while Hampel himself, the leader of the Czech Social-Democratic Party had repeatedly to take part in this discussion. The leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party of Czecho-Slovakia were also forced to break their silence and deal with the 7th Congress, particularly with Comrade Dimitrov's report, in a tone unusual in the Social-Democratic press.

This all resulted from the fact that the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia had succeeded in rapidly acquainting the masses with the decisions of the 7th Congress.

In the ranks of the Party, the popularisation of the 7th Congress was launched by a meeting of the leading Party workers of the Prague organisation of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia, at which 1,200 persons were present. Following this meeting, three mass meetings were held in Prague in a single day, attended by 10,000 workers. Congress delegates gave reports on the results of the 7th Congress in the chief industrial centres—Brunn, Moravska, Ostrava, Pilsen, and at mass meetings in the German areas (Gablonts, Reichenberg, etc.). The Communist Party launched an extensive campaign in the press and organised mass distribution of pamphlets containing Congress material and especially Comrade Dimitrov's report. The first German edition of Comrade Dimitrov's report was sold in 30,000 copies, the second edition in 5,000 copies. The Czech edition was sold in 30,000 copies. Comrade Gottwald's speech was published in the form of a leaflet.

The Party press, especially the *Rote Fahne*, and lately the *Rude Pravo*, have been carrying on systematic work in popularising the decisions of the 7th Congress. These decisions are concretised from day to day as applied to actual political prob-

lems in the country. The *Rude Pravo*, the central organ of the Party, which during the Congress completely failed to cope with the task of giving publicity to the work of the Congress, has now adopted a line which fully coincides with the spirit of the decisions of the 7th Congress, in the discussion with the Social-Democratic press on united front questions, in properly approaching the members of the bourgeois democratic parties and in the discussion of the points raised by the opponents of the united front concerning the defence of democracy, participation in the government, the right of the nations to self-determination, and the attitude towards the army.

In popularising the 7th Congress and its decisions, the Communist Party has learned to differentiate its approach to the various strata of the toiling population and the national minorities. Special meetings of active women workers were called, for example, at which reports were made. Public and closed meetings devoted to the Congress in the Czech areas passed resolutions on the position of national minorities in the German and other oppressed districts of Czecho-Slovakia. This made it possible when carrying on agitation among the population of the oppressed regions, to refer to the decisions of the Congress as an example of solidarity and support for the struggle of the toilers of the oppressed nationalities on the part of the Czech workers. The *Rote Fahne*, for example, published a report about big meetings in Prague under the heading: "Prague Appeals to Sudetan" (Sudetan is the German district of Czecho-Slovakia). In reply to the ban on the circulation of Dimitrov's pamphlet in the German areas of Aussig and Budenbach, the Czech workers and Party functionaries issued a protest.

An important place in the popularisation in Czecho-Slovakia of the 7th Congress of the Communist International is occupied by the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party at which about 100 leading functionaries from leading districts were present. The Plenum adopted a unanimous resolution on the report of the Congress and sent greetings to Comrades Dimitrov and Gottwald. The Central Committee of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia decided to convoke the next Party Congress between January 3rd to 6th, 1936, with the following agenda:

- 1.—How to prevent fascism, war and poverty, and how to unite the toiling people of Czechoslovakia.
- 2.—Trade Union Unity in Czechoslovakia.

- 3.—The struggle for the young generation of toilers.
- 4.—Election of a Central Committee.

A general increase in the activity of the Party members is to be observed in connection with the popularisation of the decisions of the Congress. The Party papers have opened up a permanent column entitled "The Comintern Decisions to the Masses." New methods of work are being used in popularising the Congress, and especially in the distribution of pamphlets about the Congress, and in the organisation of meetings. Competition was developed as to the best explanation of the decisions of the Congress, while a week was devoted to activity under the slogan: "Dimitrov speaks to the masses." (During this week all Party organisations were mobilised for the sale of Dimitrov's speech at the Seventh Congress and other of the printed materials of the Congress among the toilers.)

A defect in the campaign is that the problems of the Congress and the struggle of the workers of the capitalist countries are not sufficiently linked up with the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, notwithstanding the instructions given on the subject by Comrade Dimitrov in his concluding speech. The Party press does not publish systematic accounts of how the Congress decisions are being popularised in other countries.

The activity of the Party has stimulated a big movement among the masses for the united and people's fronts. The rising cost of living, the serious threat coming from Hitler fascism, and the growing discontent of the broad masses, are urging them on to a united front with the Communists.

A number of impressive united front meetings, for example, have taken place in the course of the campaign against the high cost of living. In Geding, Communists, Social-Democrats, Czech Socialists, members of the Artisans' Party, legionnaires, war victims, members of the Social-Democratic and Jewish Sport organisations and the Communist and Socialist Youth Leagues, etc., took part in a meeting called against the high cost of living. The meeting sent greetings to the Soviet Ambassador in Prague, and resolutions of the masses, demanding the preservation of peace, to Benes and Masaryk.

Similar meetings at which the Socialist, Agrarian and middle-class parties took part have been held in several other cities. Four trade unions of the town of Brun (the Social-Democratic and Czech Socialist Wood Workers' Unions, the Revolutionary Metal Workers' Union and the Christian Union) decided to call a joint protest strike against the high cost of living. As a result of the united front movement, 42 factory committees joined the movement against the high cost of living in Prague, and 30 factory and mine committees of North-West

Bohemia decided to call joint meetings against the high cost of living in all the district towns; 50 permanent united front committees have been set up on the outskirts of Prague. Of particular significance in connection with the wave of chauvinist war agitation in Poland is the fact that representatives of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia held a conference with representatives of the Central Committee of the Polish Socialist Party in Czecho-Slovakia, in Teszin.

