

AUGUST 1936

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In Memory of the Late Alexei Maximovich Gorky

STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF MAXIM GORKY

*Issued by the Ninth National Convention of the Communist Party
of the U.S.A.*

THE Ninth Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A., expresses its profound grief over the death of Comrade Maxim Gorky—the great writer, the great revolutionist, who, in the words of Lenin, “tied himself firmly with the labor movement of Russia and the whole world”.

Maxim Gorky belongs not only to the masses of the Soviet Union but to all the toilers of the world. Gorky used his mighty talent to attack the exploitation, the greed, the darkness, the crushing of the human soul that are the essence of capitalism. From the early years of his work he had the vision of a beautiful humanity on a high level of real culture which can exist only under socialism. Gorky’s novels, stories, plays, songs, articles and pamphlets served to awaken millions of workers and other toilers, to make them feel the power of unity against the class enemy, to move them closer to the front of the class struggle.

Gorky, one of the greatest literary geniuses of this century, early found his way to the Bolshevik Party of Lenin. He fought with the Russian masses in the Revolution of 1905. He kept his faith in the ultimate victory of the Revolution even after it was defeated in 1906. He early identified himself with the October Revolution of 1917 and with the work of building socialism in the U.S.S.R. He fought under the banner of the Communist International and world revolution to the very last days of his life.

Gorky is loved by millions in our country. Gorky died but his work remains—to inspire, to teach, to lead the masses of our country in their struggle against the monster of capitalism. Gorky’s struggle for a new socialist culture, for the new man as against the sham culture of capitalism which is based on barbarism, serves as an example for the proletarian writers of America who will continue, collectively, under the leadership of the Communist Party, the work of the great creative genius and fighter.

June 26, 1936,

THE C.I. MOURNS GORKY

THE Executive Committee of the Communist International gives expression to the profound sorrow of the international proletariat and the millions of the toiling masses of all countries at the death of the greatest writer of the proletariat, Comrade Alexei Maxim Gorky. His life work, the work of the passionate fighter for socialist culture and the

victory of communism, the genius of his creative activities, filled with revolutionary hatred against capitalist barbarity, inspired the toiling masses of the whole world and spurred them on in their struggle against fascism and the rule of capitalism, the struggle for freedom, peace and socialism.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

* * *

GREETINGS FROM GORKY TO DIMITROFF

November 28, 1934

WITH all my heart I greet the exemplary revolutionist and Bolshevik. Very, very glad at the arrival of him and his comrades. I heartily shake his hand.

M. GORKY.

From *Pravda*.

GREETINGS FROM GORKY TO ERNST THAELMANN

ERNST THAELMANN is fifty years old today. For four years now the fascists have kept him in jail. It is high time that it be understood that fascism is the sadism of a class which is sick and dying. The fascists are more bloodthirsty than wild beasts, but are more cowardly. They wish to sweep the leader of the proletariat out of their way, but they cannot make up their minds to kill him, without first performing a treacherous legal comedy, and they are afraid that the trial of Thaelmann will still further intensify the disgust with them called forth by the trial of Comrade Georgi Dimitroff.

They hack off the heads of Communists, but, it is clear, they understand that every head hacked off rouses hatred of fascism in the hearts of thousands of proletarians.

The time will come when all these hearts will burst out into a single flame, and burn fascism, the rotten ulcer of the world, to the roots. This devastating flame will turn not only the dregs of mankind into dust, but also all those who are humanitarians in words, all those who fill the air with the dust of fine words of sympathy for the heroes of the proletariat, wiped out by their dirty enemies, but who remain indifferent to the fate of the prisoners of fascism. Long live Thaelmann and his manly comrades, who are tirelessly digging the grave of fascism.

M. GORKY.

* * *

THE LIFE OF ALEXEI MAXIMOVICH GORKY

ALEXEI MAXIMOVICH GORKY was born on March 28, 1868, in Nizhni-Novgorod. Gorky himself described his childhood and boyhood in two splendid books, *Childhood* and *Among Others*, which have entered the world's literary treasury as classic models. In these books we find described with tremendous truthfulness the ugliness and burden



ALEXEI MAXIMOVICH GORKY

1868-1936

of the life undergone by Gorky. When he was four years old he lost his father, who died of cholera, and when he was ten years old he was completely orphaned.

When he was eight years old he was sent to an elementary school; but "he did not finish the course because of poverty". All Gorky's tremendous knowledge was acquired as a result of personal study, in terribly difficult circumstances.

So as not to die of hunger, Gorky became a rag-picker, errand boy, baker, watchman, cook's assistant and longshoreman. "I worked much," he called to mind, "almost to the point of insensibility. Everyday life and holidays were like burdens with small, senseless and resultless labor." But his passion for reading did not leave him throughout his life, and although at the start he read everything that fell into his hands without any system, books helped him to understand life and to love it still more.

His constant passion for reading gave rise to an ever greater thirst for knowledge, and it was because of this thirst for knowledge that Gorky came to Kazan, the university town, in the hope that it would be easier for him to come closer to science.

He never, of course, found his way into the university. However, as formerly, while doing heavy and dirty work, he came in closer contact with young revolutionary students.

It was here that Gorky made the acquaintance of the well-known revolutionary populist, Michael Antonovich Romas, who had already undergone a heavy period of exile in Irkutsk. Romas invited Gorky to work with him in the Volga village of Krasnovido. In this village, Romas opened up a shop with a view to carrying on revolutionary propaganda among the peasants. But the foul kulaks burnt his cottage and his store, and Gorky almost lost his life in the burning building.

Gorky's first contact with life in the village had a depressing effect on him. He left for the Caspian Sea and worked in a fishing group there, then he traveled alone in the Mozdoksy steppe and later returned to Kazan. This was his first great journey, in the autumn of 1888.

After working for some time as a watchman and weighman on the railroad, Gorky came back to Nizhni-Novgorod. Here he met political exiles and for the first time fell under "the notice" of the gendarmes as a political suspect. It was in Nizhni-Novgorod that he spent a month in jail for the first time. From that time, right up to the Revolution of 1917, the material in the police department "about the joiner, A. M. Peshkov" continually grew.

In Nizhni-Novgorod Gorky met with the well-known Russian writer, V. G. Korolenko. He dedicated to this writer his long poem entitled *Songs of an Old Oak*. The poem proved to be a bad one, and Korolenko told Gorky this, gently but firmly. "I decided," Gorky later called to mind, "not to write verses or prose any more and, in actual fact, during the time I lived at Nizhni, for almost two years, I wrote nothing at all, although sometimes I very much wanted to."

At that time, Gorky served as a messenger for the barrister Lanin, for which work he received 20 rubles per month.

In the spring of 1891 he set off on a new journey. He traveled through the Don Region, the Ukraine and everywhere earned his living

by doing odd jobs for peasants. He traveled through Bessarabia to the Danube, then returned along the coast of the Black Sea. From Odessa, where Gorky worked as a dock laborer, he passed through Perikop, Simferopol, Yalta, Kerch, Kuban and the Black Sea, the Ter Region, the Georgian Military Road, and in the middle of autumn, 1891, arrived in Tiflis.

It was only on September 25, 1892 (this date is usually considered the beginning of his literary activity) that Gorky's first story, entitled *Makar Chudra*, appeared in the Tiflis paper *Kavkas*. In October of the same year, Gorky came back to Nizhni and once again began to work as a messenger for Lanin. Fired by the success of his first story, Gorky continued to write, but he did not print what he wrote, because he was a very critical judge of himself and literature. It was only in August, 1893, that Gorky's second story, *Emelyan Piliyai*, was printed in the Moscow *Russian Journal*.

On the advice of Korolenko, Maxim Gorky wrote his first big novel, called *Chelkash*, which was printed in the journal *Russkoye Bogatstvo* (*Russian Wealth*).

On March 23, 1895, Gorky arrived in Samara where he was invited to be a permanent member of the staff of the *Samara Gazette*. On the same date, the regional police office secretly requested that "the place of abode of Peshkov, who is under surveillance, should be determined in Samara and a secret watch kept on him".

Among the articles and numerous short stories printed by Gorky in the *Samara Gazette*, mention should be made of such well-known articles of his as the *Song of the Hawk*, and *Once in Autumn*.

In May, 1896, Gorky was invited to be a permanent member of the staff of the *Nizhni Gorodsky Listok*, and he returned to Nizhni. Here Gorky wrote a number of stories, among which were such stories as *The Tomboy*, *In the Steppes*, etc. Soon afterwards Gorky was compelled to leave Nizhni-Novgorod, and to travel to the Crimea, as he had fallen sick with tuberculosis which threatened his life.

The year 1898 was a noteworthy year in the life of Gorky, for it was the year when his books, two volumes of ten stories each, appeared for the first time in a separate edition. They were exceptionally successful.

In the same year, Gorky was again arrested in Nizhni on the demand of the police office in Tiflis and was removed to Tiflis to be questioned. There he was in jail for some time in the Metech fortress.

After Tiflis, Gorky went to Samara and from there to Nizhni. In February, 1899, an important play of Gorky's entitled *Foma Gordeyev*, began to appear in the journal *Zhizn (Life)*. At the same time, Gorky continued to carry on revolutionary work.

Gorky did not get off scot free for his activity. He was arrested and thrown into jail, but again after a month's imprisonment the authorities were compelled to release him from jail.

In September, 1899, Gorky was handed over to be kept under surveillance by the police in the city of Arzamas. But in view of the bad state of his health, Gorky succeeded in getting permission to be transferred for a few months to Crimea, for treatment. When Gorky left the town, big demonstrations of young students and intellectuals took place. It was

to these demonstrations that Lenin responded with his article in the old *Iskra*.

In April, 1901, Gorky's *Song of the Thunderstorm* was printed in the *Zhizn* and was accepted by the whole country as a manifestation of revolutionary enthusiasm.

While Gorky was in the Crimea, there took place the famous episode connected with his election as honorary member of the Academy of Science. When this was reported to the Tsar, the latter wrote the following words on the official report: "More than original," after which he gave the direct order to cancel the election of Gorky, and the elections were declared invalid. In disgust at this arbitrariness, such honored academicians as A. P. Chekov and V. E. Korolenko gave up their titles.

In March, 1902, the Moscow Art Theatre gave the first presentation of Maxim Gorky's play *The Philistines*, which was a tremendous success.

In April of that year, Gorky was compelled to return to exile in Arzamas, and there finished his play *The Lower Depths*.

At this time, Maxim Gorky joined the camp of revolutionary democracy and came into closer contact with the old *Iskra*, which was issued abroad under Lenin's guidance.

Gorky's play *The Lower Depths* met with exceptional success, not only in Russia, but also abroad where it appeared in the theaters of all European countries. It was accepted as a revolutionary production by both the friends and enemies of the working class.

Gorky took a direct part in the Revolution of 1905. He wrote proclamations and helped the revolutionary movement with all his might. He was arrested and thrown into the Peter and Paul Fortress, but after a month he was released, and sent to Riga. A trial was prepared against Gorky, but in connection with the manifesto of October 17, the case was stopped. On his return to Petersburg, Gorky organized a big newspaper, the *New Life*, which became the first Bolshevik legal newspaper. After its first issue, it was edited by V. I. Lenin, who had arrived from abroad.

At that time, the idea developed in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party that Gorky should be given the task of traveling to America, in order to collect money for the Party. He left for abroad in January, 1906.

During his journey to America, Maxim Gorky wrote his famous novel *Mother*, which played such a tremendous part in the struggle of the working class for its liberation.

After the speeches he made abroad, Gorky could not, of course, return to Russia. He settled in Italy, on the Island of Capri, and became a political emigre.

While living abroad, Gorky developed still closer contacts with the Bolshevik Party and Party work. In the spring of 1907, the Fifth Congress of the Bolshevik Party took place in London, and Gorky attended as a delegate with a consultative vote. His meeting with Lenin at the Congress served as the beginning of close understanding, activity, and correspondence.

Gorky took an active part in the Bolshevik paper *Education*, and directed its literary department.

Gorky was tremendously indignant at the imperialist war, and

always remained one of its staunchest opponents. When his long-wished-for desire was fulfilled and he succeeded in organizing the solid journal *Chronicles*, this journal adopted an international position.

After the October socialist revolution, Gorky took an active part in publishing *World Literature*, and carried on work among the intellectuals and scientists. From the year 1918, he was closely connected with Lenin and helped Soviet literature and young authors as much as possible. He printed a number of splendid articles in *The Communist International*, and in one issue of the magazine painted an unforgettable picture of Lenin.

In 1921, he had an additional attack of haemoptysis and was compelled to go abroad for treatment, and in the spring of 1924 he settled in Italy on doctors' orders. He then once again began intense artistic work, and wrote four new books, entitled *Stories*, *Reminiscences*, *Notes From My Diary*, and *My University*.

In 1925, Gorky published a new book entitled *The Case of the Artamonovs*, and in 1927 the first volume of Gorky's big new work entitled *The Life of Klim Samgin (Bystander)*, appeared.

In 1928, he returned to his native land, and here set to work with redoubled energy. He published the two following volumes of *Klim Samgin*, wrote a number of splendid articles and stories, particularly about peasant life. He published the plays *Yegor Bulychev* and *Vasily Dostigayev* and founded and edited a number of journals including *Our Successes*, *Abroad*, *Literary Studies*, *The U.S.S.R. in Construction*, and put forward the idea of the publication of a series of books entitled *The History of a Young Person of the Nineteenth Century*, *The Poet's Library*, and the *Lives of Splendid People*. On his initiative, such tremendously important publications as the *History of the Factories and Workshops in the U.S.S.R.*, and the *History of the Civil War*, came into being.

Maxim Gorky became the Chairman of the Union of Soviet Writers, and undertook the direct leadership of its work.

Just as he was formerly closely connected with Lenin, so he was the friend of the great Stalin, consulted with him and asked his advice. He was tremendously popular among the people. He was loved by the people and his memory will never perish.

The Stalinist Constitution of the Socialist State

THE publication of the draft of the new Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics once again focuses the attention of the toilers throughout the world on the Land of Socialism. The draft of the new Constitution is an historic landmark in the development of the world working class movement. It marks a new stage in the struggle of the toilers throughout the world for their liberation from the yoke of capitalist exploitation and oppression, a new stage on the path of mankind towards well-being and freedom, towards a happy life, towards the final removal of all that hinders the free and full development of the human personality.

For the peoples of the Soviet Union inhabiting one-sixth of the globe the draft of the new Constitution, after nineteen years of the dictatorship of the proletariat, represents the result of the heroic struggles, the world historic victories, won by the working class and all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. under the leadership of the Communist Party, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, victories which have led to the final and irrevocable victory of socialism.

To the people of the U.S.S.R. the new Constitution is, as it were, the concentrated essence of the victories and gains achieved. It reflects the new social relations hammered out as a result of these victories. It expresses the new prospects that open out before the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the unlimited development of the human personality. The draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R. reflects and makes secure that which has *already been won* by the working people of the U.S.S.R. under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

For the working class and for the laboring masses in the capitalist countries, for all who still suffer from capitalist exploitation and oppression, for all the peoples doomed by capitalism to poverty and slavery, the draft of the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. is a vivid and convincing program of their liberation. At the time when the bourgeoisie in power, gripped in the vise of insurmountable contradictions of the capitalist system, are feverishly seeking for a way out through fascism, and are abolishing or reducing to nought the last remnants of bourgeois-democratic liberties, at the time when fascism is conducting a desperate attack on the working people, dooming the workers and peasants to ruin, destroying the workers' organizations, humiliating the human personality by a return to barbarism, to darkness and ignorance, and to medieval cruelty, and is preparing an imperialist war of plunder as the last anchor wherewith to save itself—at this moment the new Soviet Constitution give concrete shape to the ideal of freedom, well-being and peace which lives in the hearts of millions of people, proclaims and concretely shows that this ideal can be carried into practice, and indicates the con-

crete living form in which it is being carried out in the Land of the Soviets. By proving that socialism is the way out of poverty and slavery, that socialism is a society in which there are the widest democracy, peace and increasing prosperity for the masses, *the new Soviet Constitution strikes a blow at the heart of fascism.*

The previous Soviet Constitutions—the first one born in the fires and storms of the great proletarian revolution, in the civil war years (1918), and the second one, adopted at the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R., at the time of the restoration of the national economy (1923-24)—were expressions of the class relations existing in those years in the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat. These Constitutions expressed the first great gains of the working class in the socialist revolution, and on the road to the establishment of genuine democracy, based not on the bourgeois hypocrisy of equal rights for “all”, but on the destruction of the power of the exploiters. The Soviet Constitutions of 1918 and 1924 expressed the first gigantic victories achieved by the working class in close alliance with the working peasants, namely, the destruction of the old apparatus of the autocracy, and of the bourgeois state, the expropriation of the landlords and big capitalists, and the cessation of the national oppression of the peoples living on the territory of the former tsarist Russia. At the same time, these Constitutions reflected the first steps of the working class along the road to the establishment of socialist economy. These Constitutions, for the first time in the history of mankind, gave a legal and constitutional form to the dictatorship of the proletariat, by stressing the point that this “proletarian democracy” is the democracy of the exploited majority based upon the restriction of the rights of the exploiting minority and directed against this minority. (Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, p. 47.)

The Soviet Constitutions of 1918 and 1924 were a million times more democratic than any bourgeois constitution. But in view of the economic and class relations existing in the country, the previous Soviet Constitutions introduced a number of restrictions in the political rights of a part of the population. In view of the existence of capitalist elements in industry, in agriculture and trade, they denied political rights to people who belonged to the capitalist classes that had been overthrown, or who were connected with these classes. This is why the suffrage could not be universal at that time. The toiling peasants, the allies of the proletariat, were still scattered at that time in millions of individual farms, and the introduction of equal voting rights under these conditions might have been used by counter-revolution against the working class and the peasants themselves. This is why these Constitutions gave the workers advantages in the election of the organs of power. Historical experience has shown that the limitations on democracy which they sanctioned were necessary to ensure the proletariat the possibility of carrying on a victorious struggle for the construction of socialist society. The new and majestic advance of Soviet democracy, the expression of which is the new draft Constitution, and the fact that the draft Constitution is open for wide discussion by all the peoples of the U.S.S.R., are the result of this victorious struggle.

From the time of the great socialist revolution up to the present

time, the capitalist world and the Soviet Union have developed in diametrically opposite directions. Whereas in the capitalist world fascism is abolishing the last remnants of bourgeois-democratic liberties, and is trying to root them out, whereas the decisive strata of the bourgeoisie are making common cause with fascism or supporting it, while the working class is the most consistent defender of and fighter for democratic liberties—in the Soviet Union, on the contrary, the conditions have been created which make it possible to put an end to the limitation of electoral rights for certain sections of the population.

Very profound changes have taken place in the economic situation, in the relation of forces and in the social structure of the U.S.S.R. The Soviet Union is no longer a technically backward country with a scattered agriculture of individual farms. It has a powerful industry and advanced industrial technique, all in the hands of the socialist state of workers and peasants, as well as large-scale mechanized socialist agriculture.

The economic basis of the U.S.S.R. is socialist economy.

“Socialist property in the U.S.S.R. has either the form of state property (property of the whole people), or the form of cooperative and collective farm (*kolkhoz*) property (property of individual collective farms and property of cooperative associations).” (Article 5 of Draft Constitution.)

Capitalism has completely disappeared from industry and trade. Socialist property is undivided in its sway in the country. Collective forms of economy have conquered finally and irrevocably, have become the dominating and predominating forms in the village. All the exploiting classes have been liquidated. The working class of the Soviet Union at the present time is a working class that has not only transformed the face of the country by its victories; it is a working class which has achieved tremendous successes in transforming itself. This working class has created a movement of socialist competition and a Stakhanovite movement. Its attitude to labor, to technique, to culture, has radically changed. In the Soviet Union, labor is no longer of a “private, personal” character. It is of “social importance”, it is a “matter of honor, a matter of glory, a matter of valor and heroism”. (Stalin.) The working class has become the most advanced section of the population, not only politically, but it is marching in the vanguard of the struggle for new heights of technique and culture. Under the leadership of the working class, the peasants have also undergone profound transformations, taking decisive steps along the path of the construction of socialist economy. The intellectuals are of a greatly altered character. The Soviet intellectuals are people who have come from the midst of the working people, and are closely connected with them. They are socialist intellectuals. In view of this sum total of economic and social processes, the *borderlines between classes are being obliterated*.

In such a situation, the limitations of political rights provided for in the former Constitutions have lost their significance. The new Soviet Constitution establishes democracy for all citizens of the U.S.S.R., without any distinctions. Defining the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as

a "socialist state of workers and peasants" (Article 1), the Constitution gives a new name—Soviets of Toilers' Deputies—to the Soviets, which constitute the political foundation of the U.S.S.R. (Article 2), and lays down that all citizens, "irrespective of race or nationality, religion, standard of education, domicile, social origin, property status or past activities" (Article 136) will take part in the elections to the Soviets.

The new Constitution—a document of great victories—takes from the bourgeois-democratic constitutions all that was democratic, positive and progressive in them. The many-stage elections disappear. The highest organs of power are elected directly by all the people. Voting becomes universal, equal, direct and secret. The Constitution makes provisions for referendums. There are no democratic liberties promised to citizens by bourgeois-democratic constitutions which are not foreseen and guaranteed by the new Constitution to the citizens of the Soviet Union. But the Soviet Constitution leaves far behind all bourgeois constitutions, even the most democratic, and, what is most important, leaves far behind the actual reality in capitalist states, because it recognizes and consistently ensures the fulfilment of each of these rights, because it provides them with a new concrete and practical content, thus carrying democracy to heights such as never will be and cannot be reached by any bourgeois state.

What is now happening in capitalist countries, to liberty, to the "rights of man and citizen", in the name of which the working people were mobilized by the bourgeoisie and for which they shed their blood during the bourgeois revolutions? Rights and liberties are still written in the constitutional charters, but the bourgeoisie are trying to destroy the last remnants of these rights and liberties in practice, wherever they need to defend their profits and their power by crushing the liberation movement of the working class and the laboring people in general under the heel of reaction. In those places where the fascists have attained complete power the citizen is already deprived of all democratic rights. He is subject to the despotism of the emissaries of capital. He knows nothing of freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, etc. The fascist theoreticians even have the audacity to justify this oppression of liberty as a higher form of social order, and pour ridicule on democratic "utopias".