Fourteen joint mass meetings under the auspices of the Socialist and Communist Parties have been held in the Brun district. In addition, 35 other meetings have also taken place as well as 10 factory meetings, attended by an aggregate of 50,000 people. A conference of the Communist and Czech Socialist Youth took place in Prague, and decided in favour of joint action for the demands of the Young Socialists.

How strong the desire is for a united front among the Socialist youth is illustrated by the numerous joint meetings held in connection with International Youth Day. At the youth demonstrations red flags were carried bearing the hammer and sickle and the Social-Democratic emblem of three arrows. In Gradzen, the young Socialists organised a district youth rally, and all who were present wore two buttons, one bearing the sign of the three arrows, and the other, the five-pointed star, as a sign of the united struggle being conducted by the Socialist and Communist youth. In West Bohemia a "cultural conference" was held, attended by representatives of the Red and free unions, the Social-Democratic Sports League, the Red Sports League, the Socialist and Communist Youth Leagues and many cultural organisations. The meeting elected an anti-fascist leadership representing all cultural and sports organisations as well as the progressive intellectuals.

Particular success in the united front movement has been achieved in the German areas. A conference of functionaries of the Social-Democratic Party of Budenbach attended by 300 delegates unanimously declared in favour of the united front, and passed a resolution which stated that the

"consolidation of all democratic and socialist forces is a most necessary prerequisite for a successful policy in the interests of the toiling population."

A conference of Social-Democratic functionaries in Aussig also declared in favour of a united front, in spite of the opposition of the official speaker sent by the Social-Democratic leaders.

The biggest united front demonstration in the German areas was the international solidarity gathering in Tepliz-Schenau, under the auspices of the Communist Party, attended by 20,000 workers, including many Social-Democrats.



The extensive struggle waged by the Party in the German areas for national liberation, and the work done among the proletarian members of the Henlein Party has begun to undermine this fascist organisation.

The successes of the united front in Czecho-Slovakia are not limited to the instances here mentioned. Alarmed at these successes and noting the advance of the united front, the fascist parties are not sparing in the warnings they are issuing to the Socialist parties.

The fascist press, especially the *Narodni Listi*, organ of Kramarz, pleads with the government socialists "not to fall for the bait of the Congress." The *Slovak*, organ of the Slovenian clericals, dedicates an editorial to the "activity of the Communists," and says that the latter continue to follow their old revolutionary way. The Czech fascists write the following in one of their papers:

"The fruits of Communist agitation are making themselves felt. Various organisations in the country are now making an alliance for Communist ends. The Socialists in the government must put a stop to the furious agitation of the Communists, who are advocating the slogan 'let the rich pay.'"

The *Lidove Noviny*, a paper closely associated with Benes, says that the Communists in their agitation have achieved a number of partial successes in the localities, and declares that "this united front cannot be durable or sincere." The *Slovak* admits with alarm that the united front movement is also beginning to shatter the positions of the Slovak People's Party. The paper notes that owing to Communist activity, the proletarian electors of the government Socialist Parties are becoming revolutionised, and tries to frighten the Socialists by warning them that:

"By tolerating the activity of the Communists, and their writings in the press in favour of the Soviet Union, the Socialists and the government are thereby preparing the ground for a Kerensky period."

The Social-Democrats of Czecho-Slovakia, much under the influence of this agitation, in their effort to prevent the establishment of a united front, have again changed their tactical line, or, more correctly, have returned to their old line of utterly refusing to have anything to do with the united front. The leader of the Czech Social-Democrats, Hampel, summing up a discussion with Communists, said:

"The idea of joint action is also gaining ground among the Socialists. This is expressed in the desire of many followers of the Socialist Parties to bring about closer

relations and unity of the trade union organisations, and if possible, to establish one big Socialist party."

Forced to admit the growing urge of the workers and especially of the members of the Social-Democratic Party for a united front, Hampel is trying to break their determination by the following assertion:

The methods by means of which the Communist Party believes it will be able to fulfil its obligations and promises, are in any event primitive. Although the masses of workers cannot at the moment understand the true causes of all that is happening, it must be said that these methods are insincere. The Communists have simply added greater vigour to their old united front slogan, trying to give it the more up-to-date name of 'socialist militant collaboration.' We must say that the whole discussion went the wrong way. It is not a question of how useful joint action is. There can be no doubt on that score. The question is whether the necessary political and psychological preconditions are present in the Communist Party for that. It is not our fault if we have to assert that so far we do not see these preconditions."

Hampel demands that the discussion be put on a different track. In his opinion the only point that can be a subject for discussion is the question as to whether the viewpoint in principle of the Social-Democrats, and of the constructive Socialists, who stand for the Czecho-Slovak republic and democratic principles, is correct, and whether in particular it is correct at the present time to take part in the government, or whether it would be more expedient to adopt the Communist point of view and work the establishment of a "Communist dictatorship" and a union of Soviet republics.

It is characteristic that the entire bourgeois press of Czecho-Slovakia speaks with satisfaction of Hampel's article, which is quoted extensively. All the other Social-Democratic papers have begun to write in a new, but essentially old tone. The Social-Democratic press is again openly expressing the opinion that a united front with the Communists is impossible, and the argument is again being repeated that the united front is only a Communist "manœuvre," and that the "policy of the Communists of Czecho-Slovakia is at variance with the foreign policy of the Soviet Government."

These are the favourite arguments used to justify the rejection of the united front in the eyes of the Social-Democratic workers.

But the spontaneous movement for the united front can no longer be arrested. Events are so developing that the broad people's front is being put on the order of the day in Czecho-Slovakia as well.

## THE NEW STAGE OF SOVIET TRADE

By V. NODEL.

THE decisions of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. and of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. regarding "the reduction of the prices of bread, and the abolition of the card ration system for meat, fish, sugar, fats and potatoes," dated September 25th, and "On the work of the consumers' co-operative societies in the village," dated September 29th, are vivid proof of the fact that the main difficulties in the sphere of food supplies have been finally overcome in the U.S.S.R. These decisions prove that the U.S.S.R. is BECOMING A COUNTRY OF ABUNDANCE, at an unheard-of pace, a country able to produce and already producing enormous quantities of goods at really cheap prices.

### **The Cause of the Former System of Rationed Supplies.**

During the 18 years of the existence of Soviet power it has been necessary on two occasions to resort to the system of rationed supplies, namely, during the period of War Communism (1918-1920) and during the period of the decisive transition from the restoration to the reconstruction of the entire national economy (1928-1934), during the first and at the beginning of the second five-year plan. These were two different historic stages. In each of these, the system of rationed supplies helped to solve the particular problems characteristic precisely of the given stage.

During the period of War Communism, when the country represented a besieged fortress, the card (ration) system helped to organise a correct utilisation of the limited resources available, helped to secure victory in the civil war, and to preserve the main cadres of the proletariat.

During the period of the transition from the restoration to the reconstruction of the national economy, when the capitalist classes offered fierce resistance on the grain front (the "grain strike" of the kulaks in the villages, and the speculation in the towns, etc.), a different problem had to be solved, namely, to utilise the resources in such a way as to secure the speediest fulfilment of the plans of production. This problem could only be solved by means of preferentially supplying the most important regions of the country and the workers of the enterprises of decisive importance. This was actually done in 1930. Thus, while the percentage of workers among the entire population of Moscow was 34 per cent., these workers received 47 per cent. of the total amount of bread, 56 per cent. of the barley, 56 per cent. of the macaroni, and 55 per cent. of the herrings on sale. In the

first quarter of 1931 the number of the workers in the most important enterprises amounted to 38.9 per cent. of the total number of workers supplied, while these groups received 67.5 per cent. of the products; in the second quarter, the figures were 39.6 per cent. and 73.2 per cent. respectively, and in the third quarter—42.7 per cent. and 79.3 per cent.

It was only due to the system of rationed supplies

"that the state was able, though having limited resources, to fully ensure that the most important centres and shock-workers in production were preferentially supplied, while at the same time ensuring bread supplies at fixed state prices to those delivering to the State agricultural raw materials, such as cotton, hemp, jute, tobacco, etc., in the interests of raising the yield of industrial crops and of the growth of purchases of raw materials for industry" (from the Resolution of the Plenum of the C.C. C.P.S.U., 25-28, November, 1934).

The system of rationed supply fully justified itself in its time. However, the Party has never concealed that this system, by comparison with wide Soviet trade, has a number of NEGATIVE features. These negative features consisted in the bureaucratic spirit in the methods of work of the trading organisations, in negligence of the individual requirements of consumers, the high cost of upkeep of the trading apparatus, and in feeble effort for the production of new articles of mass consumption, etc.

That is why the Party has repeatedly stressed the exceptional importance of the development of trade turnover, and of the passage from rationed supplies to a wide Soviet trade.

The 17th Party Conference (January-February, 1932) pointed out that

"it is only on the basis of developing the trade turnover that it is possible to ensure a further speedy improvement in supplying the workers and the village toilers with industrial goods and agricultural products, for which, in its turn, it is necessary in every way to develop a network of shops, stores and an entire trading network, with the introduction of the technical reconstruction of it necessary. Only on this basis is it possible to prepare for the abolition of the sale of goods on the basis of rations, and to replace the system of centralised distribution, by wide Soviet trade."

### **The Abolition of the Card (Ration) System and the Transfer to Wide Soviet Trade.**

For the card system to be given up it was necessary, first of all, to establish a stable base in agriculture, to ensure a steady growth of the quantity of agricultural products available. It was also necessary to prepare the trading apparatus for wide Soviet trade.

At the 17th Congress of the Party, when analys-

ing the data of the growth of agriculture, Comrade Stalin pointed out that

"1933 IS THE FIRST YEAR AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE REORGANISATIONAL PERIOD — is the turning year in the DEVELOPMENT OF CEREALS AND INDUSTRIAL CROPS."

"This means, THAT THE CEREALS IN THE FIRST PLACE, AND THEN THE INDUSTRIAL CROPS WILL FROM NOW ON PROCEED STRONGLY AND CONFIDENTLY TOWARDS A POWERFUL RISE." (Problems of Leninism, page 562).

This powerful rise revealed itself in 1934 already. In spite of unfavourable climatic conditions, the Soviet Union succeeded in storing 250 million poods of grain more than during the preceding year. This growth of state reserves and the simultaneous growth of the reserves in the hands of the population rendered possible the abolition of ration cards as regards bread products. Comrade Molotov, speaking at the November (1934) Plenum of the C.C. C.P.S.U., said the following regarding the abolition of ration cards:

"The replacement of the ration card system by trade is one of the best proofs of the growth of the strength of the Soviet Union, a proof of the sharp change in agriculture, a proof of the new successes of Socialism in our country. WE HAVE BECOME STRONGER AND THEREFORE WE ARE ABOLISHING THE CARD SYSTEM."