In the Soviet Union, where a new social system was really established by the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie, and where socialist society has been built, the Constitution ensures to the citizens not only freedom of speech, press, assembly and meetings, street processions and demonstrations (Article 125), freedom to unite in public organizations (Article 126), the inviolability of the person (Article 127) and the home (Article 128), secrecy of correspondence (Article 128), freedom of conscience, religious worship and anti-religious propaganda (Article 124), but provides for the conditions which guarantee that these liberties will really be carried out, guaranteeing to the working people and their organizations the possibility of freely using the printing presses, supplies of paper, public buildings and other material conditions requisite for the exercise of the rights and liberties of the citizens (Article 125), etc.

What is taking place at the present time in the capitalist countries

in regard to "equality" and "fraternity"—the two other great principles of the bourgeois revolutions? As is well known, in capitalist conditions these slogans have always served to *deceive* the working people, have always meant equality and fraternity for the capitalists, the exploiters, the rich, and still greater oppression and exploitation of the proletariat and the poor.

Even in the most advanced capitalist countries, equality is denied to half the population, namely, the women, who, in most cases, are not only deprived of voting rights and denied access to political activity, but are regarded by the law as judicially inferior creatures.

The new Soviet Constitution, confirming the rights won by the great socialist revolution, guarantees to women "equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural and social and political life" (Article 122), and shows how women can really be assigned these rights. Women are free and equal to men thanks to the fact that the socialist state, by means of a powerful system of social institutions, protects the interests of the mother and child, comes to the help of motherhood, more and more taking on itself the care for children.

In the capitalist world, "equality" never existed when the question of the oppressed national minorities, the colonies and dependent country was concerned. Imperialism divides the world in two camps: into "a handful of the 'advanced' capitalist countries which exploit and oppress vast colonies and dependencies, and the immense majority of colonial and dependent countries." (Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, p. 31.) For the latter, there are no equal rights! Fascism carries this system to the extreme, preaching national and racial hatred and looking on all who do not belong to the "elect" nation and race as lower creatures and slaves. Woe to small and weak nations! Their fate is to be crushed, enslaved and swept from the face of the earth!

Only in socialist society are democratic principles consistently applied to all nations, peoples and races. The socialist state is a great union of free and equal peoples. The Constitution of this country carries out in the most consistent fashion the democratic principle of the self-determination of nations to the point of separation, leaving to each union republic of the U.S.S.R. the right freely to secede from the Union (Article 17), giving to each of the peoples of the Union full equality of rights with all the others, ensuring it the possibility of complete economic, social and cultural development. The new Soviet Constitution is the triumph of the national policy of the Party of Lenin and Stalin. The equality and fraternity of nationalities, peoples and races are proclaimed in it as the fundamental law of the state. The new Constitution solemnly declares: "Any direct or indirect restriction of these rights, or, conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any propagation of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, are punishable by law" (Article 123).

Bourgeois constitutions, ostensibly with the aim of better protecting the rights and liberties of the citizens, make a distinction between the "three authorities—legislative, executive and judiciary". In reality, their entire structure is such as to remove the organs of power as far as

possible from the control of the working masses. In this sphere, fascism consistently destroys all traces of democracy, however slight. The fascist totalitarian state, *i.e.*, the aim towards which the most reactionary strata of the bourgeoisie are striving in all countries, is the rule of tyranny, gross violence, the liquidation of any system of juridical guarantees, the triumph of savagery, barbarism and terror. In the Soviet Constitution and in the Soviet state at the present time, all the positive elements that were to be found in the democratic system of representation exist and are developed. The Supreme Council of the Union, elected by direct vote of the whole population (above the age of eighteen), is a genuine democratic parliament of the whole people, whereas the fascists liquidate, destroy and ridicule bourgeois parliaments. But at the same time, the Soviet Constitution, in developing the system of Soviets of Toilers' Deputies at all levels of the structure of government, as the organs of power, establishes the closest contact between the state apparatus and the people, and ensures the genuine participation of the latter in all the work of directing and administering political, economic and social life.

Thus, the Soviet Constitution, from all points of view, is the *most democratic constitution that ever existed in the world.*



But the victories and gains achieved by the working class since it overthrew the bourgeoisie and took over power not only created the conditions for consistently extending democracy. The conditions were created which make it possible to give a *new content* to freedom and democracy, such as *does not and cannot exist* even in the most democratic bourgeois constitution, to give them a *socialist content*. "Freedom alone is far from sufficient," said Comrade Stalin. "The characteristic feature of our revolution is that it gave the people not only liberty but also material well-being, and the possibility to live a prosperous and cultured life". The new Soviet Constitution is founded on this most important principle, which is a socialist principle. On the basis of this principle, it does not confine itself to the abstract proclamation of the "rights of the man and the citizen". The center of its attention and of juridical relations is given not to a fictitious but to the real, living person with his concrete creative activity, with his concrete and definite material and mental requirements. In declaring the *system of socialist economy to be the basis of the economic order in the country* and of its political structure, the Constitution proclaims as the fundamental law of the state the socialist principle that: "He who does not work, shall not eat." It converts the principle of socialism into the law of the state: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his labor." It guarantees to every citizen:

The right to work, the right to guaranteed employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to leisure.

The right to material support in case of sickness and old age.

The right to education.

And in regard to all these rights, the draft Constitution fixes guarantees which make it possible not only to recognize these rights but to carry them out.

The right to work: This has been the dream of socialists of all times, beginning with the Utopians. It has been the constant aim of the proletariat, even since it took form as a class and appeared on the political arena. Capitalist society cannot recognize the right to work. It cannot guarantee work for them with payment for their labor in accordance with its quality and quantity, because the basic law of capitalist society is the race for profits, because it is an anarchical society which can only live by refusing work to millions of men and young people, by driving them into the abyss of unemployment and hunger, and depriving them of any hope for the future. In the years of the world economic crisis, millions of people learned the horrors of unemployment. Although this crisis is already passing in a number of countries, *unemployment nevertheless remains. Work is the first of all blessings, without it, no freedom has any value, no prosperity is possible, no development of the human personality is attainable. And people cannot be guaranteed work by the capitalist regime.* The fascists replace labor by new forms of slavery in forced labor camps, but people require simultaneously both labor and liberty. This is what socialist society gives them. The new Soviet Constitution is able to ensure the right to work for all citizens of the U.S.S.R., the right to obtain guaranteed work with payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality, simply because the national economy of the U.S.S.R. is socialist and is organized according to a plan, because this socialist organization ensures the uninterrupted development of the productive forces, because unemployment has been completely abolished (Article 118).

The factors making it possible for the Constitution to guarantee the right to work are: the overthrow of capitalism, the expropriation of the expropriators, the two Five-Year Plans, the inviolability of the alliance of the workers and peasants, the heroism displayed by the masses in the construction of socialism, socialist competition, and the Stakhanov movement which opens up to the country the path to abundance. The inclusion of this right in the Constitution is the most brilliant confirmation of the correctness of the path taken by the working class under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin.

The right to leisure: The founders of socialism who demanded this right were reproached that they were incorrigible utopians. The workers of capitalist countries do sometimes succeed in wrenching away a few gains in this sphere, but these gains are always limited, always depend upon the changes in the relation of forces between the workers and the employers. When fascism comes to power, it destroys these gains. In the vast majority of the capitalist countries, and, first and foremost, in those countries where fascism rules, the workers, if they are not unemployed, work ten or twelve hours a day, work till they are completely exhausted, till they are dazed. The ardent dream of the working class—the eight-hour day—has been left far behind by the reality of Soviet life and by the new Constitution, which gives legal form to that which already exists in the U.S.S.R.

“The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the reduction of the working day to seven hours for the overwhelming majority of the workers, the institution of annual vacations with pay for workers and other

employees, and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest homes, and clubs serving the needs of the toilers" (Article 119).

The right to material support in case of sickness and old age: All that was won by the working class in this sphere is now being attacked by the capitalists and their governments. In all countries, social insurance is one of the first objects of the offensive on the working class by fascism and capitalist reaction. In Germany, the system of social insurance which was won by the proletariat has in fact been abolished by the fascists. Fear of the future, of old age, sickness, poverty, and all the sufferings they bring, is the lot of the working people in all countries still under the power of capital.

The confidence in the morrow, which is guaranteed by the new Soviet Constitution by "the wide development of social insurance of workers and other employees at state expense, free medical service, and the wide network of health resorts at the disposal of the toilers", is one of the chief elements making the life of the citizens in the Soviet Union joyful and making it possible for them to develop their individuality in every way.

The right to education: Liberals and bourgeois democrats in the past also proclaimed the necessity for gradually extending "education" to the masses as a guarantee of social progress. At the present time, the reactionary bourgeoisie reject this democratic principle, which is being revived and carried into effect in a new form and with a new content in the Land of Socialism. The right to education is solemnly written in the new Soviet Constitution at the very time when fascism is becoming the champion of darkness and ignorance, when it burns the best productions of mankind, when it is reorganizing the school system, placing it exclusively at the service of a selected group destined to manage the state, at the time when the fascist theoreticians are proclaiming the need for restricting the development and education of the masses, so that it will not be too difficult for their rulers to keep them in subjection. The recognition of the right of all peoples to every grade of education, as given in the Soviet Constitution, is at the present time a guarantee of the development of culture in general.

The Constitution which recognizes and guarantees to all citizens the right to work, to leisure, to material support and to education, is not only the most democratic in the world, but the most just, the most humanitarian, because this Constitution is really and consistently socialist.

At the same time, it is a Constitution of peace. The questions of war and peace, which in all capitalist countries are jealously guarded prerogatives of the organs of the executive authorities who decide these questions in secret, are subject in the new Soviet Constitution to the organs of the legislative power. *As we know, the Soviet Union is not preparing war against any country whatever.* This is why the Constitution makes provision for the point that a state of war can be declared by the Presidium of the Supreme Council only if a military attack is made on the U.S.S.R. (Article 59). This solemn declaration, which gives the character of a fundamental law of the state to the peace policy conducted by the land of the proletarian dictatorship, will meet with a warm

echo in all countries. At the time when the imperialist bourgeoisie is seeking a way out in war, when fascism is preaching a war of aggression as the salvation of the world, and is preparing to attack neighboring countries with a view to destroying their national independence and freedom, the fundamental law of the socialist state which calls on all citizens to perform the sacred duty of defending the fatherland (Article 133), drives out every thought of an aggressive war, and recognizes the necessity of resorting to arms so as to repulse any aggressor, and thus gives a legal, constitutional form to the principle: "Socialism means peace."

* * *

All the paragraphs of the Soviet Constitution, all the principles proclaimed and sanctioned in it, will make the deepest impression on the masses of the people throughout the world.

To those who are still hesitating, to the working people who are still under the influence of bourgeois ideology but who nevertheless dream of a better future, worthy, free and human, and who ask what socialism can give them, we reply: Look at the Soviet Constitution! This is what socialism is, this is what is meant by bringing about socialism, this is what it gives to the masses! Here is the new path which it opens before mankind.

To those hypocrites who slander socialism and try to deceive the masses by depicting the socialist system as a system in which human individuality and freedom are crushed, as a barrack system, as a regime of poverty, of the "community of blessings", we reply: Look at the Soviet Constitution and the socialist state, of which it is the basic law! It is a state founded on the expropriation of the expropriators, on collective ownership of the means of production, but provision is made and a guarantee is provided to all citizens of the property of their "income from work and in their savings, in their dwelling house and auxiliary household economy, domestic articles and utensils as well as objects of personal use and comfort" (Article 10).

To the peasants, who are doomed by fascism to poverty and ruin, which at the same time tries to fill them with fear and hatred of the socialist regime, we say: Look at the new Soviet Constitution! The peasants of the U.S.S.R. voluntarily united so as to secure the possibility of utilizing the latest technique and by collective labor to raise the productivity of their farms. They have the right to the personal ownership of their houses, their gardens, the subsidiary farm about their houses, produce animals, and poultry, and minor agricultural implements (Article 7). The land is allotted for use for an unlimited period, *i.e.*, forever, to the collective organizations of the peasants (Article 8), but at the same time for those working people who are not yet convinced of the superiority of the collective farms "the law allows small private farms . . . of individual peasants, and home workers based on their personal labor and precluding the exploitation of the labor of others" (Article 9).

To the national minorities, to the people of the colonies, to the peoples oppressed by imperialism and fascism and seeking the way to liberation,

we say: Look at the Constitution of the U.S.S.R.! You will find in it a model of the society where national and racial hatred is prosecuted by law and where there reign the freedom and equality of peoples.

To the young people who are dreaming of a future filled with social justice and freedom, to all broad-minded people, to all honorable minds which suffer from the chaos and anarchy dominating the capitalist world, we say: Look at the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R.! You will see in it a model of the new world, the world of free, happy and peace-loving people about which the great minds of the human race dreamed.

To all toilers, to the workers, peasants, to all men and women who bear the hatred of fascism in their hearts and are struggling to destroy and break its yoke, we say: Look at the new Soviet Constitution! Let the example of the gains of which it is the essence rouse you to redouble your efforts to repulse the fascist enemy, to defend the last relics of the democratic liberties which still remain under the capitalist system, to develop your struggle for bread, freedom, peace and socialism.

The struggle of the united proletarian and anti-fascist front in France and Spain, and the class struggle throughout the capitalist world, on the one hand, and the building of a new world by the peoples in the U.S.S.R. on the other hand—these are two sides of one and the same struggle. They are closely connected with each other.

It has been proven that only as the result of the struggle of the working class and the laboring people, only within the bounds of socialism, are liberty, equality and fraternity concretely embodied and fully realized.

The enemies of the working class are resorting to slanders so as to distort the real nature of the new Soviet Constitution. They claim that the extension of political rights sanctioned by the new Constitution, and the new Constitution as a whole, are a step backwards, a repudiation of proletarian democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and a return to bourgeois democracy. The draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R., on the contrary, is a *tremendous new step forward*, is a constitution of socialism and confirms the correctness of the path taken by the working class of the U.S.S.R. to attain the victories which it sanctions. This path is that of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of fierce and unswerving class struggle against all the enemies of the power of the working class, no matter under what flag they hide themselves.

The new Soviet Constitution once again gives an unambiguous reply to the question of the paths of development of the working class struggle. The Second International, which rejected the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat and chose that of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and tried to paint bourgeois democracy with a socialist mask, opened the path to fascism in the most important countries in Europe. But the Bolshevik Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, led the working class to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the building of socialism, the reflection of which is the Soviet Constitution. The Bolshevik Party, at various stages of the development of the dictatorship of the proletariat, led the working class to victory over enemies from without, made it possible for them to defeat their class enemies at home, to overcome economic difficulties and victoriously to fulfil the task of build-

ing socialism. The Bolshevik Party fired the enthusiasm of the masses in town and country, directed the great work of re-educating the working class and the whole of the people of the Soviet Union in the spirit of socialism, converted the cause of socialism into the cause of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, and led this cause to victory. It has been under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and Stalin, the wise and beloved leader of the proletariat of the whole world, that the great world historical victories have been achieved which have made the new Constitution possible and which have found expression in it. Thus the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. is the child of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the child of the Communist Party, and in it are reflected and secured the *great victories of the Leninist-Stalinist epoch of the working class movement.*

This is why, in giving the answer in advance to hypocritical democrats, to the open and concealed enemies of the working class, the new Constitution confirms the basic principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat, by laying down that the rights and liberties of the citizens of the Soviet Union are guaranteed "in conformity with the interests of the toilers, and in order to strengthen the socialist system" (Article 125), and openly proclaims the leading role of the Communist Party, in which are united "the most active and politically conscious citizens from among the working class and other strata of the toilers"; the Communist Party, which is the "vanguard of the toilers in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and which represents the leading core of all organizations of the toilers, both social and state" (Article 126).

This leading role of the Communist Party is the guarantee to the working people of the whole world that the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. will not only be applied in the most consistent fashion, that it will not only be defended against all the enemies of the toilers, but that on the firm foundation which it constitutes, the toilers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will achieve new victories, new gains.

The General Situation in France*

By ANDRE MARTY

I. THE GENERAL ELECTION IN FRANCE

THE election campaign has made it possible to sum up certain results of the mass work of the Communist Party of France for two and a half years, and at the same time to show the masses the way out of the present situation as proposed by the Communist Party.

The general line of the Party was given in the main document of the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of France, under the heading, *Save the French People*.

In the Manifesto was outlined the program of the Communist Party for the defense of peace, freedom and bread for the people, and the following slogans concluded the Manifesto: "Forward, unite the French people in the struggle against the two hundred families!" "Forward behind the banner of the People's Front for bread, peace and freedom!" "Forward for a free, strong and happy France which the Communists want and will achieve!" These slogans met with a very wide response not only among the masses of the working people, but also among those sections of the population who have hitherto been far from the Communists, namely, the peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals.

In addition to this general program the Communist Party drew up a program of demands for various districts. Finally, in each of the 619 constituencies, the Communist Party organizations put forward local programs either separately or in conjunction with the district program.

Let us quote a few figures. On April 22, 1936, *i.e.*, four days prior to the first round of the election, the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France dispatched throughout the country nine main proclamations totaling 7,450,156 copies, 142,711 placards with texts and 143,467 illustrated placards. When the reactionaries and the fascists asked the Communists where the money came from, Jacques Duclos, in a special letter to the *Echo de Paris* which was the first to raise this question, replied as follows, in order that the toilers of France should not have any doubts whatever left on this account: "Exclusively from the sale of our publications at a price such as makes it possible to cover all expenses connected with the printing and distribution of these publications."

THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS

The number of votes given to the Communist Party almost doubled. The Party received 1,503,125 votes, *i.e.*, 700,495 votes more than in 1932. The Socialist Party lost a little (receiving 1,922,123 votes as against

* This article was written in the first half of June. This note is necessary in view of the fact that events in France are developing with unusual rapidity.—A. Marty.

1,956,780 in the year 1932), but if we take into account the fact of the split away of the Neo-Socialists, then it appears that actually the Socialists made good all their losses. The Radical Socialists received 1,401,974 votes, thus losing 435,000 votes. But if we compare the number of votes received in 1932 by the parties which now belong to the People's Front, with the figures of the 1936 election, it is clear that the People's Front won about half a million votes (5,599,763 votes as against 5,184,049).

As regards the parties hostile to the People's Front, they lost about 179,899 votes as compared with 1932 (4,276,806 votes). It must, however, be noted that one party, the Popular Democrats (Christian Socialists, a section of whom are beginning to adopt a sympathetic attitude to the People's Front and are clearly hostile to fascism) won and received 373,943 votes. Thus the losses of the parties hostile to the People's Front were really far more considerable.

The grand total of the voting was as follows: all the parties of the People's Front received 1,322,957 votes more than the parties of reaction. Thus the elections showed the profound movement of forces to the Left. And whereas in some countries such as, for instance, England, the U.S.A., etc., the Right leaders of Social-Democracy assert that the Communists gained at the expense of the Socialists, the figures speak to the contrary. We must carry on a determined exposure of such lying stories spread about by the Rights, their only purpose being to justify their splitting policy and their hostility to the united front. On the contrary, thanks to the People's Front, the Socialist Party strengthened its position, which was weakened as a result of the split-away of the Neo-Socialists, while the Radical Party reduced its losses to a considerable degree, thanks to its participation in the People's Front. The losses suffered by the Radicals are to be explained by the fact that they participated in the government which by its Exceptional Decrees plundered the civil servants and state and municipal employees, as well as workers and old people, and cut down the benefits given by public charity institutions for children, as well as pensions for ex-servicemen, etc. Had it not been for the People's Front, the losses of the Radical Party would have been twice as great.

The Communist Party won a considerable victory in the working class centers. In the City of Paris, it was the strongest party, receiving 163,531 votes and 16 seats, as compared with the last elections of 70,777 votes. (It must not be forgotten that women in France have not the right to vote.) In the Seine Department (excluding Paris) our Party received 200,428 votes. Thus, the elections in Paris, and in the Departments of the Seine and Seine-et-Oise, showed 459,740 votes for Greater Paris.

Hence it follows that, first, the Party is strong now not only in Paris but also in the industrial districts, that it is growing rapidly in some provincial industrial towns (as for instance in Marseilles). Second, the Party has made a tremendous advance in a number of departments which are mainly agrarian. In seven agrarian departments the Communist Party received more than 20 per cent of the votes registered. If we compare, as percentages, the number of votes received by the

Communists with the corresponding data for other parties, then the following picture results: In the Seine Department, where we have our greatest influence, the number of votes we received amounted to 33.3 per cent of all the votes cast. Next comes the Lot-et-Garonne (mainly agrarian) where we received 31.7 per cent. This is followed by the Bouches du Rhone Department (industrial) 28.4 per cent, then Seine-et-Oise, industrial, 28.1 per cent. These are again followed by the agrarian departments of Lot, 23.8 per cent, Comeye, 21.8 per cent and Dordogne, 21.3 per cent. Thus the Communist Party has won quite a firm position in a number of peasant districts.

To sum up:

A. The parties of the People's Front are in the majority in the village. But the relation of forces between the parties in the People's Front, on the one hand, and the Right parties in the village, on the other hand, is almost without alteration. Great masses of peasants who support the Right parties still remain loyal to these parties.

B. Of all the parties of the People's Front only the Communist Party has to a considerable degree increased its influence in the village, by almost trebling the number of votes it received.

C. The position of the Socialist Party remains unaltered.

D. The Radical Party can now no longer be regarded as the chief Left party of the peasants. The Socialist Party is now as strong in the countryside as is the Radical Party.

In sixteen departments the Right parties are in the overwhelming majority (having received from 50 to 89 per cent of the votes cast). This refers mainly to Brittany and Normandy, where the peasants and Catholic workers are under the influence of the Right parties. In these places the relation of forces can only be changed by extending the People's Front and by operating a more active policy of defending the interests of the peasants. The Communist Party's campaign, with the slogan, "Extend a hand to the Catholic working people" must consequently be carried out in Brittany and Normandy on a still wider scale and still more boldly.