Simultaneously with the creation of a stable base for supplying the cities with bread, extensive work was begun on the development of a network of shops and stores, and on the improvement of the organisation of trade itself. In the last two years only, the trading network has grown almost 50 per cent. During 1934, 4,526 new well-equipped model shops were opened. State trade by July 1st, 1935, possessed over 28,000 shops as against 9,145 on January 1st, 1932. A network of large model department stores were opened (the central department store in Moscow gives an idea of the turnover of these shops—for the past month its daily turnover reached two million roubles). Thus in 1935, we already had a stable supply base and a considerably better working staff.

The flunkeys of fascism attempted to present the abolition of cards as "a new defeat" of the Soviet Government...*The Times* wrote that "the system of distribution has failed and is now being abolished" (November 27th, 1934). *The Berliner Börzen Zeitung* asserted that "by means of the abolition of ration cards the Soviet Union desires to mislead the foreign countries regarding economic successes, primarily in the field of agriculture" (December, 1934). *The Illustrirovanny Kurrier Podzenny* tries to save its face by assuring its readers that "the Soviet régime is inexorably returning to those methods of government that it had itself called capitalist" and that all this "is a proof of the complete bankruptcy of Marxist teachings" (December 8th, 1934).

It is doubtful whether any of these scribes would care to repeat what they wrote less than a year

ago. The practice of this year has shown that the abolition of the card system means a FURTHER strengthening of the entire national economy and an improvement of the conditions of the toilers. The Party began the abolition of the card system with the abolition of bread-cards so as later to abolish the ration cards for the remaining products, and to pass to Soviet trade.

#### **The Growth of State Purchases, Turnover and the Reduction in Prices.**

Bread cards were abolished on January 1st, 1935. Only 10 months have elapsed. If we are to measure this period by the usual scale — this period is extremely short. But for the land of the Soviets this was a period of new tremendous advance, and, on the basis of the consolidation of the collective farm system, and basing itself on the victories of 1934, the Party set the following task before agriculture — to achieve a 16.3 per cent. increase in production during 1935.

The data concerning harvesting, and the fulfilment of all agricultural work, enable us to assert that this plan will be over-fulfilled. Thus, for the first time in the history of humanity, agriculture, based on the construction of collective and state farms, provides an increase this year in excess of that attained by the product of industry (16 per cent.).

The growth of agriculture has been primarily reflected in the growth of state reserves of products, in the growth of collective farm trading. The state supply of milk for seven months of this year increased by 14 per cent. as compared with the same period last year: butter by 17 per cent., and fish by 21 per cent., while additional supplies in the hands of co-operative stores and workers' factory supply stores increased for the first half of the year by 38 per cent. The funds of retail trade have grown considerably, while the turnover of collective farm trading has increased. This growth of resources created all the necessary conditions for the FINAL abolition of rationing and for the transfer to wide Soviet trade with all food products. The decision of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. and the C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. dated September 25th, declares that:

"The significance of this figure may be judged by the following data. The average annual increase in agricultural production in the U.S.A., the country, where capitalist agriculture is mostly highly mechanised, amounted to 3.1 per cent. in the first decade of the 20th century, and 1.4 per cent. in the second decade, while for the period of 1925-1929 it amounted to 1.7 per cent. Thus, the increase of agricultural production in the U.S.S.R. for one year is more than ten times the average annual increase of agricultural products in the U.S.A.

The improvement of cattle-breeding, the growth of the yield of the sugar beet crop, and the consolidation and development of the fishing industry, have now created

all the necessary conditions for the liquidation of the card system for meat, fats, fish, sugar and potatoes as well. The liquidation of the card system for meat, fats, fish, sugar and potatoes should eliminate the existence of double prices—the high commercial prices (for goods sold in “open” shops—Ed.), and the too low rationed prices — and ensure the establishment of state selling prices uniform for each province (republic) on a level between the existing commercial and rationed prices.”

The transfer to uniform prices for meat, fats, fish, potatoes and sugar is realised by prices which are CONSIDERABLY LOWER by comparison with the existing prices in the “open” (non-ration) shops. Thus, for instance, the price for meat is being cut by 24 per cent., for refined sugar 35 per cent., and potatoes 15 per cent. For the overwhelming majority of the city population this is a DIRECT increase in their real wages, because only a part of the city workers received rationed supplies.\*

The decrease in prices for bread in January of this year was followed by a sharp decrease in prices at the collective farm markets.† The reduction in the price of bread resulted in the reduction of the prices of all other products. The prices for some 30 various articles have been decreased by the Soviet Government during a period of six months amounting to a total of 600 million roubles (not taking into account the cut in the price of bread on January 1st, 1935). In comparison with the first half of 1933, the prices in “open,” “commercial” shops were cut by September 1st, 1935, by almost a half, by 45 per cent. The greatest decrease in prices had been effected for the following goods: bread, buns, potatoes, cotton (from 60 per cent. to 70 per cent.), butter, barley, milk, kitchen soap, sausages (from 40 to 50 per cent.).

The reduction in prices effected by the government, the development of state and co-operative trade, the growth of the quantity of products in the collective farm village available for the market could not fail to affect the prices current in collective farm trading. For the first half of 1935 the prices of collective farm products sold in the open market have fallen by 21 per cent. This means that if the same rate of price reductions continues in the second half of the year (and the rate of price reduction will undoubtedly be greater), the city population will save on purchases at collective farm markets alone from 3-3½ thousand million roubles. In capitalist countries a fall in prices leads to impoverishment and destruction of peasant farming. In the Soviet Union the decrease in prices is a stimulus towards the further development of agriculture. This lowering of prices goes parallel with the general increase of the income of collective farmers. In confirmation of this it will be sufficient to cite two facts:

\* At prices lower than those in the “open” shops.

† When the collective farmers bring their surplus products for public sale.

1. In the last five years the state doubled its purchases of products from collective farms and from collective farmers—individually. Expenses of production have sharply decreased as a result of the mechanisation of the processes of labour. The state itself has invested thousands of millions of roubles in technically equipping agriculture, has established an enormous network of machine-tractor stations, and placed hundreds of thousands of tractors and tens of thousands of harvesting combines and automobiles at the disposal of those engaged in agriculture. At the same time the state has left unchanged the prices it pays for those products compulsorily sold to the state by the collective farms. For a number of agricultural products (industrial crops, dairy products, etc.) the state has even increased the prices it pays (for the last five years the collective farms and farmers have doubled their incomes on that part only of their products which they sell to the state at fixed prices).

2. The collective farmers sell about 20 per cent. of their surplus products through the collective farm markets. The market prices have been reduced thrice in the course of two years. The following are the figures of the incomes of the collective farmers obtained from the collective farm markets: in 1933 the turnover of collective farm trading amounted to 10,000 million roubles, in 1934, 14,000 million roubles; in 1935, 16,000 million roubles, taking the average of the first nine months of each year.

There is no doubt that the new lowering of prices will in a still greater measure result in the reduction of collective farm prices. Now already by the middle of the Second Five-Year Plan, the decrease of prices, planned for the end of this plan, has in fact already been secured on the collective farm markets. It is therefore quite clear that the second half of the Second Five-Year Plan, when there will be a still further increase in the country's resources, will be a period which will see a particularly considerable decrease in prices, a period when the material well-being of the toilers will rise to an unheard-of degree. Every toiler in the Soviet Union and outside it can now see that the U.S.S.R. is really becoming the richest country, a country where there is an abundance of products, a country where products are cheapest.

The quantity of products in the country is increasing. The possibility of producing them is growing. The satisfaction of the demands of the population depends decisively on the work of the trading apparatus. At the 17th Party Congress, Comrade Stalin gave special attention to the question of the development of commodity circulation as a most important national economic task, “which

if not solved, will make further progress impossible" (J. Stalin). He said that:

"In order that the economic life of the country might bubble like a spring and that industry and agriculture might have a stimulus to increase output still more, one condition is necessary, and that is, to expand COMMODITY CIRCULATION between town and country, between the districts and the regions of the country, between the various branches of national economy. The country must be covered with a huge network of goods bases, shops and stores. There must be a ceaseless flow of goods through the conduits of these bases, shops and stores from the producers to the consumers."

Soviet trade, well and culturally organised, helps in better organising production, and ensures the correct utilisation of goods produced, and their correct distribution over the various regions of the country.

#### **The Strengthening of the Consumers' Co-operative Societies in the Village.**

The demands of the village population have grown enormously, but there is clearly insufficient improvement in the way their trading requirements are met.

The C.P.C. of the U.S.S.R. and the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. in their decision on "the work of consumers' co-operative societies in the village" point to the following serious defects in the work of co-operative societies in the village:

"The work of consumers' co-operative societies in the village suffers from serious defects. The system of village consumers' societies and village stores has been unnecessarily split up into too small units. Industrial commodities reaching the village, such as clothing, shoes, cloth, etc., are distributed among small unsuitable stores, which cannot have the necessary assortment of goods for the consumers' selection."

It is necessary to raise trade in the village quickly to correspond with the new tasks. It is necessary to make considerable improvements in supplying the village with industrial products. At the same time it is necessary to intensify purchases in the village. How is this to be done?

The decision of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. and Council of People's Commissars gives a detailed answer to this question. This answer amounts, in the first place, to sharply strengthening and consolidating the village consumers' societies themselves, secondly, concentrating the entire activity of the consumers' co-operative societies on work in the villages, and liberating the consumers' co-operative societies from the task of serving the city population.

The consolidation of village consumers' societies is to be brought about by the following measures: small consumers' societies are being united; huge sums of money are being allotted for the construction of 5,000 new shops and for strengthening the district societies (155 million roubles), 5,000 trucks for carrying goods are being provided, the wages of the staffs of the consumers' societies are

being increased, the work of the district co-operative unions is being strengthened, and a base is being established for work to be carried on on business-accounting lines.

At the same time the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. and the C.P.C. have taken steps to secure that all distortions of democracy in the co-operative societies are decisively abolished. Their decision states that "all basic questions of the work of village consumers' societies (plans of trade and purchases, estimates of expenditure and profits, measures to ensure work without any losses on the part of the village consumers' societies, reports of administration and control and auditing commissions of their work, and so on) must be discussed at a general meeting of shareholders or at a meeting of representatives, called at least once a quarter."

(From the decision of the C.C. and C.P.C.)

The consumers' co-operative societies must carefully attend to the needs of their shareholders. The activities of the co-operative societies must be under the constant control of the masses.