As a result of the elections in France, the People's Front has 381 seats in Parliament (72 Communists and 142 Socialists). The reactionary national front has 237 seats (under proportional representation the Communist Party would have had 94 seats).

II. THE QUESTION OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE STRIKE MOVEMENT

In the following resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France it says:

"The people of France have unequivocally expressed their desire to defend their bread against those who desire to doom the people to hunger, to defend their liberty against the fascist adventurists, and peace against the warmongers.

"This desire of the people is, and will continue to be, the supreme law for the Communist Party."

The people also voted for honesty, and against financial corruption.

And, finally, everybody who voted for the Communists and many of those who voted for the People's Front showed themselves to be ardent and unshakable defenders of the peace policy of the Soviet Union and supporters of the unbreakable friendship between the French people and the people of the U.S.S.R.

In its resolution the Central Committee of the Party stated the position of the Communist Party on the question of its attitude to the government in the following clear and precise fashion:

"The Central Committee and the Communist Deputies are unanimous in considering it necessary for the Communist Party to maintain close and loyal collaboration with the government in its work to bring about the fulfillment of the program of the People's Front.

"To ensure the fulfillment of this task, the Central Committee undertakes the responsibility and assures the future government, with its Socialist leadership, of its complete and unstinting support."

Why did not the Communist Party enter the government?

First of all, it should be stated that the question whether or not to participate in this government is not a question of principle. It is a question of political advisability, a question of the timeliness of entering the government in the *given circumstances*. This means, in other words, that in a certain situation we can join such a government. But we shall not join it today. Why?

The present government of France cannot be identified, for instance, with the bourgeois-Socialist governments of Czechoslovakia and Denmark. Why? Because these governments came to power as a result of parliamentary combinations, whereas the present government in France, formed by the Socialists with the participation of the Radical Party and the Socialist union, came to power on the crest of a mighty wave of the People's Front movement and on the basis of the program of the People's Front. This program was hammered out during the last one and a half years, in the struggle against the most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie, against the fascists. And it is precisely because this government was created by an actively operating People's Front that the bourgeoisie are compelled to tolerate it. But in the above-mentioned countries the position is entirely different. There, coalition governments are in power, governments of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, the result of the usual parliamentary maneuvers of the bourgeoisie.

Although the present French government was placed in power by the People's Front, the strength of this front is still not sufficient to establish a real People's Front government as understood by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International. The aim of the Communist Party in supporting the new government is to prevent the government from being transformed into the usual government of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and by following the program on which this government was established to urge it on to satisfy the demands of the followers of the People's Front who placed it in power, and first and foremost to satisfy the demands of the proletariat who inspired the People's Front. It is precisely for this that the Communist Party supports the new gov-

ernment. Precisely for this reason it is actively collaborating in drawing up all the measures necessary for the fulfillment of the program of the People's Front. It is precisely for this reason that the strengthening of the People's Front is one of the conditions for the fulfillment of its program.

But why did not the Communist Party enter the government? For the following reason: If the Communist Party had sent its representatives there then the attacks by reaction for this very reason alone would have been increased by a tremendous degree. Were the Communists to enter the government now, it would make it easier for the reactionaries to exert pressure on the Radicals to leave the government, and to split away from the People's Front. Hence, this could lead to the break-up of the People's Front, since very important and considerable sections of the population would leave the People's Front. It must not be forgotten that in spite of the losses suffered by the Radical Party it received 1,402,000 votes. Were the Communists in the present situation to join the government this could lead to the break-up of the People's Front, by driving away the Radicals or part of them. In only fourteen departments at the present time are the number of Communist and Socialist votes more than 50 per cent of the total votes cast. Thus, the united front of the Socialists and Communists is still comparatively weak throughout the whole country, and this renders it not possible (as is shown by the data as to the number of Communist and Socialist Deputies in the Chamber of Deputies, with 211 seats out of a total of 618) to form a united front government. Consequently a government without the participation of the Radicals, and where the forces of the Communists and Socialists are limited, would be a government of a *minority in the country*, and consequently would be doomed to helplessness.

It is absolutely clear that were the Communists to participate in the government it would call forth a ferocious attack by the reactionaries, and would give rise to serious difficulties at home and abroad as the result of increased provocation on the part of the reactionary bourgeoisie. But the forces of the People's Front are still insufficient to beat off such attacks. What would be the result then? The breakdown of the government, and the discrediting of the People's Front. But if the government, placed in power by such a mass movement, were to be discredited it would mean opening the way to fascism. This is why the Communist Party of France replied in this strain to the National Council of the Socialist Party on May 10, and later, on May 30, to the Socialist Party Congress. Taking into account these two fundamental arguments we consider that the entry of the Communist Party into the government at the present moment would not be of benefit to the People's Front, but on the contrary would make it possible for the big capitalists to smash the People's Front, *i.e.*, to achieve their aim by clearing the way to fascism. But the slogan of the Communist Party was and still remains: "*All for the People's Front, everything through the People's Front.*"

In this government there are thirty-five members, of whom there are eighteen Socialists, including two women; fourteen Radical Socialists including one woman; and three members of the Republican Socialist League. For this government to be able to fulfil its program we put

forward the task of establishing and extending the committees of the People's Front.

What must be done now? The Central Committee of the Communist Party gives the following answer in its resolution:

"The Central Committee understands and endorses the desire of the masses of the people who can state that insofar as nothing has been done in the three weeks that have followed the victory of the People's Front, the following measures must be taken as speedily as possible without any delay whatsoever:

"Public works must be organized on a big scale with a view to cutting down unemployment and livening up the economic situation in the country.

"The first steps must be taken to correct the injustices which have been done by the extraordinary laws, to the state and municipal employees, ex-servicemen, small investors, old people, and people with large families. Measures must be adopted to secure the protection of children, and the development of sport by allotting one billion francs which can be advanced in parts. A commission must be set up to investigate the sources of the enrichment of politicians who have accumulated wealth in politics (Tardieu, Laval, Bouisson, Fiancette, etc.) Measures must be taken to protect the franc against the traitors who are making efforts so as once again to deal a blow at the toiling peasants and small traders, against the stability of the national currency. Measures must be taken to ease the situation of the toilers in the village, and to raise prices on agricultural products to the pre-crisis level. A general amnesty must be secured. The law regarding conspiratorial organizations, whose actions should draw the attention of the French people, must be operated, so as to prevent any attempt at violent coup d'états."

We shall see below how the new government can and should act.

THE STRIKE WAVE

The strike movement which has developed at the present time in France is the most tremendous of all that have taken place since the years of 1914-18. The movement started in the aviation and automobile works of the Paris district, among the metal workers of Paris who are the heart and soul of the Paris proletariat and the Communist Party. These workers are filled with very profound class-consciousness and are distinguished by the high level of their political sense. At all stages of the history of the working class movement in France, they have invariably been at the head of the people of Paris, and have been distinguished by the unusual display of their initiative and heroism.

What were the conditions of the metal workers of Paris? They depended on the arbitrariness of the employers, received ridiculously low wages, and were always uncertain of the morrow. There were cases of metal workers being dismissed from one enterprise where they received seven francs per hour, and given work at a neighboring plant at five francs per hour for exactly the same kind of work. Since the period of the crisis, the employers have made very wide use of this method of utilizing unemployment. As a result, the wages of the metal workers of Paris gradually, and especially during the last four years, have been cut

down to a very great degree. For a number of years the former Unitary Metal Workers' Union (which has now joined the united union) put forward the important slogan of guaranteed wage rates, to which it added the old demand of *recognition of the rights of the trade unions* (which the employers systematically ignored), and the recognition of the shop stewards.

On May 11, exactly eight days after the victory of the People's Front, the workers in the aviation works of Breguet in Havre declared a strike and occupied the factory. They put forward the demand that the two workers who had been dismissed on May 1 be given back their jobs. The strike ended in victory. Three days later, on May 14, the workers of the Bloch Aviation Works in the Paris District Courbevoise et Villeconblay struck work in the same way, their demands being wage increases for all at the rate of 25 centimes per hour, and the application at Villeconblay of the collective agreement already being applied in Courbevoise. As soon as the workers of the Bloch works struck, all the deputies and councillors of the People's Front, the overwhelming majority of whom in this district are Communists, made their way to these factories. Mayors, municipal councillors and deputies brought food supplies, and gave the workers moral assistance and support. The workers saw that they were really being supported. In two days they had won a victory.

On May 15 the workers of the Latecoere Aviation Works in Toulouse struck work. The cause of the strike was the dismissal of two workers on May 1. The workers occupied the works and in 24 hours had won a victory, achieving in addition the recognition of the trade unions, the recognition of the shop stewards, and wages for compulsory lay-offs.

The example of the Bloch works showed the metal workers that with the aid of the People's Front they could secure the satisfaction of the main demands popularized for more than a year by the Unitary Metal Workers' Union. On May 27 a strike began at three factories in the Paris region at Nieuport, Issy-les-Moulinaux, Sauter Harle, at the electric power works in No. 16 District in Paris, Hotchkiss, Levallois (machine gun works). The method of the stay-in strike, of occupying the factories, justified itself. The workers of Nieuport put forward the following demands:

1. The abolition of overtime after an eight-hour working day, and the introduction of the 40-hour working week.

2. The recognition of delegates elected by the workers themselves (without the participation of the management).

3. Guaranteed minimum daily wage.

The workers in all these factories secured the satisfaction of their demands, and on May 27 *l'Humanité* published the collective agreement won by the workers of the Hotchkiss works in Levallois Perret, where the demands put forward at 4:30 were met the same day at 9 o'clock in the evening, after the workers had occupied the works. On achieving their demands, the workers left the works singing the *Internationale*.

The considerable successes achieved with such rapidity led to a stormy growth of the movement and its extension on a wide scale. On June 5 in the Paris district alone the workers of 250 metal works went on strike, and the employers' federation in the person of Richemond,

its Chairman, who is a member of the Comite des Forges, had to lower itself to the extent of entering into negotiations.

What is the characteristic feature of this movement? The splendid discipline of the workers. The workers kept the factory in complete order, delegates were elected in each department, committees were established to organize strike pickets, the entrances to the exits were guarded day and night, and workers began to clean up the departments. When sleeping quarters were organized, supper prepared, and a guard set up, the workers began to play games, to dance and to play football. It is useful to note the high degree of class consciousness of the workers. While the shops were full of goods (this refers to the food stores and the big department stores) not a single thing was tampered with.

From the first day both the giants of the automobile industry, Citroen with 22,000 workers employed in five enterprises, and Renault with 32,000 workers (factories which can compare with Ford factories in Detroit) struck work.

The workers displayed the greatest preparedness for negotiations. May 31 and June 1 were holidays. On the insistence of the union the striking metal workers left many of the factories as soon as the employers promised to fulfill their demands. But when on June 3 and 4, after the holidays, the workers saw that the employers were dragging out the negotiations, they again occupied the factories. The leadership of the movement was assured by the Metal Workers' Union which periodically called together conferences of delegates from the departments. Eight hundred worker delegates of metal workers, selected by departments and enterprises, gathered together on June 4 in the center of Paris in the Labor Exchange building. They were mostly young people, workers less than 30 years of age. They kept contact with the occupied factories by motorcycle. The strikers were in possession of the factory telephones and management offices. No outsiders were allowed into the factory.

The organizational ability of the workers, their discipline and the seriousness of the leadership, once again testify to the political maturity of the Paris metal workers, and refute the old legend about Frenchmen, and especially about the French workers, being allegedly incapable of engaging in organized activity. On the contrary there are numerous examples to show that the strictest discipline was observed.

This big strike of the Paris metal workers provides the workers of France and all over the world with an example of splendid organization.

In view of this powerful movement, which achieved the granting of the workers' demands, strike stoppages covered the entire province and workers of all specialties. Entire pages of *l'Humanité* were filled with the enumeration of the victories won by strikers, although the paper was not able to give full publicity to the entire strike movement, the strikes being so numerous.

The strikes in all the big centers, such as Lille, Roubaix, Dunkirk, Marseilles, and La Seine sur Mere, etc., were won. In the Northern department and in the Pas de Calais district the number of strikers quickly reached the figure of 400,000, and especially great was the number of strikers among the miners, who declared a general strike, as well as

among the metal and textile workers. Faced with such a powerful movement the employers had to retreat.

On June 8 *l'Humanité* published the text of an agreement between the General Confederation of Labor and the employers, the latter agreeing immediately to the introduction of a collective agreement and recognizing the rights of the trade unions.

Article 4 states the following:

"The wage rates existing on May 25, 1936, will be increased for all workers from the day they return to work, according to a scale, beginning with 15 per cent for the lowest categories and ending with 7 per cent for the highest categories."

An announcement was then made, which stated that the very low wage rates were to be increased, and that on the basis of the new rates wages would be increased by 15 per cent.

The movement which led to such an increase in the standard of living of the Paris metal workers, and also of other numerous categories of workers, is the best testimony to the correctness of the line taken to unify the trade unions, the line followed by the Communist Party of France in accordance with the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. *Had the split in the trade union movement still continued, such a struggle would have been impossible.* It is clear that if the trade unions are pulling in different directions the workers will never make headway. The employers understand this quite well, and are therefore now trying to spur on the Catholic organizations and Croix de Feu organizations in an attempt to split the trade unions. This should be of assistance to those countries where the toilers have yet to come to one and the same conclusion, namely, that, had the trade unions not been united the French metal workers and all other French workers would not so quickly have achieved big victories over the employers.

For the first time in France an agreement was signed between the representatives of the C.G.T., Jouhaux, Frachon, Semat, Codier, Milan, on the one hand, and the representatives of the General Confederation of French Industry (the so-called employers C.G.T.) composed of Duchemin, Dalbouse, Richemond and Lambert Ribot. The chairman of the Banking Syndicate, M. Lehideux, the henchman of finance capitalists, was compelled to carry on negotiations with the bank clerks' trade union. The bosses of the flour mills trust, one of the most powerful in France, had to engage in negotiations with the workers of the Grande Moulin flour mills in Paris. What a tremendous strength the C.G.T. has achieved thanks to unification!

Why did the workers develop the movement so rapidly? Because the People's Front, their People's Front, was victorious.

The Paris metal workers, politically developed, determined that the time had come to act, because the present government had been put in power by the People's Front in order to help the working people. As a result of this action the working class in a few days, in a few hours of struggle, secured a considerable improvement in their living conditions. This is a splendid reply to those who formerly asserted that nothing can be done to raise wages before the victory of the revolution.

Another result of this movement is the mass character assumed by the French trade unions. The metal workers' union in the Paris district now has 50,000 members, while the Metal Workers' Federation throughout the country has 200,000 members. The united C.G.T. has *three and a half million members whereas at the time of the fusion between the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U. there were only nine hundred thousand members.**

This is something that has not been achieved under the coalition governments of either Czechoslovakia or Denmark. The strike movement in France, however, immediately helped the government and strengthened it. In the factories, worker delegates are now being legally appointed and real factory committees established and these will undoubtedly become the bodies on which the People's Front can base itself. They will be the best lever for putting into life the program of the People's Front. Yes, a tremendous trade union movement is developing in France.

Let *Le Temps* talk about the "tragic situation" (June 6 and 7), let the English press, and, first and foremost, *The Daily Herald* and *Times*, talk about the "difficulties of the government". Let Morrison print an article in the *Forward* of June 6, entitled "Good Luck, Mr. Blum". But it is clear that the government has a support now which no government has ever had in France.

To those who, like *Le Temps* of June 9, say that the "Parliamentary system has now been dealt the heaviest blow it has ever received" we may reply that the very opposite is now taking place. On the contrary, the fact that a few weeks after the election masses of the people achieved such big results narrows down the basis of fascism. This is why the independent action of the working class, the inalienable right of the working class will be an exceptionally important driving force as far as the actions of the government are concerned and will be the decisive force barring the way to the efforts of reaction and finance capital. This was stressed by the National Council of the Metal Workers' Federation at its meeting of June 8, when it declared in its resolution as follows:

"The Committee of the Federation declares that if the 40-hour week, the collective agreement, and holidays with pay, are legislative measures, none the less, the metal workers cannot wait until Parliament introduces these measures into law, for the employers to satisfy these demands. *The Council of the Federation in exactly the same way presumes that the fulfillment and the regular operation of these measures will depend, in no smaller degree, on the corresponding independent action of the trade union organizations.*"

Marcel Cachin was right when he wrote in *l'Humanité* of June 8, that:

"We are told to make use of our influence to put an end to this increasing agitation. We reply that there is only one way of putting an end to strikes, and that is by satisfying the demands of the working people, by making it possible for them to live by their labor, by giving them adequate wages and by giving them conditions of existence worthy of human beings."

* On June 25, the C.G.T. announced a membership of 3,500,000, of whom 500,000 are in the Metal Workers' Federation and 180,000 in its Paris section.

We must bring about a situation where our work in the villages is raised to the level of our work in the towns. The Communist Party has now ardently set itself to achieve this.

This is how we can see in actual life, in action, the forces which support the government, and which make it possible for it to fulfill the program of the People's Front. In a word, the present strike movement has immediately shown how it will be possible tomorrow to support the government which has been placed in power by the People's Front and how it will be able and will have to fulfill its tasks. The strike movement in France is meeting with a wide response on an international scale, as witnessed by the strikes in Belgium and the ferment among the workers in England and even in Germany.

III. THE PRESENT SITUATION

THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

In spite of the great successes achieved by the working class and the People's Front, we must not forget the seriousness of the situation, since it is quite clear that the reactionary bourgeoisie have no inclination to retreat. After their first attacks, which were designed to call forth a panic, and which shook the stock exchange at the beginning of May, the campaign was renewed with additional force at the end of May when the strikes began. I will quote the following example. In view of the fact that the distribution of newspapers was held up for three days (the newspapers of the People's Front were distributed by the workers themselves) the rumor was immediately spread about that there would be a general strike the next day. Everybody rushed to the shops to purchase food supplies, which led to prices being trebled. The fascists cried: see, this is the handiwork of the new government of the People's Front. Speculation was rampant everywhere, all the more so since the big department stores were occupied by their employees, while the central market was closed for two days. After the victory of the workers the increase in prices still continued, the excuse now being that wages had been increased. The reactionary press continues to accuse the government of having allegedly let loose anarchy.

As regards the economic situation, the tendency to improvement is still relatively weak. The index of French economy has hardly passed beyond the lowest point reached during the crisis. France is the only one of all the big capitalist countries where the crisis maintained itself throughout the year 1935 as well. According to official data, on May 30 there were 422,036 unemployed, of whom 106,530 were in Paris, and 249,000 in the Department of the Seine, as a whole. Note must, however, be made of the slackening of the agrarian crisis as the result of a certain rise in the prices of agricultural products, particularly of grain. This is to a certain degree to be explained by the wide campaign conducted by the Communist Party and the government measures adopted as a result of this campaign. But the finances of the country are in a serious position. On the one hand, there has been a considerable withdrawal of gold from the Bank of France on two occasions, namely in

March-April, 1935, and in September, 1935. The gold reserve fell from 82,630,000,000 francs in March, 1935, to 65,590,000,000 francs by March 31, 1936.

There is a tremendous number of hidden banknotes in France (about 10,000,000,000 francs) and, according to a recent declaration of the Minister of Finance, Vincent Auriol, there are 30,000,000,000 francs. That is to say, if a panic begins, and these thousands of millions are put into circulation, then fundamentally the devaluation of the franc will take place. On the other hand, the budget deficit, the decline in receipts from direct taxation, have led to a situation where the various governments of National Unity, by refusing to tax the rich, were able to resort to loans. Prior to November 1, 1935, 18,000,000,000 francs of new loans were issued, at high rates of interest. At the present moment, the indebtedness of the French state amounts to 334,000,000,000 francs, of which sum 70,000,000,000 was incurred in the last five years. A great part of these debts are "floating" short term loans* and this provides finance capital with the possibility, if it so desires, of strangling the government in the course of a few days. We had such a situation with the Herriot government which in 1936 was overthrown in a few hours by this means, and the deficit in the State Budget for 1936 is at least 10,000,000,000 francs.

Finally, the big industrialists, as is well known, are striving to achieve devaluation with a view to carrying on a more successful struggle on foreign markets. Paul Reynaud, the agent of the big employers, recently came out in the Chamber for devaluation. The danger is exceptionally great and serious, for devaluation will not only deprive the workers of what they have achieved as a result of the present strike struggle, but it will render still more serious the conditions of the workers and the whole people. Today the attack is in full blast, by a general, rapid and big increase in the prices of all products of prime necessity, in the cost of living. Thus the first advantages obtained by the workers are already being imperiled, while the peasants and small shopkeepers are beginning to be severely hit. There is an immediate and particularly grave danger there.

On the other hand, according to law, the fascist organizations have been disbanded. But they have only changed their names and for the time being still continue to exist with their arms and their organization.

In such a situation, there is a danger that the big finance capitalists, trusts and monopolists which base themselves on the fascist bands, may exert pressure on the government. Therefore the Communist Party must at the present time display a maximum of vigilance at every step and in action. This is why the movement of such dimensions as has now broken out among the workers is an exceptionally powerful barrier against the forces of fascism and reaction, and is thereby a support to the government in the fulfilment of the program of the People's Front.

It is precisely for this reason that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France has insisted on the need for strengthening the People's Front, and of attracting to it those strata of the population

* On June 19, according to the Minister of Finances, there were 66,000,000,000 francs in short term loans.

which are still far from it, particularly the Catholic, among whom we have already achieved successes.

In exactly the same way the Party's campaign for the "unification of the French people", for the struggle against the two hundred families, is meeting with support even among many of those who have hitherto been supporters of the Croix de Feu. The efforts of our Party, as expressed in the policy of stretching out our hand, are well known.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY IS THE DRIVING FORCE OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

The past two years have shown that the Communist Party always inspires and fights for the extension and consolidation of the united front. The Communist Party has struck deep roots among the masses. Its influence is tremendous. Its membership is growing.

Thousands of new members have joined the Party every day since June 4. To date, the Central Committee of the Party has sent out 133,048 Party cards and stamps. The Young Communist League organizations after a period of inactivity have also begun to grow. During the recent period 40,893 membership cards and stamps have been sent out. During the District Conference which took place on January 11, 1936, the Paris city district had 6,392 members, whereas on May 31 there were 12,777 members registered, *i.e.*, the figures had doubled. In the Paris halls where we usually hold our meetings, we can no longer find enough accommodation for all our Party members.