#### **Why the Party Decided to Wind Up the Work of the Co-operative Societies in the Cities.**

This decision is not a sudden one. It has been prepared by the entire previous work done to develop trade, and reflects the tremendous successes of the entire national economy. As far back as May, 1931, the C.C. of the C.P.S.U., the C.P.C. and Centrosoyus,\* in their declaration regarding the consumers' co-operatives, pointed out that it was inexpedient to retain the monopolistic position of the consumers' co-operatives. This declaration laid it down that it was OBLIGATORY for state trade to participate in serving the city population. All the following plenums of the C.C. emphasised the necessity for extending the participation of various kinds of state trading in the organisation of the commodity circulation of the country and primarily of the towns.

As a result of these measures, state trading has occupied a LEADING place in the towns. At present 62.3 per cent. of all the goods, realised in the cities, are sold through the network of state trading stores belonging to the People's Commissariat of Home Trade, and the People's Commissariat of Food Industry (as well as branches of workers' factory supply stores, etc.). The consumers' co-operative stores sell only about one-third of all goods. Thus, in 1935, we have a situation the opposite to that which we had in 1930-31, when the consumers' co-operative stores were almost monopolist in the sale of goods in the towns.

It is not only the relations between the individual trade systems which have changed. THE POSITION OF THE TRADING ENTERPRISE HAS ALSO CHANGED. The existence of the co-operative societies in the towns is expedient and justified

\* Central Co-operative Union.

as long as co-operatives can present DEFINITE ADVANTAGES to their shareholders in comparison with other citizens. These advantages were very considerable during the N.E.P. period, when the struggle against private traders was carried on. The advantages remained in another form during the period of the First Five-Year Plan. While trade continued in "closed" stores, when the co-operatives had at their disposal a large network of suburban farms and extensive products and when there was a shortage of a number of products in the country—they could sell their shareholders an additional quantity of products at cheap prices.

The position, naturally, changes when there is a large amount of products in the country, when dual prices are liquidated (the low price in the closed trade and the higher one in the open commercial store), and when trade is carried on entirely at STABLE PRICES. The co-operative societies cannot present any special advantages to their shareholders. The most important stimulus for co-operation falls away.

From this fundamental fact arises the necessity of doing away with the SEPARATE existence of the co-operative societies and the advisability of completing the processes taking place in city trade. The necessity of just such a solution of the question also follows from the fact that the consumers' co-operative societies must concentrate ALL their attention on work in the village "where it must serve as the basic transmitter of industrial goods and the most important link in the organisation of commodity circulation between the town and country."

The consumers' co-operative societies have played no small part in organising and developing trade in the towns. Those engaged in the work of the co-operative societies have done not a little to develop a network of shops, to root out the private trader, and to accumulate experience in carrying on trade in a cultured fashion. The time has now come when the state itself is in a position to organise trade through its own apparatus. The handing over of the co-operative stores to the state trading institutions will still further improve the trading service of the town population, and at the same time will ensure a new and great advance of trade in the village.

\* \* \*

The turnover of Soviet trade in 1935 equals 80,000 million roubles (not counting the commodity circulation of collective farm trading which equals 16,000 million roubles). 20,000 million roubles worth of goods more than were sold last year are being sold to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union this year by state trading stores and the consumers' co-operative societies. This is in

the U.S.S.R. In the capitalist countries the trade turnover is steadily decreasing. During the four years of the crisis the trade turnover in Germany decreased by 40 per cent., in the U.S.A. by 47.7 per cent. This decline took place in a situation where prices increased uninterruptedly. Even according to fascist statistical data (Wirtschaft und Statistik, of 1-9-35), the minimum cost of living, leaving out rents, in Germany, grew during the last two years by 6.9 per cent. The cost of articles of consumption grew still more—by 8.6 per cent. According to the same data the cost of eggs during the past year rose by 19.2 per cent, meat by 8.5 per cent., veal by 16.2 per cent. In Berlin, from April, 1933, to June, 1935, the price for butter increased by 36.9 per cent., meat by 15.3 per cent., peas by 90.7 per cent., potatoes by 43.3 per cent. Difficulties as regards food supplies, and the high cost of articles of consumption are a widely-spread phenomenon in fascist Germany. A considerable increase in prices is to be observed in the U.S.A. "The National City Bank" in its July report states that "since the time of the lowest point of the crisis up to April, 1935, retail prices for products increased by 38.5 per cent. As a result of this the consumption of the main food products is growing daily.

In the Soviet Union the goods turnover is growing daily, and the life of the toilers is becoming ever more prosperous. Prices for goods are decreasing. The toilers of the U.S.S.R. have approved the abolition of food (ration) cards and the decrease in prices for foodstuffs with great enthusiasm; their hearts are filled with pride and joy at the growth and property of their socialist fatherland. Here is what Comrade Yermilova, a woman worker employed in the "Sickle and Hammer" Works (Moscow), writes in connection with the abolition of food cards:

"My wages amount to from 120-130 roubles per month. And I, as a worker with low wages, am all the more glad to hear of the new decision of the Party and Government, as just read to me. I have not yet calculated what economy the lowering of prices will give me. But I can already see that this economy will enable me to purchase additional kilograms of butter, meat and other products every month. We shall live to see the day when there will be a still greater decrease in the prices of foodstuffs. Foodstuffs and other products will be the cheapest in the world in our country."