Approximately, 250,000 copies of *l'Humanité* are sold. From June 4 to 9 3,368,657 copies were sold.

These figures are higher than ever during the entire period of the existence of *l'Humanité*.

The self sacrifice and heroism of our comrades are well known. In 1934 and 1935, at the first call of the Central Committee they went to shed their blood in the struggle against fascism. Many examples go to show that the Communists in France know how to organize the masses.*

Our successes in the village and especially in the big aviation works have been brought about by the work of thousands of humble comrades, endlessly persecuted by the employers and the police, thrown out onto the streets, and condemned to hunger.

The great success of the Party is its ideological consolidation. The Communist Party of France brought about a sharp turn during the year 1934 in the whole of its tactical line. (It began its work in this direction in February and intensified it in June.) And this at a moment when great confusion existed in all parties in France. The entire Party operated this turn without any serious hesitations, and the success was such that from that moment the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France won considerable prestige both inside the Party and outside its ranks. On the other hand, the work of the Central Committee demonstrated the solidarity among the leadership, a point which is very important in a country such as France, where anarcho-syndicalist and

* See article entitled "How French Communists Worked During the Election Campaign", in this issue, page 1063.

individualist traditions are very deep rooted. Whereas conflicts are taking place in all parties in France, only one party shows itself to be a monolithic whole and possesses a united leadership, a united Central Committee, and that party is the Communist Party of France.

We can boldly declare that never yet in the history of the Communist Party of France has there been such a unanimous endorsement of the line of the Comintern, and particularly the line of the Seventh Congress. And it is not a question of formally endorsing this line, in resolutions, but of endorsing the line of the Comintern in the entire everyday work of the Communist Party, inspired by the spirit of the decisions of the Seventh Congress.

None the less it is clear that we are still not sufficiently strong. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of France has sent out 133,000 Party cards. But eleven million French proletarians and millions of others who toil require leadership. In view of the present complicated and difficult situation, the most urgent task is clearly to recruit ever new members, in thousands, into the Party.

There has been some delay in establishing a joint federation of the youth, due to the resistance of the leaders of the Socialist and Republican youth, but the position is improving. The membership of the Young Communist League is increasing, and the basis is again being laid for the unification of all the youth, and especially for the drafting of a list of common demands for the youth. But what still remains to be done is tremendous.

As regards *l'Humanité*, it is of course an important newspaper, but as recently as December, 1935, its total circulation was in all 100,250 copies in the Paris district, whereas there is a population of 6,705,000 in Paris. In 188 cities with a population of more than 10,000 inhabitants each, and with a total population of approximately 9,000,000 inhabitants, only 36,952 copies of *l'Humanité* are sold. In the rest of France, with a population of more than 26,000,000 people, only 53,000 copies of the paper are sold. This means that the Party is faced with the tremendous task of improving the biggest Communist paper both politically and technically, a paper which is a lever for action and unity.

Finally, and this is the main thing, in this complicated and difficult situation, the Communist Party of France will only be able to cope with the situation if it rapidly prepares the numerous cadres of which it stands in need.

At the present time, more than five-sixths of the Party membership has a Party standing of two years. We are growing very rapidly, and, thus, the tasks of training and propaganda work will become colossal in dimensions. The ideology of Communism must be introduced among the huge masses of people coming into our Party. The Party is, thus, faced with the problem of raising the ideological level of our press, both national and local, and of our theoretical organ, and of all our publications. In this work we shall be led by the words of Comrade Dimitroff at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, when he said that:

“It is necessary to learn, comrades, to learn always, at every step, in the course of the struggle, at liberty and in jail, to learn

and to fight, to fight and to learn. We must be able to combine the great teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin *with Stalin's firmness at work and in struggle, with Stalin's irreconcilability, on matters of principle, towards the class enemy and deviators from the Bolshevik line, with Stalin's fearlessness in face of difficulties, with Stalin's revolutionary realism.*"*

This also raises the question of increasing discipline. It goes without saying that it is not a question of bureaucratic, moribund, and barrack discipline, but of live Communist discipline, based on political consciousness. But to achieve this a tremendous amount of educational work needs to be done. This is one of the most important tasks facing the Communist Party.

The situation of the Communist Party of France is extremely complicated, extremely difficult, and the French Communists recognize these difficulties. They are difficulties of growth, and show that the Communist Party has grown up and has achieved great successes.

The results already achieved enable us to look with confidence into the future.

* Georgi Dimitroff, *The United Front Against War and Fascism*, p. 127.

The Development of the Democratic Revolution in Spain

TOWARDS THE FIFTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SPAIN.

By J. HERNANDEZ

I. ECONOMIC SABOTAGE BY THE BIG BOURGEOISIE AND LANDOWNERS

IN FEBRUARY, 1936, the People's Front in Spain won a splendid victory. The Azaña government came to power. Two years of rule by a reactionary government had reduced Spain to a state of serious economic ruin. As compared with 1931, production in the textile industry had declined by 40 per cent, the cause being the sharp decline in the purchasing power of the people. In the mining industry tremendous reserves of coal, amounting to more than 300,000 tons, had accumulated, there being no market for them.

The reactionary government, in order to ensure itself a market for oranges, olives and other agricultural products in England and France, had allowed the Spanish market to be swamped by cheap goods, including coal from England and France. Many enterprises where big sums of foreign capital are invested make exclusive use of imported British coal, while there are no purchasers for Spanish coal—the result being that mountains of coal lie about on the pit tops. Former governments tried to compensate the losses of the mining industry by the granting of loans, but this only led to a further increase in the deficit in the state budget, which as it was was unfavorable enough. From the year 1932, the deficit in the state budget increased from 410,000,000 pesetas to 506,000,000 in 1934. As a result of this policy, imports increased while exports declined (the only increase, though insignificant, being the export of ore to Britain and Germany).

This is the situation which met the new Azaña government. In reply to the victory of the People's Front, the bourgeoisie resorted to economic sabotage and acts of provocation such as the export of capital, the withdrawal of capital from the banks, and the undermining of the exchange rate of the peseta. The employers and big merchant firms are threatening a lockout if the government does not withdraw the law regarding the giving of three to six months' compensation to those who were dismissed for participating in the battles of October, 1934. The big landowners, supported by the bankers, are also threatening a sort of land "lockout". They have declared that they will not cultivate their lands this autumn, since cultivation will not pay for itself. The pretexts they resort to are numerous. The government, they say, is preparing an agrarian reform, but what price the landowners will receive for the land is not known. Or else, they say, the agricultural laborers are

demanding the restoration of their former wage rates, arbitrarily reduced two years ago. Or else, they add, there is the law regarding the cultivation of the land which makes it obligatory to employ a definite number of workers. Basing themselves on all this, the landowners are cutting down cultivation of the fields.

The government and the working people are faced with the question as to how to break down this policy of economic sabotage, how to lead the economy of the country out of this blind alley, and how to help the masses of the people.

WHAT HAVE THE MASSES OF THE PEOPLE RECEIVED FOLLOWING THE ELECTIONS OF FEBRUARY 16?

First and foremost, there is the decree regarding compensation according to which all those dismissed on political grounds after January 1, 1934, are given back their jobs, and receive financial compensation to the extent of three to six months' wages.

Further, there is the general amnesty for all those arrested in October, 1934, and for all those awaiting trial and investigation for political offenses.

Catalonia has had restored her status (of broad autonomy) and is provided with democratic rights; the autonomy of Biscay will soon be recognized.

The state has already provided 87,000 peasants with land, *i.e.*, together with their families approximately half a million people are thus affected. In addition a law was adopted by the Cortes on May 28, regarding the re-examination of the cases of all peasants expelled by the former government from the land they rented for the non-payment of rent. According to this new law, tens of thousands of peasant families will have the right to return to the land they rented formerly.

The social legislation of the first period of the Republic has been restored, the reactionary legislation partly annulled and democratic rights restored.

A section of the fascist leagues and kindred organizations such as, for instance, the Spanish Phalanx, the Requetes, etc., have been disarmed and disbanded. At the present time, 5,000 to 6,000 fascists are in jail.

A clean-up has been begun in the police force, the gendarmerie and the army to rid them of reactionary monarchist elements.

Finally, a juridical commission has been appointed to clear up the question as to who were responsible for the repressions of October, 1934; as a result of the work of this commission several prominent reactionaries have been arrested.

This, in general, is what the masses have received from the government which came into being as a result of the victory of the People's Front.

It is not difficult to understand that the reactionaries and fascists did not and will not retreat without a struggle. A tremendous growth of the strike movement is to be observed throughout the whole country. Economic and political strikes are taking place both in town and country. The employed and unemployed are taking joint action in the effort

to secure work for the latter. Partial and general strikes take place, accompanied by the occupation of factories and coal mines, and in the villages by the mass seizure of estates by the peasants and agricultural workers.

The majority of these strikes conclude with the complete or partial victory of the workers. They all take place under the flag of unity—Socialist, Communist and Anarchist workers acting jointly in them. Strikebreaking has vanished. In those cases where the government considers it necessary to interfere, through its labor representatives, these latter, under the pressure of the workers, make decisions favorable to the workers. Thus it is that big victories are being achieved. For instance, the bus workers had only to declare a strike in Madrid for their wages to be increased from eight to fourteen pesetas. The rest days, which had been done away with, were restored to the extent of four per month, and in addition an eight-day holiday is now provided once per year at the expense of the employers. As a result of the strike of the seamen and dockers, which completely paralyzed the entire work of the port for eleven days, the strikers achieved official recognition of their organizations. In addition the workers have been granted the right to regulate the order of shifts, and they are allowed one month's holiday per year.

In some cases the strikers seized the enterprises. This is how the tramway workers in Madrid behaved when their employers refused to pay them wages. Then the workers themselves took charge of the trams, painted them red and printed on the trams the three letters "U.H.P.,"* the fighting slogan of the Asturian workers, well known through the whole of Spain. This affair was settled by the intervention of the authorities and the municipal council. As a result, the demands of the workers were satisfied and, what is more, the tramway lines passed into the hands of a joint committee, composed of representatives of the municipality and of the workers' committee.

The villages are the scene of the seizure of the land by the peasants. Although the Communist Party for the time being is refraining from advancing the slogan of the seizure of the land by the peasants as a general slogan, in those places where the local conditions permit and where the agricultural workers' unions, along with the municipalities and peasants' organizations, are proceeding to seize the land, the Party supports this movement and does everything possible to ensure that it is carried through in an organized fashion, avoiding conflicts, provoked by the enemies of the Republic and agents of the counter-revolution, between the peasants and the armed forces of the state.

The reactionaries are attempting to set the Catholic section of the population, among whom there are many peasants, against the other section of the population which is free of religious sentiments. To this end they are attempting to make use of the burning of churches.

What has been responsible for the burning of the churches? It cannot be explained simply by hatred for the churches felt by a section of the people who have freed themselves of religious prejudices. The fact is that the churches in Spain are organizational centers of the

* * U.H.P.—"Unios Hermanos Proletarios"—"Brother Proletarians, Unite!"

fascists and serve as stores for their weapons. In the overwhelming majority of cases, hidden stores of arms are discovered after the churches have been set afire. It is from these stores that people who took action against the workers' demonstrations received arms. It was in the churches that the fascists who murdered workers received sanctuary. The wrath of the masses against the churches (but not against the Catholics), which sided with reaction and fascism is understandable. There are numerous cases when it was not the people who directly set fire to the churches, but the forces of reaction which provoked the fire so as to give rise to discontent among the believers. The Communist Party is explaining to the masses that the burning of churches and monasteries only plays into the hands of counter-revolution.

Of tremendous importance both in securing the victory of the People's Front at the elections of February 16, and in the further development of the movement, was the part played by the women, who by their indignation at the black reaction of the two previous years moved to the Left with remarkable rapidity and force. A very important point was the active participation of the Anarchists who, in spite of the objections of their leaders, took part in the elections, and overwhelmingly voted for the People's Front. This movement of the masses to the Left is also to be observed among the elements which were formerly under the influence of the Rights. After the victory of the People's Front, this Leftward movement has become still more marked.

For instance, in Granada and Cuenca, where the Rights originally achieved victory by making use of a number of violations of the law, they received only an insignificant number of votes at the re-elections. In Granada, the pressure of the masses resulted in a Communist deputy, not included in the list in the first round, being included in the list of candidates of the People's Front. And although the candidature of this comrade was only put forward by a minority, the number of votes he received was beyond all expectations, and he was elected deputy. At the same time, great developments in the organization of the workers' parties, trade unions and also the Left Republican Parties are to be observed.

Certain of the Rights are pretending that they have become reconciled with the present political situation, and are in agreement with parliamentary and more or less democratic forms of government. They are declaring for a republic of a "Christian-Social" character. The representative of this tendency is Jimenez Fernandez, leader of the C.E.D.A.,* who is now trying to put a stop to the increase in the influence of the Left Republicans. Others are preparing a new blow against the People's Front and the republic, while not giving up their plans for a coup d'etat. At the same time a certain increase in the strength of fascism is to be noted. The fascist type of monarchists have also increased their activity. The situation is becoming more and more tense, and is threatening to split the Popular Action Party.** For the time being the church has succeeded in preventing this split by reason of its tremendous influence inside the C.E.D.A.

* Confederacion Economica de Agrarios, a reactionary landlord organization.

** Accion Popular, a fascist party headed by Gil Robles.

Parallel with the main line of development, namely, the growth of the influence of the parties and organizations in the People's Front, the consolidation of the position of the Communist Party and the development of the popular anti-fascist movement, there is to be noted the rallying together of the forces of the most reactionary fascist and monarchist groupings (Spanish Phalanx, monarchists, the fascist wing of the Popular Action Party) which are preparing to deal a new and decisive blow at the People's Front and the Republic.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

Immediately after the October battles in 1934 when a furious riot of reaction and fascism began, the Communist Party told the masses that the united forces of the enemy must be countered by the front of all advanced forces, of all who are devoted to liberty. In March, 1935, Comrade Jose Diaz, General Secretary of the Communist Party, made a speech at a big meeting in Madrid where he very clearly outlined the specific forms which this People's Front must take. This speech met with a tremendous response throughout the country.

After the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, which exerted exceptionally great influence on Spain, this idea of the People's Front attracted the support of tremendous masses of people throughout the country. The campaign popularizing the decisions of the Seventh Congress in Spain was one of the most successful campaigns organized by the Communist Party. Throughout the country, in spite of the reaction raging at that time, we succeeded in gathering at our meetings thousands and sometimes more than 20,000 workers and peasants, who heartily endorsed the line indicated by Comrade Dimitroff at the Seventh Congress. The name of Dimitroff became most popular among the masses of people. Not only Communists, but also many Socialists engaged in popularizing the decisions of the Seventh Congress. It is interesting to note that the demagogic speeches of the reactionaries and fascists frequently led to the opposite results. Thus, for instance, during the election campaign they pasted huge posters in all the streets which read as follows:

"A vote for the People's Front is a vote for Dimitroff. Vote for Spain and against Dimitroff."

It is clear that the Spanish people, faced with such a dilemma, replied by voting for Dimitroff.

To the masses, Dimitroff is the embodiment of the victorious struggle against reaction and fascism. To the workers he is the standard-bearer of the idea of proletarian unity, the leader of the Communist International. To all the Left Republicans in Spain, Dimitroff means the salvation of the democracy won from the fascism which threatens it. All these people voted "for Dimitroff", and the People's Front was victorious in Spain and dealt a crushing blow at the fascist reactionaries. But this does not mean that the question of organizing the People's Front did not meet with great obstacles in its path. Doubts arose among some of the Left Socialists as to the need for establishing the People's Front.

Another tendency among the Socialists, headed by Prieto, approached

the People's Front as though it was a case of class collaboration, and adopted the same attitude as formerly, beginning from the moment when the Republic was declared in our country.

As regards the Republicans, when they decided to link up with the People's Front, they understood this People's Front to be a mere electoral coalition which must come to a conclusion after the election, after they came to power.

However, in the long run we succeeded in getting our comrades, the Left Socialists and also a considerable part of the Republicans, to alter their point of view as regards the People's Front. In reality the People's Front not only exists, but is growing and strengthening. In agreement with the Socialists, the leaders of the 'General Workers' Union and the League of Youth, a decision was taken that the leaders of the workers' organizations belonging to the People's Front should come together periodically to discuss urgent questions of the struggle inside and outside Parliament. We have convinced the Republicans of the need for the Committee of the People's Front coming together periodically with a view to discussing the plan of work, and to introducing various questions and bills into Parliament. At these meetings of the People's Front, a preliminary study is made of all the bills being proposed by the government, and we try to bring about unanimity among all participating, so as to act unitedly in the Cortes against the reactionary bloc.

In the provinces, meetings of the People's Front are not held with particular regularity. Usually they are called together when some important event takes place. Thus, for instance, a meeting of the People's Front was called together in Cadiz, in order to discuss the fact that work had been completely stopped in the wharves at Echevarria. The representatives of the People's Front arranged a joint meeting with the governor of the province, and decided to propose to the government that it confiscate this enterprise. The government examined this declaration and handed over the enterprise to be managed by the workers. The latter immediately renewed production without waiting for the government to appoint its representative and a director for the enterprise. In other places, the representatives of the People's Front come together, discuss the poverty-stricken conditions of the workers, and amid general approval advance demands to the government or the municipality. All this indicates the further prospects of the People's Front, its further consolidation, in spite of all existing obstacles.

OUR RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT

Casares Quiroga, chairman of the Council of Ministers, made a declaration in Parliament in the name of the government, in which he pointed out that the government would in all its activity base itself on the masses and take all measures to bring about the speediest possible fulfillment of the program of the People's Front. In relation to the question of action against the fascists, he declared the following:

"The period of the defense of the Republic has come to an end and now the period of the offensive has begun. . . . My Republican conscience is indignant at and condemns the fact that there

are reactionary officials in the legal apparatus who when we hand over the enemies of the Republic to the Tribunal, set them at liberty. . . . As to the fascist organizations which occupy themselves with making onslaughts on the democratic republic, it is clear that the government cannot remain unaffected by this. In relation to fascism, the government is a fighting force."

Will Casares Quiroga keep to his promises? Judging by the first measures adopted, even though with some inconsistency, we may reply that he will, with the aid of the People's Front, with the aid of the people. Some measures have already been adopted in the army, the police force, the law courts, etc. The government declares that laws will be immediately presented to Parliament, in the spirit of the program of the People's Front, laws such as would satisfy the demands of the peasants and unemployed, and that a progressive income tax will be introduced, etc. The adoption of these laws will serve still further to consolidate the People's Front and the development of the popular democratic revolution in Spain.

The policy of the Communist Party is directed towards consolidating, strengthening and extending the People's Front, and not towards breaking it up. The Communist Party is urging on the government and the republican parties which belong to this front to be as speedy as possible in satisfying the economic and political demands of the people, as formulated in the platform of the People's Front. This is the best means of suppressing reaction and fascism. The consistent way in which our Party has operated the policy of the People's Front has raised its authority high not only among the workers, but also in the ranks of the Left republican parties.

We do not leave out of account the fact that the present government is a Left Republican government. None the less, on the basis of facts, we see that at the given stage we can fight alongside of them to improve the conditions of living, the labor, culture and well-being of the masses of the people in our country and to ward off the blows of reaction and fascism.

THE STRUGGLE FOR TRADE UNION UNITY

The biggest factor in the development of the working class movement in Spain was the unification of the Unitary General Confederation of Labor (C.G.T.U.) and the General Workers' Union (U.G.T.), which led to a colossal development of the activity of the trade union organizations in Spain. The overwhelming majority of the independent trade unions in existence linked up with the General Workers' Union. After the unification had taken place, many unorganized workers joined the union. The joint U.G.T. has 745,000 industrial workers and 253,000 agricultural laborers in its ranks, and more than 200,000 workers who are in the process of being accepted as members of the union. Here are a few facts to show the growth of the trade union organizations. In Malaga prior to the merger between the U.G.T. and C.G.T.U., both we and the U.G.T. had a number of very weak trade union organizations, but now, after the merger there are more than 31,000 workers in the joint organizations, while the leadership belongs to the Communists and Left Social-

ists. In the province of Seville, the trade unions have doubled their membership, and have more than 50,000 members in the union, while the leadership is in the hands of the Socialists and Communists jointly, the President and Secretary of the Federation being Communists. In Asturias, apart from a few local unions which are led by Communists and Socialists, there are two secretaries—Communists—in the Executive Council of the Miners' Union, co-opted as a result of the increase in our influence. A similar situation exists in Toledo, Cordova and Jaen, etc. Many workers who formerly, when the C.G.T.U. was separate, considered us splitters, now have faith in us and put us forward for leading positions in the trade unions.

The workers have seen that the Communists pursue a firm policy in relation to the People's Front and trade union unity. They have seen that we are the warmest defenders of the unified U.G.T., that we are seriously concerned about strengthening the trade unions, that we assist the remaining trade unions and unorganized workers in affiliating to the U.G.T.

The Congress of the National (Anarchist) Confederation of Labor (C.N.T.) which took place recently, was compelled to take account of the tremendous urge for unity existing among the majority of the members of the C.N.T. The Anarchist leaders, taking account of these sentiments of the workers, introduced a demagogic proposal about the need for establishing "alliances" for the exclusive purpose of "carrying on the revolutionary struggle", and on condition that political parties are not accepted into the "alliances". In harmony with this, the Congress of the C.N.T. demanded that the U.G.T. immediately break relations with the bourgeois parties and leave the People's Front. Objectively, this "arch-revolutionary" decision is being used by the enemies of the people for their own ends.

The maneuver of the Anarchist leaders was not clearly understood by some of our comrades, especially those of the *Mundo Obrero*.* The Central Committee of our Party immediately introduced clarity into this question. This mistake is also the result of the fact that our Party, especially in recent times, has not been paying sufficient attention to the problem of anarchism as a whole. Especially now is it necessary to undertake an ideological struggle against anarchism, since this problem at the present time is linked up with the problem of the "alliances" at the very moment when there are prospects for their development. The establishment of alliances is very much hindered by the failure of some of our Socialist comrades to understand the real importance and purpose of this movement. After the recent declarations made by Comrade Largo Caballero about the need for establishing "alliances" (although he does not raise the question of the direct election of delegates in the factories), the question of organizing "alliances" throughout the country will, we presume, move far forward.

THE SITUATION IN THE SOCIALIST PARTY

In the Socialist Party there are the following three trends: the Right

* The central organ of the Communist Party of Spain.

current headed by Besteiro, the Center headed by Prieto, and the Left, headed by Francisco Largo Caballero.

The main forces of the Socialist Party which have the greatest support among the masses undoubtedly follow Largo Caballero. They are honestly striving to adopt a revolutionary position. And we are trying to help them to get their bearings in these problems. For it is precisely with the aid of these Lefts that we shall establish a single revolutionary party of the proletariat in Spain.

The Left wing in the Socialist Party facilitated and rendered possible the merging of the C.G.T.U. and the U.G.T. and also assisted in bringing about the fusion of the Communist and Socialist Leagues of Youth. The Left wing does not hide its sympathies for the Communist International. Its program also contains the idea of the establishment of a single party of the proletariat; it declares itself an adherent of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the armed uprising for the seizure of power. At the last meeting of the Madrid organization of the Socialist Party, headed by Largo Caballero, a decision was adopted to introduce a resolution at the forthcoming congress of the Socialist Party to establish a united party of the proletariat on the basis of a discussion of the programs of the Communist and Socialist Parties, with a view to drawing up a final program for the united party.

Such is the position of the Left wing in the Socialist Party.

Although the Center tendency does not openly declare against trade union and political unity, there are elements in its ranks which lean more to the Right tendency which is openly against the Communists and against unification. Still, many Socialists of the Center could be won to the side of the revolution. This is why our Party is exerting all its efforts to ensure that the struggle within the Socialist Party should develop on a high political plane, and should not be reduced to a polemic of a personal character. For if the Centrists have hitherto maintained great influence over the revolutionary workers of Asturias, it is only because political problems which separate the Lefts from the Centrists in the Socialist Party have not been sufficiently explained to the Socialist workers. This is the reason why the workers of Asturias still continue to support the Centrist leadership, and keep at a distance from the Left tendency in the Socialist Party as represented by Largo Caballero.

The danger of a split in the Socialist Party has grown considerably. The entire press is now speaking of the possibility of a split in the Socialist Party, and of the establishment of a party of the Republican Radical-Socialist type.

A split in the Socialist Party would only lead to a weakening of the revolutionary forces. That is why we are striving to prevent a split, for the workers who support the Centrist leaders are in the main revolutionary, and can and should follow the Left wing of the Socialist Party, so as jointly with us to form a united party of the proletariat.

THE EXPERIENCES OF THE UNITED ORGANIZATIONS OF THE YOUTH

The fusion of the Communist and Socialist Leagues of Youth in Spain is a tremendous political event. As the result of discussions among the youth, and also contact with the Young Communist League, the

Young Socialists carried on a struggle against Trotskyism as a counter-revolutionary current. The Madrid organization of the Young Socialist League condemned the factional activity of the group led by the renegade Bullejos and expelled him and some of his supporters from the Young Socialist League.

To show the growth of the organization of the youth, we quote the following data: at the time when the fusion took place, the Young Communist League had 50,682 members (prior to February 16, 1936, 14,000), while the Young Socialist League had 65,600 members (prior to February 16, 24,000). In the course of two or three weeks after the merger, the united organizations of the youth already had 140,000 members. This fact shows that the tears of those people who think that the revolutionary character of the youth movement may be lost or altered as the result of the merger are superfluous. Now it is not 50,000, but 140,000 members of the United League who are defending the revolutionary line of the Young Communist International. The first issue of the *Juventud* (Youth), the organ of the United League of Youth, was printed in 150,000 copies. The leaders and the press of the Socialist Youth heartily defend the Young Communist International and the Comintern, and occupy a clear and loyal position in relation to the problem of the united front, the Alliances, the People's Front, the organization of a united party of the proletariat, and also the question of the character of our revolution.

WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' MILITIA

The Workers' and Peasants' Militia* is in the stage of organization, and as yet there are no exact data about it. The most important thing at the present time is the re-organization of the former shock groups which belonged to the Socialist and Communist Leagues of Youth into a broad organization of the masses of the people. Predominant in the ranks of the Workers' and Peasants' Militia are the young people, many workers and a tremendous number of peasants. There are also in the Militia a great number of young people who belong to the Republican Left, while in Catalonia groups of the *Estat Catala* (national revolutionary party in Catalonia) are in the Militia. After the merger of the youth organizations, the Militia adopted a uniform like that formerly worn by the Young Communist League, namely, a blue shirt with a red tie. In actual fact the Militia exists throughout the country. The Militia defends the People's Front organization against attacks and aggression by the fascists and reactionaries, and defends the liberties of the people, and the Republic.

What is the nature of the activity of the Militia? Here are a few characteristic facts:

In Madrid the fascists make a practice of shooting from automobiles at revolutionary workers and demonstrations. And so the Militia assists the government by placing guards at the entrances to and exits from the city to keep a check as to the occupants of automobiles and the nature of the luggage they carry with them. With the same end in view, groups of militiamen at night time parade working class quarters, and check

* Militant self-defense groups directed against reaction and fascism.

up the documents of pedestrians. If they meet a fascist, then on the first occasion they notify the authorities of his address, but on the second occasion they turn him over to the authorities for detention. Whenever the forces of reaction and fascism have attempted to organize a coup d'etat, to stir up rebellion among the troops, etc., the militia has been constantly on the streets and acted in such a way that there was not a single case of encounter or friction between the police on the one hand and the Militia on the other.

The Militia is now a well-disciplined force, and will, as time goes on, become one of the biggest mass organizations in our country.

THE STRUGGLE TO DEMOCRATIZE THE ARMY

A most serious problem facing the Communist Party of Spain is that of work in the army, since while our work in the army is still weak, the forces of reaction and fascism which constantly organize conspiracies against the republic and hatch plots against the state are still concentrated there.

It is true that in the recent period, a certain turn in favor of the People's Front and our Party can be noted among the officers. The violence of the fascists, as for example the murder of Captain Faraudo, has hastened this process. The funeral of this captain was turned into a real demonstration of their anti-fascist feelings by the soldiers and officers of the Madrid garrison. The speech made by the representative of our Party at this funeral created a tremendous impression on the army men. The speaker emphasized the point that the Communists are not at all hostile either to the soldiers or to the army itself, that we are not striving to undermine discipline, but that all we want is to purge the army of fascists and reactionaries who murder both working people as well as military men of anti-fascist sentiments, merely because these latter honor the will of the people and remain true to the republic.

Characteristic of the sentiments prevailing among the soldiers was the event in Alcala de Anares, where reactionary officers attempted to incite the soldiers to mutiny, who not only did not obey the orders of the officers but reported these efforts of incitement to insurrection.

We are striving to prevail on the government completely to purge the army of all reactionary and fascist elements, and of the considerable number of monarchists who hold commanding posts in the army. We are striving by energetic work to create a powerful republican and anti-fascist movement within the army for the purpose of democratizing it. The army must serve the interests of the working people and not of the reactionaries, as has been the case up to the present time.

WHAT OUR PARTY WAS, AND WHAT IT IS NOW

After the temporary defeat of October, 1934, our Party succeeded in regrouping its forces without being seriously weakened. We suffered heavy losses during the uprising and after it, as a result of the repression. But on the whole, our cadres were saved throughout the country, with the exception of Asturias, where our Party suffered very great sacrifices.

By the struggle carried on by the new leadership of the Party to eliminate all remnants of sectarianism; by the struggle it wages in creating the People's Front; by the exceptional activity of the entire Party during the days of the darkest reaction; and by the work we did towards unifying the forces of the proletariat, the workers, and particularly the Socialist workers, became convinced that our Party knows what it wants and where it is going. Our Party has shown itself to be a monolithic Party organizationally and ideologically, a fact which has greatly increased its influence over the masses. Thanks to the correctness of its tactics, substantiated by the results of the elections of February 16, the masses of the people consider the Party to be the initiator of the victory over reaction and fascism. Our Party is a big factor in the political life of the country. For the first time the Party has real representation at its disposal in Parliament. The activity of the seventeen Communist Deputies in the Cortes is facilitating the growth of the popularity and authority of the Party. Similar successes are being achieved by our representatives in the city councils. The Communist Councillors are the most popular people throughout Spain. They know how to approach what appear to be the most complex problems and to solve them. Here, for example, is the way our comrades acted in the case of the "land sabotage" when the big landowners ceased cultivation of the land, depriving the agricultural laborers of work. Our comrades invited the representatives of both the landowners and the agricultural workers to the Municipal Hall. If they could not reach an agreement during the first exchange of opinions, then our comrades would place the question in this way: "You shall not leave the building of the City Council until you carry out a decision which will be acceptable to the workers."

This is one of the thousands of various methods of work used by our comrades, who carry on a great amount of work to improve sanitary conditions in the working class districts, to secure the distribution of relief during strikes, the repairing of workers' houses, etc.

The popularity and the influence of the Party can be excellently demonstrated by figures. Prior to the elections of February 16, our Party had 20,000 members, while at the present time it has 83,967 members. This is still not a big figure, but then our Party has only just begun to be transformed into a big mass party. We set ourselves the task of bringing the numerical strength of the Party up to 100,000 by the time of the opening of our Party Congress, and this figure will undoubtedly be exceeded.

The largest influx of new members into the ranks of our Party is taking place in the agricultural districts of our country, and in the cities of the semi-industrial type, such as Malaga, Seville, Jaen, Valencia, Badajoz, etc., and in the mining centers as, for example, in Asturias, and to a lesser extent, in Biscay. New members are also joining our Party directly in the large enterprises, including the railways. The majority of the new members are workers organized in the U.G.T., while only a minority are unorganized. The growth of the Communist Party at the expense of the Socialists constitutes a comparatively small percentage, as the Communist Party is not carrying on a special campaign to draw the members of the Left wing of the Socialist Party into its ranks. The in-

crease in the membership of our Party from among the members of the trade unions affiliated to the C.N.T. is still insufficient, a fact which testifies to the general weakness of our work in Catalonia.

The important question of training these new members is one facing our Party at the present moment. This question deserves all the more attention since it concerns the question of the lack of cadres. Up to the present moment we have not carried on any regular work to train new members and to set up cadres. There is a decision of the Party periodically to call meetings of active Party members for the exchange of experiences in Party work and methods of work, taking into consideration the fact that the new members of the Party came to us from organizations whose methods of work differ sharply from ours.

Our work in Catalonia deserves the greatest amount of self-criticism. Here the successes of the Party are too insignificant. The membership of the Communist Party of Catalonia is not more than 2,000. It is precisely in Catalonia and Biscay—the basic industrial districts of Spain—where the Party is growing at an exceedingly slow pace, yet the people of Catalonia have elected a number of our comrades to leading positions in the trade unions. This fact shows that while they have confidence in the Communists as individuals, the Party as such has not been able organizationally to cover them and to consolidate its influence among them. It is true that the situation in Catalonia is more complicated than in any other place in Spain. There are ten or twelve organizations of a nationalist type, two Socialist organizations, an Anarchist and counter-revolutionary Trotskyist groupings. And, of course, the factional cancer of the past has made the growth of our Party in Catalonia more difficult. But this is only one reason. The basic mistake lies in the fact that the national question, the question of our national policy, has not been put forward correctly.

Now conditions are favorable for growth of the revolutionary movement in Catalonia. Such parties as the Union of Socialists of Catalonia, the Socialist Party and the Proletarian Party of Catalonia, have agreed to merge with the Communist Party on the basis of our general line and tactics, and to join in principle with the Communist International. We are aiming towards creating a single mass Workers' Party of Catalonia by uniting the Communist Party with the above mentioned organizations, while at the same time striving to ensure cooperation with the peasants' union (*Rabassaires*).

WHITHER IS SPAIN GOING?

Two forces are struggling against each other in Spain—the force of fascism and the forces of the anti-fascist People's Front—revolution and counter-revolution. The outcome of this struggle has not yet been decided. At the present time we occupy a much more advantageous position than the enemies of the people. We can come out of this struggle victorious. The Party is growing rapidly. But the leadership of the Party does not forget that the successes which have been achieved are not yet finally consolidated. At the present time we are not putting forward the transition from the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revo-

lution to the socialist revolution, for the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship, as the immediate task. But we aim at completing and carrying to its conclusion the people's democratic revolution. This is the basic task of the Spanish people at the present moment.

The weapons of victory are in our hands. The Communist Party of Spain sets itself as the main and most pressing immediate task at the present moment—the achievement of the complete victory of the democratic and revolutionary forces over fascism and counter-revolution, and by operating measures of an economic and political character which lead along the path towards the completion of the democratic revolution, to isolate the fascists from the masses of peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie on whom they have based themselves up to the present time; to disorganize the forces of fascism, to undermine the material base of the counter-revolution, and to strengthen the position of the proletariat and its allies. Will we be able to solve these tasks, to solve the questions which face the proletariat and the people as a whole? The basic condition for the successful solution of these tasks lies in strengthening to the utmost and in further developing the struggle of the People's Front against fascism and counter-revolution, and in defense of the revolution and the republic. We are carrying out a clear line, and understand our aims—we know what we want and where we are going. In our struggle we are inspired by the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Spain, which is called for August of this year, will sum up the results, and set the perspectives of the struggle against fascism and the counter-revolution, for the political unity of the proletariat, and for the victorious development of the revolution in Spain.

For the People's Front in England

By HARRY POLLITT

THE great successes won by the French and Spanish People's Fronts in the recent general elections in those countries have had a far-reaching effect on public opinion in Great Britain.

In practically every progressive newspaper, with the exception, of course, of the *Daily Herald*, there began to appear articles, editorials, and letters dealing with the question of whether, and if so, in what form it is possible to establish a People's Front in Britain.

The discussion began immediately after the results of the French general elections were known. It was further stimulated by the subsequent formation of the Leon Blum Government in France.

The whole feeling that it is high time something of a similar character to the French and Spanish People's Fronts was organized in Britain was, however, encouraged most of all by the stirring events which have taken place in France *since* the elections.

Progressive opinion in Britain and especially the great majority of the members of the organized labor movement witnessed with amazement the striking victories won by the working people of France in the wave of strikes which swept the country from end to end. They realized the tremendous changes that must come about in the conditions of life of the French nation. They watched astonished the unprecedented influx of new members to the trade unions. They sensed the new life, the new strength, and the new hope, that were transforming the French labor movement. They contrasted all these happenings with the state of affairs in Britain and there began to be voiced the demand that steps similar to those taken by the workers and professional people in France and Spain should be taken in Britain to end the intolerable situation existing there.

* * *

If the basis of the demand for a People's Front in Britain is clearly to be understood, it must be realized that the National Government is now recognized to be a government of social reaction by an ever-growing section of the population; that the foreign policy of this self-styled National Government—with its past support for the military-fascist ruling clique in Japan, its gross betrayal of the Ethiopian people, and its open assistance and encouragement of Hitler Germany—is recognized as a policy directly menacing the peace of the world.

Although the general election in Britain, at which the ill-disguised Tory government of Baldwin was returned, took place only last November, no other government, at least in modern times it is safe to say, has so

rapidly and so completely discredited itself in the eyes of the millions of those who voted it into office.

In this situation it is felt, and rightly so, that there exists an unrivaled opportunity, providing all those who are opposed to it are organized within a common front, of sweeping it finally away.



Unfortunately, the basic weakness in the standpoint of most of those who think along these lines is that they regard this "common front" purely as an electoral agreement arrived at by consultations between the leaders of the Liberal and Labor Parties.

In the Liberal press, particularly, this question is receiving considerable attention.

There are some who see in this fact a deep laid plot on the part of the Liberal leaders to make use of the growing feeling that a Popular Front is necessary in Britain in order to revive the fortunes, or, at least, prolong the life, of a dying Liberal Party.

I do not accept this idea.

I believe that, at bottom, the attention which the question of a Popular Front in Britain is receiving in the Liberal press reflects the attitude of that large body of progressive opinion which is outside the labor movement.

On the whole, the people composing this section of the population are profoundly alarmed at the national and international situation. These people have a very sincere desire to do something practical to help defeat the National Government, to improve the conditions of the majority of the people at home and to organize all peace-loving people into a single movement aimed at preventing war.

But desire, good-will and sincerity are not enough.

Both the end and the means by which it is to be achieved must be crystal clear, and the unity must be a united struggle of aim and method and not merely one of good intent. It goes without saying that any attempt to establish the People's Front in England must pay attention first and foremost to the existing movement among the people for peace. This movement, with its successes and defects, must without fail occupy the center of the attention of all who support the People's Front. The movement for peace led by the National Peace Council covers very wide sections of people, and its dimensions are on a scale unheard of in England. Why has this movement been passive in all the critical situations which have arisen recently? Because there is no clarity inside this movement on the question of the ways and means to be adopted in the struggle for peace. Everybody wants peace. But there is the greatest disagreement as to how to maintain peace.

The Communist Party, which wishes to see the whole of the people of Britain on the march against the National Government and the policy it is pursuing, is fighting the confusion about, and distortion of, the nature of the Popular Front, which, if not eliminated, will actually retard the movement.

It is not sufficient to be inspired by the successes of the People's

Fronts in France and Spain. It is necessary to *understand how* they were made possible.

* * *

That a widespread confusion as to how a real fighting People's Front can be developed in Britain does exist at the present time can be shown by a few extracts from articles and letters which have appeared in the press.

"I am by no means suggesting the expediency of a Liberal-Labor alliance. Far from it; parliamentary Liberalism is highly unpromising material for any Front Populaire designed to further a constructive policy. I have in mind rather a more open, friendly and collaborative attitude towards individuals at present outside the Labor ranks, but largely at one with the immediate objectives of Labor policy." (G. D. H. Cole, *New Statesman*, May 9, 1936.)

"The one consolation in a long-distance view to be drawn from a break-down in this sense of the sham 'National' front would be the stimulus it might give to the formation of a great Popular Front in this country.

"The present Government totters, without falling, from one shock to another largely because of a general disbelief in the ability of the Labor Opposition to provide a more efficient alternative. Labor politicians, aware of the handicap, are beginning now to talk among themselves in terms of a Popular Front.

"But today thoughtful politicians, ranging from the extreme Socialist Left to the extreme Conservative Left, see in the establishment of a well-organized Popular Front the best hope—if not the sole hope—of fighting reaction, building up a staunch system of social justice and making democracy secure." (A. J. Cummings, *News Chronicle*, May 11, 1936.)

"The conception of a Popular Front in Britain is beginning already to capture the popular imagination. It may well be that in the next few years political history will be transformed through the mobilization on a few simple issues on the one front of all the forces of progress whether inside or outside existing parties.

"But there is no room for delay. A neglected opportunity may be lost for a generation." (Leading article, *News Chronicle*, May 14, 1936.)

"But advocates of a Popular Front (or Peace Front as I have termed it elsewhere) may at least urge that, while consolidating the progressive forces in this country which obstinately adhere to a two party system, it combines satisfaction of the demand for a united workers' movement with the prospect of such an enlargement of voting support as may make feasible the acquisition of power and prevent the rot setting in of Liberal-Unionism. It may even contribute a temporary bridge over which battalions, at present detached, may join forces with, and accept the discipline of, the Labor Party." (Professor Catlin, *New Statesman*, May 16, 1936.)

"At that time, 1931, it seemed clear to me that we must . . . protect our democratic system by a Popular Front on the Right.

"Today the opposite is true. We can only protect democracy and get the chance to reorganize our national life by a Popular Front on the Left. I believe that ultimately the Labor Party will have the imagination to realize that they must take the lead in bringing this Popular Front into being, just as we witnessed it being done in France." (Lord Allen of Hurtwood, *Sunday Express*, May 24, 1936.)

"It is equally clear that there is every chance of winning a number of seats from the government if there would be an electoral arrangement between the Parties of the Left.

"Unite the divided radical vote, harness the new ideas of other groups, draw in the new men who are agreed on the vital questions of the day and you have the end of the reaction in Great Britain.

"It remains only for reason to triumph over dogma and for loyalty to a political and humanistic ideal to extort temporary sacrifices from the political machines of the Left." (Arthur Greenwood, *News Chronicle*, May 28, 1936.)

Such expressions are typical of what is now appearing on the subject of the People's Front in the Liberal and Liberal-Labor press.

In this situation, one might have thought that it should have been the duty of the *Daily Herald*, as the mouthpiece of the official Labor movement in Britain, to have given a clarifying lead on the question.

As it was, the most complete silence was observed, only to be broken when those who are responsible for the policy of this paper saw an opportunity to deliver just another of those vicious and criminal stabs which are preserved specially for any manifestation of mass struggle and militant advance.

At the decisive moment in the great strike movement which swept France, the direct result of the election successes of the People's Front, the *Daily Herald* wrote:

"The French workers will be wise enough not to lessen the capacity of their Government to continue in that progress.

"At the moment there is some danger of playing into the hands of reaction.

"Electors will not be encouraged, either in France or anywhere else, to return Left Governments if their success is immediately marked by widespread economic disturbances and an interruption in the supply of daily necessities." (Leading article, *Daily Herald*, June 6, 1936.)

* * *

Two main weaknesses are to be noted in the views expressed in the above quotations.

Firstly, while these views are the direct consequences of recent events in France and Spain, no understanding is shown of *past* events, of the stages in the development of the People's Front in these countries.

Secondly, the Popular Front is conceived of primarily as an *electoral bloc* between what are commonly described as "the progressive elements in the Labor and Liberal Parties".

So far as the first weakness is concerned, it is necessary to draw

attention to the fact that the People's Front in both France and Spain only came into existence *after a united working class front had been achieved between, and carried out in practice by, the Communist and Socialist Parties in these countries.*

The successes attending this working class *unity of action*, the enthusiasm and power which it generated and the salutary check which it imposed upon hitherto advancing fascism, at once attracted the attention and sympathy of those sections of the population—peasants, middle class and professional people—that were outside the working class movement.

These at once began to demand that their own organizations should be identified with the united working class movement.