An old weaver, Maria Feodorovna Mokhova (Ivanov) has reckoned her saving as a result of the reduction in prices as follows:

"On bread I will save 18 roubles a month, on herrings 9 roubles, on sugar 4.20 roubles, on butter 12 roubles, and on meat 4.40 roubles. Now, I will certainly get a new coat and shoes for my daughter for the October holidays." ("Pravda," 29.9.1935).

By abolishing the ration cards, by reducing

prices, and by reconstructing trading, the Party and the Soviet Government are giving striking examples of the way they care for people, for their well-being, and for the steady growth of the standard of living of the masses. This is another illustration to the splendid words of Stalin at the graduation of the students from the Red Army Academy:

"Of all the valuable capital the world possesses, the most valuable and most decisive is people."

These people are developed in the Soviet Union,

care is taken of them, their standard of living is raised, and they are ensured a happy and joyful life in the land of Socialism.

The abolition of food cards and the reduction in the prices of bread and many other products, and the decision of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. on the work of consumers' co-operatives in the village—all this creates exceptionally favourable conditions for Soviet trade to flourish and for the well-being of the toilers of the Soviet Union to rise to an unprecedented degree.

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### THE RAKOSHI TRIAL\*

A Review of the Records of the Rakoshi Trial.

By I. AVAR.

THE chief counsel for the defence in the Rakoshi trial in Budapest, Professor Rustem Vamberi, has published a book on the trial. The book includes a preface by Professor Vamberi and the following documents: The speech by the State Prosecutor, the speech by R. Vamberi, counsel for the defence, the speech, by Comrade Rakoshi delivered as his last plea in the hearing before the court, the verdict and its motive.

These documents, so different in content, are of exclusive interest. The book gives an impression of a real battle. The counter-revolutionary forces are represented in this battle by the speech of the prosecutor and the text of the verdict. In these an entirely secondary rôle is played by legal consistency and logic. The references to paragraphs in the Criminal Code made in the speech of the prosecutor and given in the verdict are a mere fig-leaf, covering the bare, counter-revolutionary class hatred. As we know, Rakoshi was accused of the following "crimes": Treason, mutiny, twenty-five cases of murder, inciting to murder in seventeen cases, and money forgery. The chief thesis of the indictment amounted to a statement that the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary was "a mutiny of the scum of mankind against civilisation." The prosecutor said:

"... what they made was not history, what they created was not state power; those few months which were known in Hungary as the 'proletarian dictatorship,' can be of little interest to the historian, the politician, and is absolutely without any interest for the learned lawyers, but is primarily of interest to the criminologist."

And the prosecutor poured forth his indictment in this strain for over two hours. For him, the

Communists who headed the Hungarian working class in the spring of 1919, were merely "so many unknown, racially alien adventurers," "prepared to commit any crime," etc., deeds that were claimed to be "nothing but greed, the thirst for power, rough materialism." The verdict which sentenced Comrade Rakoshi to hard labour for life, and the motives for it, are entirely constructed upon this "legal" thesis of the indictment. These documents speak for themselves: all the hypocrisy and falsity of fascist justice can be learned from them.

Professor Vamberi delivered a noteworthy speech at the trial. It was a real feat on the part of a learned lawyer who was trying to defend "justice" as such, and did not want to allow justice to be reduced to the rôle of a fascist lackey. Vamberi gradually pulled down the whole "legal" thesis of the indictment; he revealed all the juridical inconsistency of the thesis which depicted the revolutionary leaders as mere criminals; he exposed all the absurdity of the accusation, pointing out that if the right place for the revolutionary council of ministers of the Hungarian Soviet Republic was "in the dock with the accused" as a band of criminals bearing "collective responsibility," then in that case "the overwhelming majority of the population of Hungary is no less liable to prosecution as accomplices."

However, every word of this speech of the counsel for the defence revealed the inner contradiction of the position adopted by an honest lawyer: on the one hand, he is fighting against the way in which fascist "justice" tramples upon the letter of formal law; on the other, he cannot but recognise that, in this particular case, there is something more involved than a conflict between

\* "A Rakoshi Fez," Budapest, 1935.

law and violation of the law. He himself is forced to talk of the "conflict between conceptions of revolution and criminal law." A prominent lawyer, for whom there is still some meaning left in the conception of objective "law," of justice, finds himself between two fronts, and himself admits that:

"If the sword is thrown down from the hand of the Goddess of Justice, then she has no support for her scales."

Rakoshi's speech is the speech of a true proletarian revolutionary. It differs strongly from the speeches both of the lying fascist counsel and of the honest lawyer. Rakoshi's speech covers sixty-two pages of the book, and the section of his speech which deals with himself, his own personal activities during the proletarian dictatorship, occupies only one single page. Briefly and to the point, severely and in a business-like manner, he enumerates in chronological order all the positions he occupied during the four-and-a-half months of proletarian dictatorship: People's Commissar of Public Production, then organiser of the army in the Danube Valley, representative of the government in the Carpathian Ukraine, Political Commissar at the front, defending the coal basin in Shalgatarian, plenipotentiary on the Southern front in the battles against the French army, and then again on the Northern front; further, he was the organiser of the grain collecting and finally, Commander of the Red Militia in Budapest.

In conclusion, Rakoshi says:—

"This was my rôle. Wherever I was sent, I honestly pursued my Communist convictions. . . . With a clear conscience I take upon myself full responsibility for every one of my actions during the proletarian dictatorship, and have no intention whatsoever of belittling the rôle I played. All that I did, I did by conviction. I have no intention of justifying my actions. I want only to say that to this day I still hold the convictions I held then. I have no cause whatever to relent, although I have been in prison for ten years."