And it was at this moment that the Communist Party of France, displaying exemplary initiative, proposed the formation of the People's Front for bread, freedom and peace.



There are some people in Britain who are, at present, arguing that there are purely "British ways" of achieving here what has been done in France.

We Communists agree that all policy must be formulated according to the actual conditions of the country to which that policy is designed to apply. We Communists are well aware that in different countries, just as in different situations in the same country, different tactics may be necessary. The character and the concrete forms of the People's Front in England will, of course, be determined by the special English conditions.

But on some issues there are fundamental principles which cannot be ignored, fundamental principles upon the recognition of which any successful effort depends.

One of these is involved here.

We can state it briefly in this way:

Until the working class organizations achieve unity in action, a united front directed against the advance of fascism, directed against social reaction and the threat of war, no real success can be achieved by any combination calling itself a "People's Front" or anything else, for that matter.

This is especially so in the case of a country such as Britain, where the working class constitutes the majority of the population. This, of course, does not mean that we adhere to any kind of theory to the effect that there are certain stages which must of necessity be passed through in the establishment of the People's Front. We perfectly well understand that the organizations of the working class are not at all separated by a Chinese wall from the wide movements against war and fascism, the initiative for which does not come from these organizations. Neither do we imagine that the People's Front in England has of necessity to be built up in the same chronological order as in France and Spain. But unless united action by the working class is achieved, the People's Front cannot become a decisive force and achieve the necessary success in England.

We who see the need for a People's Front in Britain would be committing a very serious political mistake if we were to shirk the struggle to overcome the opposition of the Labor leaders to the united working class front, the essential condition for the creation of a genuine People's Front, and to take refuge in general talk about some vague People's Front.

And at this point it is necessary to point to the contrast between the experiences in the general election in France and that in Belgium.

In France the anti-fascist progressive forces won striking successes because the People's Front there is based primarily upon the united working class front achieved by the French Socialist and Communist Parties.

In Belgium, the Labor leaders refused a united front with the Communists. There was in consequence no People's Front. As a result, the fascists gained important successes in both the general and the more recent municipal elections, and the Belgian Labor Party lost heavily. The Communist Party, which carried through its election campaign under the slogan of the united and people's fronts, met with great success.

The failure of the Belgian working class to achieve unity in action has prevented the creation of an anti-fascist People's Front, and has led to an advance of fascism in Belgium, and, because of the strategic importance of Belgium in Europe, has increased still further the serious menace to the peace of the world.

* * *

In all countries fascism attempts to find support among the middle class and professional section of the population.

The economic crisis and the subsequent depression have hit this section almost as hard as the working class.

The terrible consequences of fascism in Germany, and the fact that fascist Germany is now the chief danger to the peace of the world, have undoubtedly made a profound impression upon this section of the population of Britain.

They are equally alarmed at the reactionary policy of the discredited National Government.

It is possible and desirable to form a fighting alliance with all these people, but the interpretation of the Popular Front repeated in the views expressed above would defeat the aims which many who earnestly desire united action against the National Government have in mind.

The experience of other countries shows that the most decisive factor in the establishment of such an alliance is the resolute action of the united working class movement against fascism and reaction—action which, in defending the workers' interests, will also defend the interests of the middle class and professional people against the big trusts, landlords and bankers.

* * *

Turning now to the second weakness in the views expressed, I must stress primarily that, both in Spain and in France, the People's Front did *not* start as an electoral combination, but as a mass movement which was repeatedly in action before electoral agreements and election vic-

tories became possible. There is an exceptionally favorable situation in England for the establishment of such a mass movement. The movement for peace, which covers millions of people, and is immensely popular throughout the country, is the cornerstone of a broad People's Front.

The ground for the People's Front has been prepared. It only depends on whether the organizations of the working class arrive at agreement and establish united action, whether the feeling of the people for the establishment of a broad People's Front will be established in England.

With the united front of the Communist and Socialist Parties as its indestructible core, the People's Front in France grew up on the basis of local, divisional and national co-ordinating committees of action, which organized mass activity (meetings, marches, demonstrations) against the fascist organizations and for a program aimed at relieving poverty, reducing unemployment, and drastically curbing the power of the bankers and armament firms.

That is why the great People's Front demonstrations, such as that of July 14, 1935, when 800,000 citizens of Paris marched past the Bastille and then similar great gatherings which took place all over France, laid the firm basis for the mass movement which later defeated Laval, forced through the Franco-Soviet Pact, and achieved the victory over reaction in the general election.

That is why it was possible for the Leon Blum Government to come to office in France.

Even more significant was the march past the Wall of the Communards organized on May 24, 1936, by the Communist and Socialist Parties of France.

The march was expected to last five hours.

It actually took from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Why?

Because the middle class and professional people of Paris joined with the workers, marching behind the banners of the People's Front, and in particular, behind the banners of the ex-servicemen's contingents.

Then came the great strike wave, which has resulted in the magnificent victories for the industrial and black-coated [white-collar—*Ed.*] workers, and in the unprecedented growth of militant trade unionism in France.

The moral of this is clear. The stronger the organized united working class movement becomes, the more it attracts all those sections of the people which normally hold aloof from political activity, or fall under the influence of the reactionary bourgeoisie.

Therefore it would be fatal if we did not understand the decisive and leading importance of the working class united front.

This point of view is repeated and stressed in some of the contributions on the subject which have appeared in *Reynolds News*, the influential Sunday newspaper of the Co-operative movement.

The following quotations are indicative of this trend of opinion.

"A People's United Front in France has brought a great victory for democracy and socialism. . . .

"Working class unity has achieved two remarkable triumphs

this year. France and Spain represent the new technique of the fight for Socialism and Peace. . . .

"Let us therefore forget our sectarianism and unite on as wide a front as possible." (Joseph Reeves, Secretary Educational (Dept. Royal Arsenal) Co-operative Society, *Reynolds*, May 24, 1936.)

". . . Allow the dark forces that stand in the way of unity to prevail now, and the outlook for the workers would be black indeed.

"But the spirit of the Whitsuntide Conferences is fighting against those forces. 'Prevail they shall not', it says. It demands prompt consultation between the chiefs of the Labor Party, the Co-operative movement, the trade unions. Bring in the Socialist League and the I.L.P. Do not leave out the Communists.

"They are not many in actual members, but their presence in the United Front would ensure its having certain clear-cut, vigorous aims. These would not be the precise aims of the Communist Party, but they would be energetic, practical.

"This is no moment for holding back because personal vanities may be affronted or personal interests imperiled. The tide is with us. For the first time in the history of labor we have the mass of intelligent opinion inclining to our side.

"There are signs everywhere of an honest, disinterested eagerness for a better state of society. The rapid success of the Russian experiment, turning to foolishness all the predictions of its early failure, has startled the world out of its conception of Socialism as an impossible dream. There is a magnificent chance for us, and also for our comrades in France, who evidently intend to take it." (Hamilton Fyfe, *Reynolds News*, June 7, 1936.)

"C.H.", in a long letter to the *New Statesman and Nation*, writes:

"Mr. Cole in dismissing the idea of a Popular Front in the form of a Liberal-Labor Alliance seems to ignore entirely the existence of any other parties of the Left in this country.

"It is surely no secret that a large part of the driving force of the Popular Front in France and Spain has come from the Communist Party. . . .

"I venture to hope that you will make it clear when you speak of a Popular Front you do not contemplate the possibility of its formation in this country any more than in France and Spain, without Communist support." (*New Statesman*, May 16, 1936.)

Very significant was the fact that, on June 12, the following letter appeared in the *Daily Herald*:

"The swift and decisive action of the People's Government of France should give rise to a serious thought among the leadership of the 'Left' and Radical elements in this country.

". . . We have got to rid ourselves of all the factions in the 'Left' and Radical movements and bring all these elements together.

"The question of a coalition of all these 'Left' and Radical elements is a matter for the immediate demands, which will rally all these elements together." (Geo. Hindle, Political Agent Warrington Trades Council and Labor Party, Editor of the *Warrington and District Labor News*.)

The people in Britain—who are anxious for a united effort to defeat the National Government, who are for achieving a great social program to help the distressed areas; who are for the suppression of Mosley's fascist blackguards; who are for close cooperation with the Soviet Union and with the government which has come into being in France after the election victory as the only effective way of maintaining peace—should be doing everything possible to achieve these ends by using whatever influence they possess to bring pressure upon their friends in the Labor Party to end the stupid opposition to united action with the Communist Party.

It is this opposition to the establishment of the United Front which is the chief obstacle to any prospects of a People's Front in Britain. At the same time the reactionary elements who are resisting the United Front are thereby affording the strongest political support to those people whose policy is leading us towards war, for it is these people, and these alone, who profit by the divisions in the ranks of the working people. It is an opposition by leaders who are afraid of a United Front because they realize that a United Front means a front of struggle, because they realize that out of it will come a really powerful fighting People's Front, and out of that will come the defeat of the National Government. And it is that defeat which the reactionary labor leaders are more afraid of than anything else in the world.

Some of them are terrified at the prospect of having to accept the responsibility of government should the National Government be defeated, for they understand that a People's Front like that of Spain and France would deal heavy blows against the warmakers.

For the great pressure which the People's Front will exert on the labor government will consolidate all the forces in Britain opposed to fascism and war. It will help to ease the tension of the present international situation. And of all these, the reactionary labor leaders are terribly afraid.

* * *

The task of healing the split in the ranks of the labor movement in Britain is no light one. The task of creating a broad front of the British people against social reaction, against the enemies within the nation—the capitalist employers, the bankers, the landlords and their henchmen—is not one to be entered upon lightly. The future not only of the British people but of the peace of the world and of humanity itself depends upon how we go about it.

The Communist Party of Great Britain, fully conscious of this tremendous responsibility, does not underestimate the gravity of the situation.

Therefore, as the first step towards the realization of united working class action, as the first necessary step towards the establishment of a real People's Front in Britain, the Communist Party now seeks to become affiliated to the Labor Party.

At the time of writing (June 13) the fact that 905 local and national Labor Party and trade union organizations have declared their support

for Communist affiliation indicates that the real lesson of the events in France and Spain have, at least, not been lost upon the more far-seeing sections of the British labor movement.

It is worth while to note how wide and representative this support is already:

Annual Conferences: South Wales Miners Federation; Associated Soc. Locomotive Engineers and Firemen; National Union of Clerks; Furnishing Trades Association (National Ballot); Socialist League; Scottish Socialist Party; Scottish Co-operative Guilds.

Executive Committees: Associated Society Locomotive Engineers and Firemen; Furnishing Trades Association; National Council Socialist League.

District Organizations:

District Trade Union Organizations.....	19
District Labor Party Organizations.....	7
District Co-operative Organizations.....	5

Local Organizations (Trade Unions):

Railwaymen's Trade Union Branches.....	171
Engineering Trade Union Branches.....	76
Miners' Lodges	69
Building Trade Union Branches	58
Transport Trade Union Branches.....	53
Distributive Trade Union Branches.....	35
Furnishing Trade Union Branches.....	25
Municipal Trade Union Branches.....	21
Other Trade Union Branches.....	44

Labor Parties:

Local Labor Parties.....	57
Divisional Labor Parties.....	39
Ward Labor Parties.....	78
Trades and Labor Councils.....	31
Labor League of Youth Branches.....	23
Other Local Labor Bodies.....	26

Co-operatives:

Local Co-operative Guilds and Political Councils.....	58
Total . . . Trade Union Bodies.....	577
Labor Party Bodies.....	265
Co-operative Bodies	64

*Grand Total—905 Organizations**

We can see from this that the framework of a People's Front is already being laid down in Britain, based upon the developing unity of the working class movement.

We say to those who desire to see a powerful People's Front established here: You can help materially in its realization by assisting in the development of the working class united front and taking full part in all forms of united action against war and fascism.

* According to a report in the *Daily Worker* of June 15, the Annual Conference of the Fabian Society, whose members, as is well known, have long had great influence in the Labor Party, declared by an overwhelming majority in favor of accepting the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labor Party.—Ed.

To put the issue of a Liberal-Labor electoral alliance as the beginning of a People's Front is to misunderstand the situation completely.

There is a basis for a People's Front in Great Britain.

But that basis is not the Parliamentary interests of the Liberal and Labor Parties.

It is the common interests of those whose lives and livelihood are threatened. The problem of wages of the workers, adequate relief and provision of work for the unemployed, the standards of life of the broad masses of working people, the possibility of progress and liberty, the preservation of peace, all of which are threatened by the National Government, are the foundations upon which alone a People's Front in Britain can be built.

Only if the people, the ordinary people, of our country are brought into *action* to check and reverse the present policy of our rulers, can a Popular Front be established.

That primarily is the kernel of the problem in this country. To set the people in political motion. And to do this we must have a united Labor Party capable of arousing the flaming energy of the British people.

Why is the enthusiasm flagging?

Why is there such a contrast between the spirit of the movement at the time of the Socialist pioneers and today?

We say frankly, it is because the Labor Party and the trade union leaders have abandoned the daily struggle for the class interests of the workers, and, by so doing, have reduced their socialism to a series of phrases in which the workers no longer believe.

Why is it that the Communist Party is admitted on all sides to be the bearer of such energy and enthusiasm as in the labor movement today?

Why do the workers crowd round the Communist meetings and voice their approval with cheers, while official Labor gatherings are half empty and dull?

Why does the ceaseless stream of Communist literature and books receive such a welcome while the production of an official Labor pamphlet is a rare event?

Why do unity and confidence reign in the Communist Party while in the Labor Party there is increasing anger with the leadership?

The answer is to be found in the fact that the Communists constantly show in deeds that they stand for the united front in defense of the immediate and future interests of the working class and all who stand for freedom and peace.

And that policy is the only one which can arouse the confidence and enthusiasm which are the forerunners of action.

The first beginnings of united action of the working class on a national scale, and thereby the forming of a force which can attract the other discontented sections of society into a common struggle, will be possible when, and only when, the policy, spirit and energy of the Communist Party are available to the whole labor movement.

It is in this sense that the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labor Party is the decisive factor for the development of a real People's Front in Britain.

The United Front in Switzerland, Its Difficulties and Its First Successes *

By HUMBERT-DROZ

FOR a number of years already, the bourgeoisie has been carrying on a severe offensive against the wages and conditions of the workers. It is attempting to improve the state finances, the deficit of which is increasing, by cutting down the subsidies given to agriculture and social insurance, by raising customs duties and indirect taxes on articles of wide consumption, such as coffee, bread, oil, fats, sugar, etc.

Prices are increasing, whereas wages, unemployed and sick benefits and old age pensions are being cut down. Petty trading is paralyzed by this policy of cutting wages. The peasantry, which is weighed down with the tremendous burden of mortgages, is living a hard life. It frequently happens that after the peasant has sold his products and paid interest on debts he has nothing left on which to live. Bank crashes are following one after the other, and are swallowing up a portion of the savings of the petty bourgeoisie, who are doomed to ruin.

This worsening of the economic position and the conditions of living and labor of the masses of the people *is exerting great influence on the social and political life of the country*. Opposition to the policy of the big bourgeoisie is growing not only in the ranks of the working class but also among wide sections of the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie.

The Socialist workers are moving Leftward and are demanding of their leaders that they pursue a more active and militant policy. Their will for unity of action with the Communist workers is clearly growing. The wall which separated the Communist Party from the Socialist workers in the most important centers of the country has been broken down; it has become possible not only to carry on discussion in a brotherly fashion, but also to undertake certain action together.

In the trade union movement, the movement of the workers to the Left was expressed in a number of conflicts which took place last year in Lausanne, and at the beginning of 1936, in Zurich between the local trade councils in favor of the united front with the Communist Party, and the leaders of the Swiss Trade Union Congress, which is hostile to united action; this movement to the Left was also expressed in the fact that cases of Communists being elected to leading positions in the local trade union branches and unemployed organizations are becoming more and more frequent.

Among the petty bourgeoisie, especially among the peasants, who for decades have been the support of the big bourgeoisie, in the operation of their policy, a process of differentiation is taking place.

* This article was written on the eve of the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Switzerland (May 30—June 3).

The peasants, small handicraft workers and shopkeepers, weighed down with indebtedness and ruined by the economic policy of the big capitalists, are more and more determinedly leaving the big bourgeoisie. In many important cases where voting has taken place these middle strata have expressed their dissatisfaction by voting with the working class against the policy of the government of Switzerland and the canton authorities. This was especially marked in questions relating to wages, the liberties of the people and new taxation. New political groups, as, for instance, the "Jungbauern", "Dutweiler", etc., which reflect this dissatisfaction and growing opposition of the most affected sections of the petty bourgeoisie, are coming into being.

This evolution of the masses leftward and their at times still hazy and inconsistent desire for struggle against the policy of the big bourgeoisie are exerting their influence on the political life of Switzerland. The democratic institutions of Switzerland, it should be noted, make it possible for the masses of people to utilize them not only to express their opinions during election times, but, by making systematic use of their right to hold a referendum and to display initiative in proposing new legislation, to accept or reject, by means of a plebiscite, all the federal, canton and municipal laws and decrees.

The big industrial and banking bourgeoisie can no longer rule and maintain the democratic principles which lie at the basis of the Constitution of the country. They are trying to steer clear of control by the people, and particularly to hinder and even to do away completely with the use of the right to the referendum and initiative in legislation.

The point in the Constitution which establishes the right of the people to the referendum provides for exceptions for federal decrees, which are declared urgent. However, this "exception" provided for in the Constitution has become the rule. The regular method of government enables the majority in Parliament to force through the bills which the people have already rejected by plebiscite, under the guise of their being "urgent". Such bills are, for instance, the bill to tax tobacco, to reduce the salaries of civil servants, the anti-press law, or the decrees which are so unpopular that the government is certain they will be rejected by the people, as was the case in January last year with the program of "financial recovery".

The regime of "urgent decrees", which corresponds to the practice of issuing exceptional laws, is an exceedingly palpable limitation of the rights of the people. The Communist Party of Switzerland carried on a campaign to alter this point in the Constitution so as to put an end to the policy of exceptional powers. In February, 1936, it collected 50,000 signatures required for submitting the question to a referendum. The results of this move clearly show that the initiative of our Party met with the fullest approval of the people.

In spite of the refusal of the Socialist Party and the Trade Union Federation to support our action, and of their efforts to prevent their members from following our initiative and signing, many members and branches of the Socialist Party took part in the campaign.

Not content with openly abusing the Constitution on this point, the bourgeoisie is also trying to change the Constitution in an obviously reactionary and fascist direction. The first attempt at the outright re-

vision of the Constitution was defeated in the autumn of 1935 by an overwhelming majority of the people. But in spite of the defeat of the reactionary circles they did not give up the plans of fascization which they had prepared. After the Gustloff case* they were forced, under the pressure of public opinion, to take some measures, extremely inadequate, against the German National-Socialist organizations in Switzerland. But, on the other hand, they are carrying on a frantic campaign against the Communist Party and are demanding its suppression. The government threatened to prohibit the anti-fascist press. The close connection between the reactionary government circles and National-Socialism on the one hand and Italian fascism on the other is extremely dangerous, insofar as fascist influence has penetrated deeply among the commissioned ranks of the army. The Swiss Officers Association tries, through its "press agency", to bring pressure to bear on public opinion, and to bring about control over the press and the radio in a sense plainly favorable to fascist Italy and Hitler Germany. These tendencies are clearly expressed in the foreign political orientation of Motta, directed against the Soviet Union, against the sanctions policy of the League of Nations in respect to fascist Italy. Motta threatens to resign from the League of Nations after the example of Germany and Italy if sanctions are extended. Finally, on the very day that Hitler fascism trampled on its treaties and sent troops into the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland, one of the members of the federal government greeted Hitler's declaration as a pledge of peace!

Profound discontent is being generated among the people by the reactionary policy of the Swiss government and the majority of the cantonal governments, which restrict popular rights and liberties, and also by the foreign policy of Motta, which is linking up the fate of Switzerland more and more closely with the fate of the neighboring fascist states which threaten its independence and its democratic institutions. In Switzerland the authorities display a tolerant attitude towards foreign fascist organizations. The highest officers of the Swiss army are in close contact with the dictators of Berlin and Rome. These facts increase the anxiety of the masses of the people for the independence of the republic and strengthen their will to defend their democratic liberties against fascism, to guard the peace and independence of Switzerland against the attacks of the foreign fascist warmongers and their allies in Switzerland itself.

The war danger, and the entire economic, social and political situation in Switzerland are driving the people to unite to resist the offensive of the big bourgeoisie, to defend their bread and freedom, to protect the peace and independence of the country against Hitler's reactionary allies.

The policy of the wide united front and the people's front adopted by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern is therefore a vital necessity for the people of Switzerland. To a very great extent, Switzerland is subjected to aggression and the military adventures of fascism.

The first beginnings of the people's front in Switzerland have lately been made during the plebiscite, in the struggle against the tobacco tax, against wage cuts, against the decrees which trample on democratic

* Gustloff, the leader of the National-Socialist organization in Switzerland, was murdered by Frankfurter.

liberties, against the reactionary revision of the Constitution and against the extension of the term of military service and the new army laws, etc.

But all this has taken place anonymously, so to speak, inside the ballot boxes during the plebiscite. The people's front is not organized, is not realized, does not know what an effective force it would represent if it were given practical form for the organization of the everyday struggle against poverty, fascism and war.

The Communist Party took the initiative of conducting definite activity in almost all the plebiscites. And now it is once again in the first ranks of the struggle against the Urgency Law, and in defense of popular rights and liberties. The Communist Party is taking on itself the initiative of developing the struggle for peace, the maintenance of the peace and the independence of Switzerland. The Communist Party is striving to rally and organize those popular forces which are prepared to fight for freedom, peace and bread, so that they will carry on systematic coordinated activity day by day.

The conditions are favorable, the task is clear and urgent, but *the difficulties are very great.*

The difficulties in the way of bringing about the unity of the proletarian front are great, and they are also great as regards the drawing of the political or economic organizations of the petty bourgeoisie into joint activity.

What are these difficulties? How can they be overcome? In the first place, we must mention the *numerical weakness* of our Party, the unfavorable relation of forces between the Communist Party on the one hand, and the Socialist Party and the trade unions on the other. How many times has the Socialist Party of Switzerland replied in the following words to our united front proposals: "Unity? It already exists in the Socialist Party! The people's front? That is we!"

The Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland, which through its representatives at the meetings of the Executive Committee of the Socialist and Labor International declares in favor of unity of action with the Communist Parties, refuses in Switzerland itself to negotiate and to bring about the united front with the Communist Party, and denies its very existence. The Social-Democratic Party recognizes the existence of Communist "groups" in Basle and Zurich. During the last year it has also been forced to recognize that Communist Party organizations exist in Geneva and in the Canton of Vaud. It recognizes the possibility of establishing contact and joint activity in four or five big towns, in a few distant localities which are of no great importance, but it systematically refuses to bring about the united front throughout Switzerland as a whole.

The governmental policy of the Social-Democratic Party is a great obstacle in the path of the united front. In his report to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, Comrade Dimitroff emphasized the difficulties of establishing the united front in countries where the Social-Democratic Parties participate in the government. The Socialist Party of Switzerland is not part of the Swiss federal government, but its Right wing conducts a policy which is aimed at proving to the bourgeoisie that the participation of the Socialist Party in the Cabinet would only be of benefit to

the bourgeoisie. The Right wing of the Socialist Party does everything in its power to meet the wishes of the bourgeoisie, and is striving as hard as possible to get into the government. This is why it rants so against the united front with the Communists, for this would break down its plans of cooperation.

On the other hand, although the Socialist Party is not in the federal government, it cooperates with the cantonal authorities, constituting the majority, for example, in the governments of two of the chief cantons—Basle and Geneva—or a minority in some other cantons (Zurich, Tessin, Soleure, Argovie). In many of the municipalities of the biggest towns in Switzerland (Basle, Zurich, etc.) the Socialists form the majority. The cantons and municipalities where the Socialists form the majority, like the others, have budget deficits, and are forced to take steps to bring about financial recovery. These measures, proposed and carried through by the Socialist Party throughout the cantons and municipalities, consist in the main of wage cuts, increased taxes and import tariffs, which strike at the people. All these measures are *identical* if not in scale, then at any rate in tendency, with the similar measures operated by the reactionary bourgeoisie in the country as a whole. The Social-Democratic Party has never even tried to carry through another policy, namely, that of taxing the big capitalists and big incomes.

This policy of the Socialist Party is resisted by the Communist Party, which defends the interests of the people, and the formation of the united front is hindered as the result of this conflict.

In this connection our Zurich organization made an experiment, the negative results of which are of value to the entire international movement. So as to avoid harming the first achievements of their united front policy, the Zurich Communists agreed to support among the people measures to raise the tram fares (a measure introduced for the purpose of "rehabilitating" the city finances at the expense of the consumer), although the Communists had opposed this measure in the municipality. In this way a wide "front" was formed for the purpose of forcing the new impositions on the population—the front of the Socialist Party, the Communist organization and the trades council in Zurich. This "united front", which fundamentally was directed against the immediate interests of the toiling people, was smashed up during the elections. The workers turned their back on such a "united front", and responded to the demagogy of the fascists, who cunningly adapted their slogans to the direct interests of the workers.

This served as a good lesson of the truth that joint action with the Socialist Party must be undertaken *only with a view to defending the interests of the working people.*

No less important are the lessons of the struggle for the united front in Basle. Last year the united front in Basle secured the defeat of the local reactionary government, and the formation of a cantonal government with a Socialist majority. The electoral program of the Socialist Party, on the basis of which unity of action was brought about, provided for a struggle against any reduction of wages, against a worsening of the standard of living of the people, and demanded that the rich be made to pay.

But the Right wing bosses of the Socialist Party forced their organization to adopt a plan of financial recovery drawn up by the reactionary bourgeoisie and providing for an economy of 8,000,000 francs at the expense of the people through wage cuts, higher taxes, reduced relief payments, etc.

The Communist Party opposed this program in the parliament and before the masses of the people, as it was in crying contradiction to the election promises made by the Socialist Party and the platform of action on the basis of which the united front came into being. Officially, the united front of the Socialist Party and the Communist Party was broken. But the Communist Party is trying to restore and strengthen its contacts with the Socialist workers and their party by carrying on mass work so as to form a firmer and wider basis for the united front among the working masses. The disruption of the united front was only possible because at bottom it had merely been contact between leaders, while, among the Socialist masses, this contact had not been sufficiently consolidated.

How is it possible to overcome the obstacles which are constantly placed in the path of the united front owing to the governmental policy of the Socialist Party? This barrier can only be swept away by correctly and consistently carrying out our united front line, by our Party undertaking far more active mass work, by strengthening the united front in the places where it has already been established, by developing close contacts and constant cooperation with the members and organizations of the Socialist Party in defending the immediate interests of the masses, by undertaking patient ideological explanatory work among the Socialists and members of trade unions. It must be patiently and resolutely explained to them that working class organizations cannot undertake the task of balancing the finances of the bourgeois state at the orders of the bankers, and that it is unworthy of working class organizations to conduct a policy of reducing the standard of living of the people, *i.e.*, the policy of the reactionary bourgeoisie. The duty of working class organizations is to defend the gains of the working class, and to defend the interests of the toilers by restoring the finances of the state at the expense of the rich. And it is to achieve this that the united front is necessary.

The main hindrance now toward bringing about the united front in our country is the struggle of the reactionary trade union leaders against the policy of the united front.

The reactionary trade union leaders constitute the Right wing of the Socialist Party. Their influence in the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party has grown in recent years. It was they who, a year ago, forced on the Socialist Party the new program which provides for voting war credits, eliminates the class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat from the old program, giving preference to "community of the people", so dear to the heart of Hitler, and to class cooperation within the limits of bourgeois democracy. The reformist trade union leaders are doing everything possible to secure the participation of the Socialist Party in the Swiss government, and to this end they support such ultra-reactionary measures of the Swiss bourgeoisie as the scandalous Urgency

Decrees and new army laws. The Right wing leaders are countering the people's front with the so-called "labor front", which is mainly parliamentary, and collaboration with certain representatives of the bourgeoisie, and from which the Communists and all revolutionary organizations will be excluded in advance. For the Rights the ideal is the "labor" government in the Scandinavian countries and Belgium.

This policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie is coming into conflict with the increasing Leftward swing of the members of the trade unions, who are becoming more and more convinced that this policy is a second edition of the policy of the German trade unions. These trade union members, on the contrary, are striving to follow the splendid example of the people of France and Spain.

A ferocious drive by the trade union leaders against united action and the Communist Party has been called forth by the urge for united action with the Communist Party that has been shown so many times by the members of the trade unions, and by the successful formation of the united front between the Communist and Socialist Parties in Basle, Zurich, Geneva, Lausanne, Bienne, etc., as well as by the growing influence of the Communists and the supporters of the united front in the trade unions, not only in the big towns but in the provinces as well. The Swiss trade union bodies, on pain of expulsion, have been most strictly prohibited from bringing about the united front, or from adopting resolutions in favor of united action. The reactionary leaders of the Swiss trade unions would provoke a split if only to prevent the unions bringing about the united front in practice.

Side by side with these administrative measures, a unanimous campaign is being carried out in the press against the united front and the Communist Party. For several months the trade union commission has been supplying all the trade union papers with articles directed against the united front and the U.S.S.R. and they have been regularly publishing these. The trade union members cannot reply, because the columns of the trade union press are systematically closed to the supporters of the united front. Not long ago, the leaders of the Swiss trade unions, who have not published a word against the capitalist offensive and the fascist danger, published a special pamphlet of 20 pages in hundreds of thousands of copies, entitled: *The Truth About the Communist Tactics—Documents on the United Front Maneuvers*. It is a compendium of extracts from the resolution of the Communist International on the trade union question, with comments, the reply of the British Labor Party to the proposal of the Communist Party, and extracts from the resolutions of the last plenum of the Central Committee of the Swiss Communist Party.

This attack was directed mainly against the efforts of the Communist Party to bring about the united front on May Day throughout the country.

It cannot be denied that this pamphlet had a certain effect and harmed the cause of the united front. But though it hindered the wider and bolder realization of the united front by bringing the Socialist Party and the working people face to face with a danger of a split in the trade union movement and the expulsion of the supporters of the united front

from the trade unions, it can be said with confidence that it did not succeed this way in turning the working class from unity of action. In spite of this ferocious attack made by the trade union leaders, the tactics of the united front and the people's front are winning more and more sympathy among the people, who are inspired by the example of France and Spain. The difficulties that are being put in the way of the united front by the reactionary trade union leaders can only be overcome by the Communists redoubling their activity in the trade unions and hastening the unity of the trade union movement.

The establishment of the united front is also hindered by the relics of sectarianism in the Communist Party, the remains of that sectarian policy which the leaders of the Swiss Communist Party pursued before the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. The sectarians hindered the return of the existing small Red trade union groups into the Swiss Trade Union Federation, on the grounds, you see, that we must not "liquidate" and surrender "revolutionary positions". Any attempt at closer collaboration with active Socialist workers who supported the united front was regarded by these comrades as a dangerous maneuver and as treachery. Such Left Socialists as Nicole were dubbed the foulest enemies of the working class. They were made the target of the fiercest attacks.

During the last few years sectarianism has led to a considerable fall in the membership of our Party and to the liquidation of many small organizations. This is a fact. Only in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, where more systematic work was carried on, and also in Zurich, do our organizations show signs of growth, though still to a modest degree.

A strong Communist organization embracing the whole country can only be formed when there is a clear and correct political line, and a consistent struggle to put it into operation.

The Plenum of the C.C. of the Communist Party in January this year set the Party the task of developing the Communist movement throughout the country. As the result of energetic agitational, propagandist and organizational work, new local organizations have been established, the district committees have been reorganized, contacts have been arranged with various readers of our press, and many of our Party organizations have considerably increased their membership. These successes are particularly great in the canton of Zurich and in the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

The Seventh Congress of the Comintern and the Plenary Session of the C.C. of the Swiss Communist Party in January, 1936, dealt a heavy blow at this sectarianism. But, although a great deal of work has been done to bring about a change in the policy of the Party, the relics of sectarianism are still deeply rooted in our ranks. It is these relics which prevent us from carrying out a bold united front policy and bringing about trade union unity. Especially in the Basle organization the Communist Party has not yet succeeded in overcoming the contradictions and waverings which hinder the establishment of trade union unity. The return of the small groups of the Red trade unions to the Swiss Trade Union Federation is going on in a bureaucratic fashion, slowly, without a mass campaign being carried on, without enthusiasm.

The Sixth Congress of the Communist Party will most energetically advance as the central tasks of the Party the establishment of the united front and trade union unity and the final liquidation of sectarianism and vacillations in the practical application of the united front.

* * *

In spite of a number of difficulties, the Communist Party of Switzerland has also achieved a number of successes in carrying out the united front. So far these successes are modest and limited, but nevertheless they show that a breach has been made which opens up wider possibilities.

The united front is being operated in three of the biggest towns of Switzerland—Zurich, Geneva, and Basle. We have not yet succeeded in these three cantons in getting agreements signed for unity of action. The Socialist organizations are still held back by the decision of their central bodies. But contacts already exist between the organizations of both parties. Meetings and negotiations are taking place on all important questions. In many cases joint meetings and demonstrations have been called, at which speakers from both parties have spoken. In other places of secondary importance the united front is being brought about from case to case on one question or another (in Lausanne, Bienne, La Chaux de Fond, etc.), but without permanent contact being established. Finally, and this is an important result for the development of the united front on a national scale—the united front is being achieved in places far from the big industrial centers, and is frequently carried out there with less difficulty, because the influence and pressure of the central bodies is less felt in these outlying districts than in the center. For example, united front demonstrations took place in Kreulingen, Drendingen, Valaid, Tessin. In the district of Aigle (Vaud canton), the Socialist sections of Ollon and Aigle, the Communist organization of Chezieres and the trade unions of Aigle and Ollon made an agreement for unity of action so as to support our initiative in the struggle against the Urgency Decrees and to demonstrate together on May First.

This is the first case of an agreement on a district scale being signed between the two parties. It is moreover extremely important to note that the local trade unions also joined in the agreement, in spite of the categorical prohibition of their reformist leaders.

In practice, the Young Communist League has secured greater results than the Communist Party in the united front movement. Agreements for unity of action on a local scale, and committees for coordinating activity were formed in Geneva, Lausanne, La Chaux de Fond and Basle. At the last congress of the Young Socialist League of Switzerland a large Left minority was in favor of close cooperation with the Young Communist League, and the resolution that was adopted by a majority of votes left open the possibility of temporary agreements being made for definite purposes. In the French-speaking part of Switzerland the Young Socialist League and the Young Communist League have already raised the question of their fusion, and, as the result of a joint congress, they formed a unity commission.

It should also be emphasized that certain organizations such as the

Friends of the Soviet Union, the unemployed organizations, the anti-fascist front, which are organized on the basis of the cooperation of Socialists and Communists, facilitate the development of the united front.

The success of the joint May Day demonstrations, which took place though they were categorically prohibited by the reformist trade union leaders, is an undoubted achievement for the supporters of the united front. In Zurich, in spite of the prohibition of the leaders of the Swiss Trade Union Federation, who threatened a split, there was a combined May Day demonstration which developed into a huge demonstration of the united front. Over 12,000 workers enthusiastically participated in this demonstration. In Kreulingen, Horgen, Thahoyl, Olton, Aigle, St. Imier, Tessin, and Valais, there were also similar demonstrations of unity.

In Geneva, Lausanne, and other towns, the urge of the masses towards unity, which has shown itself in various forms, has broken all the barriers put up by the reformist leaders against unity. The only place where a united front demonstration could not be organized was Basle. There the Right Socialist leaders converted the May Day demonstration into one of support for the program of wage cuts and new taxes put forward by financial circles. The workers of Basle, who had demonstrated in a united front on May First last year, now showed their discontent and disappointment by not participating in the demonstration of either party.

The Social-Democratic and Communist organizations in Basle took this lesson to heart, and are now trying to renew contacts so as to restore unity of action, which has at the present moment been broken by the governmental policy of the Right leaders of the Socialist Party.

The Communist Party, which is fighting to establish the proletarian united front so that the people's front can be built on its basis in Switzerland, is seeking out the possibility of developing the united front into the people's front. The first steps have been taken in this direction in the process of the struggle against the war danger.

The drive of fascist Italy against Ethiopia, and the policy of sabotage of the League of Nations sanctions conducted by the Swiss government, provided the opportunity for calling a huge meeting in Zurich. The Communist Party, Socialist organizations, the pacifist movement led by Professor Ragaz and several Left members of the bourgeois parties, took part in the organization of this meeting.

In Lausanne, a committee representing the Communist Party and the Socialist Party organizations, the Y.C.L. and the Y.S.L., the local Trades Council, and pacifist and Christian organizations, was formed to organize a gigantic anti-war demonstration. On their own part, the young people formed a committee to prepare the Geneva Peace Congress, in which twelve youth organizations took part, including Protestants, Catholics and pacifists who are working in common with the Young Socialists and the Young Communists.

Finally, it should be pointed out that in the cantonal parliament of Zurich, the most reactionary points of the government's financial program, directed against the unemployed and the toilers, were rejected. The defeat of these points was secured as the result of the cooperation

of the representatives of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Young Peasants, the Democratic Party, a section of the Christian Socialists (Catholics) and Evangelists. This majority, which takes action every time that the interests of the working people have to be defended, has no organizational shape but the very fact shows that there are possibilities for closer cooperation on the basis of a definite program of action.

Such cooperation has already taken shape in the Committee of Supporters of the Recognition of the U.S.S.R. and the Committee of Liberty, which in the main consists of these same political circles. The latter committee consists mostly of intellectuals.

This is the first symptom, showing that it is possible in Switzerland to move ahead along this path. It is true that it is fraught with still greater difficulties than those which hinder the formation of the united front of the working class. But a bold policy by the Communist Party, in defense of democratic rights and liberties and the national independence of the country, and in the struggle against the fascist danger, a policy that will be clearly and definitely drawn up by the Party Congress, will make it possible to break down many prejudices and preconceived ideas, and will open up new prospects for the establishment of the people's anti-fascist front in Switzerland.



The Congress of the Communist Party of Switzerland will assume great importance and will have a decisive influence in the preparations for the establishment of the people's front.

Fascism is a direct menace to the territorial integrity of Switzerland, to its national independence. Hitler announces his claims to annex the German part of Switzerland, while Mussolini is trying to tear away Tessin and the Italian valleys of Grison, in the Swiss Federation. Switzerland is gripped in a vise between two of the biggest fascist powers. Its very existence is endangered.

In Switzerland the very existence of the republic and its national independence are connected most intimately with the defense of democratic traditions and democratic liberties. For Switzerland fascism means partition and the disappearance of Switzerland as an independent country.

In view of the war threats from the "Third Empire", in view of the occupation of the Rhineland, the question has become vitally important for the whole of our people, the more so since the big financial bourgeoisie, their government and the higher officials, are carrying on a policy of capitulation to and rapprochement with the fascist countries.

The Swiss bourgeoisie has about 4,000,000,000 gold francs in investments and frozen credits in Germany, and over 1,000,000,000 in Italy. The interests of the Swiss bourgeoisie are therefore closely bound up with the fate, the welfare and the imperialistic war policy of both their fascist neighbors. The sabotage of the League of Nations sanctions against Italy, and the tolerant attitude adopted towards Hitler's agitational, propagandist and spying organizations on Swiss territory, show

with sufficient clarity that the fascist aggressor has powerful allies in Switzerland itself.

The Communist Party must take on itself the initiative in the struggle to defend peace and the integrity of Switzerland, in the struggle to save it and to extend the liberties, democratic traditions and institutions of the people, which are being attacked by the foreign fascist aggressors and their Swiss allies. The Communist Party must most energetically emphasize the need for Switzerland taking an active part in all the collective action undertaken by the League of Nations for the maintenance of international peace, as the guarantee of the independence of Switzerland and for declaring for the organization of collective security and mutual assistance against the fascist aggressors. The Communist Party of Switzerland demands the cleansing of the army of all fascist officers, the democratization of the army, the dissolution of all foreign fascist organizations on Swiss territory, the expulsion of their agents and the suppression of the Swiss fascist organizations, in Switzerland itself. The Communist Party will carry on a policy of boldly defending democratic liberties and the direct interests of the people.

This program, combining the struggle in defense of the national independence and integrity of the Swiss republic with a struggle for popular liberties, and for bread for the people, will give our Party the possibility of considerably extending its work for the united front and the people's front, by breaking down the incorrect conception of the Party as being indifferent to the fate of the country.

On the basis of these first successes recently achieved, the Communist Party at its congress will apply the bold Bolshevik policy of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern and the guiding line given by Comrade Dimitroff, and succeed in opening up new possibilities and wide perspectives for the formation of a united proletarian front and a people's front against war, fascism and impoverishment, which threaten the Swiss people and the very existence of Switzerland.

How the Fascists "Buried" the Class Struggle in Bulgaria

By V. KOLAROV

THE central organ of the Communist Party of Bulgaria, the *Rabotnichesky Vestnik*, in its issue devoted to May First, international labor day, noted that "down among the rank and file of the working class, in all the enterprises, there seethes an ever growing unrest", and made the following forecasts:

"In the near future we shall find ourselves faced with mass strikes and actions by the workers. . . .

"The First of May this year will take place under the sign of general preparation for the coming mass struggles in defense of the economic interests of the working class and the violated rights and liberties of all toilers."

First and foremost, the newspaper further pointed out, this refers to "the tobacco and textile workers who have had experience in heroic strikes and have glorious militant traditions in the past".

Driven deep underground, the Communist Party of Bulgaria prepared the masses for the struggles. Under the leadership of the new Central Committee headed by Comrade Dimitroff, the Party, in the process of its work, outlived the relics of Left sectarianism, which had temporarily weakened its connections with the working class.

In the same May First number the *Rabotnichesky Vestnik* called upon the Communists and sympathizers to:

"Spare neither time nor labor and begin work in all enterprises to prepare and carry through the struggle of the working class. The eyes of wide masses of the workers are turned towards us, the conscious working Communists and other fighters devoted to the cause of the working class, in expectation of action and initiative. The masses trust their genuine leaders. We must worthily justify this confidence!"

As against this militant prognosis there was another one thoroughly saturated with official optimism and the rosy hopes of the fascist dictatorship and its henchmen, headed by the so-called Bulgarian Workers' Union.

The fascist band boasted in exalted tones that they had been successful in drawing the Bulgarian workers over to their side, to detract them from the class struggle, from strikes, to drive all "revolutionary fantasies" out of their minds and to re-educate the workers in the spirit of "social peace", "class harmony" and "collaboration with the state".

Events, however, very soon decided the question of the immediate perspectives of the labor movement of Bulgaria in favor of the Commu-

nist Party of Bulgaria. In spite of the united efforts of the police, employers and "leaders" of the government "Workers' Union", a general strike of tobacco workers—the most numerous detachment of the Bulgarian proletariat—swept like a hurricane over the country, and following this came partial strikes in the textile and other branches of industry.

It was not the government of the fascist dictatorship, nor the fascist "leaders" of the government's "Workers' Union" forced upon the workers with the aid of the police, who correctly reflected the sentiments and strivings of the Bulgarian proletariat, but the Communist Party of Bulgaria, tested in the struggle, and the independent workers' unions, disbanded for their loyal service to the working class.

In spite of all the efforts made by the fascists and reactionaries to tame the Bulgarian proletariat, to bind them to the chariot wheel of the new "national" but in reality fascist state, the Bulgarian proletariat showed that now, as formerly, they stand firmly in the front lines of the class struggle, and that they will allow no fascist demagogy or terrorist threats to drive them to support the rotten "social peace" and "class collaboration" under the guardianship of the so-called "national", but in reality fascist, state.



May First. International Labor Day, which the fascist dictatorship of Bulgaria, in imitation of Hitler Germany, declared a "holiday of the National Workers' Union" (united trade union), served as the grounds for the "victorious jubilation" of the Bulgarian fascists.

The Communist Party of Bulgaria published a most interesting document, the report of the chief of the department for the organization of guilds, addressed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor, which completely discloses the entire inner meaning and class background of this new trick cooked up by the Bulgarian fascists.