In these simple words there is sublime pathos which the ridiculous howling of the Prosecutor about "Christian culture" and "European civilisation" merely emphasised.

Comrade Rakoshi's speech in form represents an historical survey of the rise and the development of the proletarian dictatorship in Hungary. Rakoshi's unusual speech in the fascist court is to be explained by the peculiarity of the indictment and of the whole trial. There, in the prisoner's dock stood, literally speaking, history itself. For Rakoshi, who had already served eight-and-a-half years' imprisonment for his activities during the proletarian dictatorship sixteen years ago, was once more brought before the fascist court. Therein lies the difference between his trial and the Leipzig trial.

In order to wound the heart of the fascist criminals, Comrade Dimitrov did not have to refer to events which occurred sixteen years ago, but to events which had taken place only a few months previously. To solve the actual political task in connection with the conduct of his trial, Rakoshi was compelled to work, as it were, on historical material. It is obvious that the historical side of the accusation was drawn in only for the sake of appearances. In hurling accusations and calumny against the dictatorship of the proletariat, fascism was serving its own actual political ends. The fascists wanted to aim a blow not only at the Communist movement of Hungary, but to use the trial to create a suitable "atmosphere" which would arouse anti-Soviet feelings on the lines of the foreign policy of Hungary. However, Rakoshi could not openly unmask these hidden intentions and aims of the court. He had only to utter a word which openly linked up historical material with actual political problems of the day, and the president immediately interrupted him. For this reason Rakoshi's services must be the more esteemed, for he was successful, not only in repulsing the calumnious attacks of fascism against the revolutionary past of the Hungarian proletariat, but also, by his behaviour at the trial, he was able to forge a weapon for the class struggle of to-day.

This refers, first and foremost, to the unmasking of the treacherous anti-national rôle which the Hungarian counter-revolution played during the proletarian revolution. The most brilliant pages in Rakoshi's speech are those in which he reveals the downright espionage of the Hungarian white-guards on behalf of the imperialism of the Entente, which tore Hungary into pieces. Rakoshi was accused of murder, because the proletarian dictatorship used methods of revolutionary violence to suppress the Danubian counter-revolution, organised and inspired outside Hungary by the counter-revolutionary "Hungarian Committee," led by Count Bethlen, who subsequently became Prime Minister, and by his aristocratic clique. Rakoshi pointed out that this armed counter-revolution was organised to directly stab the Hungarian Red Army, which was waging a revolutionary war against the Czech imperialists, in the back. The suppression of the Danube Vendée was a crime, because it was striving "to establish law and order"—so the indictment read.

Thus did Comrade Rakoshi explain this point:

"But the chief means of restoring so-called law and order was the army of the Czech and Roumanian bourgeoisie: I fought with all the means at my disposal, and not I alone, but the whole Party, to prevent these attempts to restore law and order on the part of the Czech and Roumanian bourgeoisie. In the process of this struggle, we occupied not only KECHEL and



DUNAPATAI\*, but also BARTYA and KASSA†, and I emphasised the fact that I took part in these struggles with weapons in my hands. The Prosecutor did not take this fact into consideration . . . But if the activities of the central government, which led to the occupation of KASSA, were according to the law, then in that case the activities of the same government which led to the occupation of KETSSEL cannot be unlawful."

"Count Julius Andrashi, on March 27, issued a memorandum to the peace conference in which he invited the Entente to use armed force against the Soviet Republic. The Hungarian bourgeois politicians in Vienna asked the representatives of the Entente for assistance in the counter-revolutionary campaign which had already begun."

The Viennese counter-revolutionary committee, through its connections with the old officers serving in the Hungarian Red Army, despatched orders, war plans, and important military secrets of the Red Army to the Czech and Roumanian armies through the missions of the army headquarters of the Entente. In conclusion Rakoshi exclaimed:

"I had no connection whatsoever with the Entente missions! We fought with all our might against the occupation of Hungary by foreign capitalist armies. But the Hungarian bourgeoisie did its utmost to encourage this occupation."

Thus Rakoshi exposed the Hungarian bourgeois

\* Localities in Hungary where the counter-revolutionary, kulak uprising was suppressed.

† Towns in Slovakia, won in battle by the Hungarian Red Army.

counter-revolution which purposely paved the way for the rapacious Trianon peace. Rakoshi tore the patriotic mask from the face of fascism, which marches under the banner of revision of the Trianon pact.

In opposition to the fascist fables about historical truths, Rakoshi explained the true historical circumstances and the driving forces of proletarian revolution in Hungary. For just this reason his speech was the militant speech of a revolutionary who appeals to the masses while exposing the fascist "historical approach." Rakoshi told how the Communist Party of Hungary fought in 1918-1919, how it had won the masses and led them to victory. He spoke of the mistakes and errors of the Hungarian Communists, mistakes which helped in the overthrow of the proletarian dictatorship, of the wrong policy on the peasant question, of the mistakes made in the method of conducting the war, of the radical mistake of the Communists which expressed itself in the liquidation of the leading revolutionary Party of the working class.

The courageous, revolutionary, and, moreover, deeply thought-out speech of Rakoshi before the fascist court, after ten years of confinement, has once more shown that the Bolsheviks are people of a special mould: they are like steel, forged the harder, the stronger the blows of the hammer.

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