The report begins with the following explanation of the true role of the Workers' Union set up last autumn by the government, and which collects its "membership dues" as a tax from all workers:

"One of the tasks of the Bulgarian Workers' Union, and what is more, its most essential task, is to wean the Bulgarian workers away from the influence of the Left political sentiments which held them in the past. . . . Now the workers' organizations are carry on a struggle against Communists and this greatly facilitates the task of the government in this direction."

Of course, in a secret report to his Minister, the fascist official has no need to hide the fact that the Workers' Union only in words "defends" the economic interests of the workers—as the "labor" leaders foisted on the workers by the government boast, while in deeds the "Workers' Union" is nothing other than a weapon of the fascist government and of reaction in its struggle against the Communists.

However, the author of the report explains further on that the successful solution of this task will depend to a very great degree on the "tactics" adopted:

"There are some emblems and symbols," he states, "left over from the past, which were monopolized by the Socialist Parties, and which the workers even today consider inseparably bound up with their fate. Such, for example, is the red color, which the workers consider their own. Such is the 'May First' holiday, which symbolizes the efforts and struggle of the workers to improve their conditions."

And the fascist "tactician" hastens to boast—true, a little prematurely—that "both the red color and the First of May holiday" before which the workers "bow in reverence" "have already been withdrawn from the extremist movements, and officially belong to the National Workers' Union". "These means will serve to operate the policy" of the union, *i.e.*, to carry on its struggle against Communism—thus does the fascist official assure his Ministerial chief, and requests his permission without any wavering, of the official celebration of the First of May by the members of the National Workers' Union:

"There is no need to hinder open action by the masses which will be an inspiring manifestation of the nationalistic sentiments of one of the rejuvenated social strata."

Although the author of the report does not doubt the "nationalistic" and "loyal" sentiment of the "rejuvenated" Bulgarian workers, at the same time he devotes the second half of his report to *special police measures* to be adopted for the struggle against "Communist provocation".

"In large centers the organization of the holiday will be carried through together with the administrative authorities and the police, to prevent any eventualities. In Sofia and Plovdiv—two of the largest workers' centers—the corresponding measures will be taken by the union and the police to prevent possible provocation."

Admission to meetings and demonstrations will be by special tickets, and only members of the government Workers' Union will be allowed to enter. Speakers at the meetings, "to prevent unexpected incidents, will be selected with the approval of the police". Speakers "will receive instructions as to the spirit in which they must speak".

But even after enumerating all the precautionary measures, the author of the report hesitates to insist that the First of May be declared an official holiday. Suffice it if permission is given "only to members of the National Union to remain away from work and to participate in the festivities".

"It is self understood that this holiday will not be paid for. It is impossible to even think at this time of a holiday with pay." Care for the purse of the employers does not leave the author of the report.

Having received the sanction of the government, and acting hand in hand with the police, the fascist officials and "leaders" of the Workers' Union began "political preparations" for the First of May celebrations. It was unwillingly, fearing the workers, that they called together preparatory meetings of workers. At many of these meetings the speakers were whistled off the platform; the workers put forth slogans for the struggle for peace, against fascism, for free class trade unions, etc.

The "leaders", in their turn, issued special First of May issues of the "workers" newspapers with red headlines and the emblem of labor. In the columns of these newspapers, fascist arrogance and cynicism competed with the most unbridled demagoguery.

The First of May campaign was opened in the central organ of the governmental "Workers' Union" paper, the *Trud*, by the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Trade, Vuliev (representative of the big industrial and commercial circles of Bulgaria), with a tirade against Communists, thereby giving the tone to the entire campaign:

"Up till very recently, the First of May was a day when elements alien to the Bulgarian workers' national interests incited the workers to riot and insubordination. Let the Bulgarian workers now transform the First of May into a symbol of creation, order and unity under the tri-color flag of the fatherland."

On the First of May the Minister made a speech. He recalled with horror the "recent past when the streets of the capital swarmed with demonstrators, who showered damnation on the social order and the state and sang hymns of class hatred and struggle", and, speaking in the name of the government, expressed the "greatest joy" because, as he claimed:

"Our workers are awakening, driving away from themselves that bewitchment in which they were held by the Maximalists—Bolsheviks and Socialists. . . . It is with satisfaction that the government records that the consciousness that well-being and a good life must be sought not in a struggle against the state and in opposition to it, but together with the state and through it, is more and more finding its way into the ranks of the workers."

It was in the spirit of this ministerial appeal that all the remaining articles of the "First of May" number of the newspaper *Trud* were composed, articles under which were to be seen the signatures of the entire phalanx of newly-baked "labor" leaders. It was in the same spirit that the speeches of all the official speakers were made on May First, individuals selected "with the endorsement of the police" and especially instructed, as stated in the above-mentioned secret report. All the authors and orators branded the Communists as being the cause of all the sufferings and privation of the Bulgarian people, and "buried" the class struggle, which "harms" the interests of the workers themselves as well as of the people as a whole, and exulted in "monarchist sentiments" newly discovered by them among the workers and their "loyalty" to the state, promising in the name of the workers to shed blood once again for "national ideals" and the "glory of the fatherland".

It was in this style that the "First of May celebrations" were carried through.

On the First of May the capital and other cities of Bulgaria saw an unforgettable picture: the priests in their elaborate religious vestments "blessed" the red banners; generals and lieutenants figured as "god-fathers"; military bands accompanied the "First of May" demonstrations; royal adjutants, high military officers and the government

ministers in frockcoats and silk hats marched in the demonstrations. . . . Official speakers and "labor" representatives uttered high-sounding speeches, shouting "hurray" for the king—the "first worker" and the supreme "leader", for the army, for the "national ideals", assured everybody that the workers were ready to shed their blood on the "altar of the fatherland". . . . In several places the demonstrators were feasted!

In short, "the class struggle in Bulgaria was buried" with ceremony. The chairman of the Workers' Union, a certain Handjiev, made a "program speech", which may serve as an example of fascist cynicism. This "labor" leader shed bitter tears over the harsh fate of workers shot or pining at the present time in prisons. But he placed the responsibility for these foul crimes not upon the well-known hangmen of the Bulgarian people, not upon the fascist barbarians who had placed him in his job of "labor" leader, but on the Bulgarian Communist Party and its heroic and self-sacrificing cadres, on the vanguard of the workers and peasants, upon the best sons of the Bulgarian people, who had fallen in the struggle for the cause of the working class, on those who had felt the vengeance of the fascist barbarians, those very same fascist barbarians whose boots were being licked by Mr. Handjiev and the other organizers of the First of May "carnival"! . . . His speech was the very embodiment of an apology for the White terror as the best school for implanting nationalist and patriotic virtues into the working class.

Handjiev, this police henchman, carried out the will of the darkest reaction, and spoke in a determined way against the main slogans of the Communists and of the People's Front as to the re-establishment of the democratic rights and liberties of the working masses, and the struggle against the instigators of war, after which he had the arrogance to declare the following in the name of the Bulgarian workers:

"We declare that we shall fight to strengthen the prestige and the power of the state. We will openly take our place on guard before its altar; we shall guard it against all onslaughts no matter where they may come from. . . ."

After picturing the workers as the watchdogs of the capitalist and fascist state, of the very state which deprived them of their most elementary rights and liberties as men and citizens and condemned them to a pauper's life, this self-appointed "chairman" gave the workers the prospect "of a piece of bread" as reward for loyal service: "Then we shall demand, and we shall be given".

And as proof of the correctness of the tactic of these watchdogs, the "chairman" enumerated twelve points of the "success" of the Workers' Union, the most outstanding "victories", according to his point of view, being the following:

"Through our efforts, and with the assistance of the authorities and the employers we have been successful in preventing the disorder which the destroyers of the state were preparing in the tobacco centers.

"We succeeded in bringing about wage increases for some workers in the tobacco and textile industries."

Alas, the hearts of the ministers of the fascist dictatorship "re-

joiced" prematurely! The newly baked "labor leaders" got tangled up in their own lies. Barely a few days passed, and "disorders" broke out in the large tobacco centers of Bulgaria which the "Workers' Union" claimed to have "prevented". A general strike of tobacco workers began, to be followed by that of the textile, boot and shoe workers, metal workers and others.

The workers gave a fitting answer to the fascist scoundrels.



Tobacco occupies the foremost place in the economy of Bulgaria. Semi-prepared tobacco constitutes 45 per cent of the entire export of Bulgaria.

The production and treatment of tobacco for export are concentrated in the hands of a few companies, trusts and cartels—for the most part foreign. The capitalists of the tobacco industry are the most powerful in Bulgaria. They dictate their will to all the governments. The dictatorial government of Georgiev-Velchev, in carrying into life a wide program of state monopolies, did not dare to encroach upon the sphere of interests of the tobacco magnates. The Kisenbanev government is the latest agency of capital in the tobacco industry, the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Labor, Bulev, being directly connected with the tobacco manufacturers.

About 43,000 workers, mainly women, are employed in the tobacco industry. This is the most numerous section of the Bulgarian industrial proletariat. The tobacco workers are concentrated in a few centers, which makes it much easier for them to organize and carry on a struggle. Having to do with such a powerful opponent, the tobacco workers were only able to defend their crust of bread by stubborn struggle, basing themselves upon their strong genuinely class trade union and party organizations. The tobacco workers were organized mainly in revolutionary trade unions, and were exclusively under the influence of the Communist Party of Bulgaria. The tobacco workers have behind them the experience of big struggles and strikes. They are the most numerous, the most courageous detachment of the Bulgarian proletariat, most tempered in struggle. The influence of the tobacco workers over other strata of the proletariat is very great. They are also directly connected with the small peasants who produce tobacco, and their revolutionary influence also extends to the villages where the peasants, enslaved by the tobacco trust, seethe with dissatisfaction. The Bulgarian tobacco workers maintain contact with the tobacco workers of Greece, and it is they who transmit the revolutionary ferment which has gripped the proletariat of both countries.

The military fascist coup d'etat of May, 1934, took place at a moment when the tobacco workers of the largest industrial center, Plovdiv (12,000 tobacco workers), were on strike for wage increases. The strike was very stormy. The dictatorial government suppressed it, but the workers nevertheless forced the capitalists to promise an increase in wages, which promise was secured in black and white. Of course, the employers did not fulfil their promise. On the contrary, taking advantage

of the fact that the military-fascist dictatorship disbanded the independent trade unions of the workers and deprived the working class of all rights and liberties, the tobacco trusts started an offensive.

At no time has the standard of living of the tobacco workers (and of the Bulgarian proletariat as a whole) fallen as low as during the last two years of the open fascist dictatorship. The Plovdiv tobacco workers published a statement on the conditions in the tobacco industry from which it can be seen that the tobacco workers receive from 18 to 50 Bulgarian levs per day (one Swiss franc equals 28 Bulgarian levs). In some places young people of from 14 to 16 years of age receive five levs per day, which equals exactly the cost of one kilo (2½ lbs.) of bread! In addition, the employers have artificially decreased wages by transferring experienced and qualified workers into the category of beginners. At the same time, by utilizing a compensation agreement, the tobacco exporters in cooperation with the government exported their entire old stock, thus making huge profits. Regarding this strike even the organ of the large banks, the newspaper *Slovo*, was compelled to declare:

"In this particular case, public opinion was sympathetic to the demand of the workers for an increase of wages, *inasmuch as labor power in Bulgaria is comparatively cheap* [my emphasis—V.K.] and the success of our export abroad should not result only at the expense of the Bulgarian people."

The movement began in Plovdiv. It coincided with the powerful mass movement in Greece, the starting point of which was the general strike of the tobacco workers. Fearing the Greek example the government decided to grant concessions to the workers. The Workers' Union, whose chairman on May First bragged that the union, assisted by the authorities and employers, had been able to raise wages and to prevent "disorder in the tobacco centers", was compelled on May 4 to present the demands of the workers to the employers. The latter arrogantly and confidently rejected the demands and declared to the government that there were no "objective reasons" for increasing wages. On May 15 all negotiations were broken off, and the "leaders" of the Workers' Union were preparing to bury the movement when suddenly, on May 16, *the workers of several enterprises elected their own workers' commissions in the factories, independently of the government union, and declared a strike without asking permission of the leaders.*

The "leaders" lost their heads. They rushed from enterprise to enterprise urging the workers not to give way to the agitation of the Communists. The police started mass arrests, *in reply to which all the enterprises of the city struck work on the following day. The strike spread to other cities and grew into a general strike embracing all the tobacco enterprises and all tobacco workers, both employed and unemployed.*

The solidarity and unity of the workers, the absence of strike breakers, the determination and militant sentiments of the strikers, the danger of the strike spreading to other spheres of industry, and the fresh example of the powerful mass movement in Greece—all of this compelled the government to make a quick maneuver and to declare that the law prohibiting strikes had not yet been approved, that the workers had the

right to strike, and that *the strike was being led by the Bulgarian Union*. The arrested strikers were immediately freed. The strikers demonstrated on the streets, organized meetings, the representative of the authorities gave promises to "assist" them to achieve the satisfaction of their just demands, while the government and the bourgeois press also expressed their "sympathies" towards the workers!

The government organ, *Bulgarskoye Slovo*, published in the French language, issued a statement about "the general strike in the tobacco enterprises" in which it was emphasized that "the workers can strike in defense of their economic interests. That this is their right", and also cited the words of the chairman of the Workers' Union who claimed that "the strike—is the work of the Union, the struggle of the workers is just, and the state must make a just decision on the question and firmly put this decision into effect".

Nor was Tyankov, the well-known hangman of the Bulgarian workers, now a leader of the "National and Social movement", far behind. The events threw even this ill-starred candidate for the position of Bulgarian Hitler into confusion. He also called on the employers to "meet the workers half way" and "not to sharpen relations" with them. At the same time he tried to calm the employers by claiming that the Bulgarian workers have already rejected "the principles of the class struggle and class hatred", and have become "loyal citizens of the state".

During these days the specter of the revolutionary events in Spain and Greece haunted the frightened forces of reaction and fascism in Bulgaria! As a result of this, the government Workers' Union, established by the dictatorship in order to stifle at the very outset any attempt of the workers to engage in the class struggle, suddenly found itself "at the head" of a tremendous general strike, shouting to the whole world that it was "leading" it, that the struggle had been sanctioned by the government of the fascist dictatorship itself. The very same government, which had deprived the workers of all rights and liberties, had disbanded and prohibited all independent workers' organizations, and which, for the slightest attempt at struggle, punished the workers with hard labor sentences, suddenly sanctioned the biggest strike in Bulgaria within the last fifteen years!

It would be difficult to imagine that fate could be more ironical with the dictatorial government, deprived of any more or less serious base in the masses, for such is the government of the Bulgarian Tsar.

Of course, while "heading" this strike, the henchmen of the government hastened to bring it to an end as soon as the employers were compelled to grant certain wage increases. The entire bourgeoisie breathed a sigh of relief.

Some time passed when, suddenly, in summing up the results of the strike, certain reactionary circles came to the conclusion that the tactics applied by the government in the case were not devoid of serious dangers. The newspaper *Slovo* spoke sharply against such a "social policy" which "cultivates distrust and a negative attitude" to the employers by picturing them "as enemies of all social improvement and from whom everything has to be torn only by law and force". The *Otechestvo* ("Fatherland"), organ of the Reserve Officers' Union, came

out even more sharply. This arch-reactionary newspaper wrote the following regarding the strike:

"Strange as it may seem, it appears that it is just the exceptional reforms after the 19th of May, which in the name of the state limited so many liberties, that created—consciously or unconsciously—an atmosphere relatively favorable for strikes."

The newspaper openly expressed its dissatisfaction with social demagoguery towards the workers that goes too far and added further:

"We must admit that the ardent and frequently incoherent speeches regarding the ideas of linking up the workers with the national state, the hasty and incoherent attempts to create a state workers' organization whose corporative tendencies are emphasized, and also the too *extensive literature* about some kind of 'new' consciousness possessed by the Bulgarian workers—all of this has created or is creating an atmosphere very favorable to all kinds of movements by the workers."

The reactionaries understood that they must not intoxicate themselves with the "successes" of the official May Day carnival. The extent of the "successes" achieved in linking up the workers with the "national state", and the nature of the "social peace" and "national unity", may be judged from the fact that the same workers who on May Day demonstrated under the "bright tricolor flag of the fatherland" a few days later declared a huge strike against the will of their organization and forced it upon their "leaders" and upon the government itself!

* * *

The general strike of the tobacco workers, which was carried through in conditions of an open fascist dictatorship, and ended with a victory for the workers, is *an important break in the front of the fascist dictatorship*. This remains a fact no matter how hard the frightened reactionary circles attempt to picture it as a purely economic conflict. Its tremendous importance and refreshing influence will be felt in the further development of the class struggle, and first and foremost in the struggle against reaction and fascism, for the re-established of democratic liberties.

This strike is the largest movement of the Bulgarian proletariat since the revolutionary events of 1923.

This encounter of the most numerous sections of the Bulgarian proletariat with the most powerful capitalist clique, which ended in a victory for the workers, has stirred up the entire Bulgarian proletariat. During the strike of the tobacco workers already the news of *an impending strike spread throughout the entire country*. And this compelled the government to increase its pressure on the stubborn employers. The textile workers, numerically the second largest group of workers, have been already stirred up. The textile workers in Slivin and Karlov went on strike and also won successes. A number of strikes have also flared up in other spheres of industry. A serious conflict is maturing in the mining region of Pernik.

The general movement forward of the Bulgarian proletariat is com-

elling the capitalists to grant concessions to the workers without waiting for strikes. And the government is hurriedly preparing a law about "collective working agreements" which are to ensure "peace in industry" by means of certain concessions to the workers. The strike is also stirring up wide sections of the peasantry—those who produce tobacco and who for a long time have striven to get better conditions in respect to the sale of tobacco from the tobacco trusts.

The strike has also disclosed the helplessness, weakness and confusion of the fascist dictatorship, and has *struck the first well-felt blow at it from below*. If the dictatorship has been compelled to sanction a general strike, the strongest weapon of the class struggle in the hands of the workers, then what is the sense of the dictatorship? What then in general remains of the dictatorial regime? The strike has undermined the authority of the dictatorial regime, and has shown to what an extent it is deprived of a real base in the country. Herein lies the tremendous political significance of the strike.

At the same time the strike has shown *the correct road to be taken by the struggle for the overthrow of the dictatorship*. It has shattered to bits the widespread legend about the "indifference" of the Bulgarian people towards the political regime, of the people being "tired" of the political struggle, a legend made use of by the adherents of the dictatorship in order to postpone the re-establishment of constitutional liberties for an indefinite period and by the leaders of the non-fascist parties and groups to sabotage the proposals of the Communists about the people's anti-fascist front.

The general strike of the tobacco workers *will usher a new fresh breath of air into the political life of the country*. Whereas up to the present time "social leaders", and all kinds of self-appointed "leaders", *spoke in the name of the people*, wrangling as to what state of affairs and reforms are the best, now the *people themselves have begun to speak*. The workers will be followed by the peasants, artisans and others.

The strike overthrow all the calculations of the reactionaries. *It will serve as a turning point in the movement to liquidate the fascist dictatorship*. The wavering and stubborn leaders of the Agricultural Union and of the Social-Democratic Party will have to take into account the militant sentiments of the workers and peasants, will have to give up their attempts at compromise with reaction, and follow the path of developing the mass struggle on the basis of the People's Front, the struggle to liquidate the dictatorship, to safeguard democracy, peace and the vital interests of the masses of the people. The struggle of the masses will quickly lead to the unfolding of a very profound political crisis, into which the forces of reaction and fascism have driven the country.

The general strike of the tobacco workers is *a great success for the Communist Party of Bulgaria*. It is not for nothing that the reactionaries of all shades have concentrated their fire entirely against the Communists. It is useless to dwell on the slanders which claim that the Communists who have all kinds of aims "directed against the people and the state" "incited" and "stirred up" the workers. Even the organs of the government and the bourgeois press were compelled to admit that the cause of the strike was the poverty-stricken condition of the workers and

and stubbornness of the capitalists. It is the merit of the Communist Party that by *casting away empty doctrinairism and overcoming sectarian isolation, it took account in good time of the tremendous ferment among the workers, and set about the preparation of the struggle*, although working in deeply underground conditions, and in the face of terrorist repression and fascist demagogy. The Communists based themselves upon the class instinct and the fighting experience of the workers, and developed and organized the initiative and self-activity of the masses.

The general strike is the *confirmation of the correctness of the new tactical line*. The Communist Party of Bulgaria has broken down the attitude of self-satisfied sectarianism and has determinedly set itself to bring about the united workers' front in the struggle for the growing demands of the workers. The united workers' front was fully realized in the strike of the tobacco workers. All the workers, without exception, fought alongside the Communists and the workers sympathetic with the Communists. These include the Social-Democrats and workers belonging to the government Workers' Union, as well as the unorganized workers.

At the Leipzig trial, when citing the example of Bulgaria, Comrade Dimitroff showed how mistaken are the reactionaries and fascists in thinking that they destroy Communism by means of terror and inquisition. The Communist Party in Bulgaria had emerged after years of unheard of trials, more steeled and stronger than ever before—concluded Comrade Dimitroff.

The Bulgarian workers have by their menacing stormy strike movement proved that their beloved leader was right.

Class Battles in Greece

By M. NIKIS

SINCE the beginning of the year, Greece has been the scene of a big upsurge of strike struggles. In the first three months of this year more than 200,000 workers struck work, the number surpassing the figure for the record year of 1935. In April 100,000 persons had already downed tools. The movement for trade union unity has become stronger. While in 1935 the overwhelming majority of strikes were led by the unitary (revolutionary) trade unions while the reformist trade unions were opposed to, or were "neutral" towards them, the strikes of the present year have taken place under the leadership either of the unitary unions alone, or, in the majority of cases, under the joint leadership of the unitary and reformist unions.

The end of March saw the merging of both the unitary and reformist tobacco workers' unions. The unity congress drew up a platform of demands on the basis of which preparations for the national strike of the Greek tobacco workers went on throughout April.

On April 29, a strike was declared in the principal tobacco centers of Macedonia, Salonika, Seres, Volos, etc., immediately involving more than 12,000 working men and women. On April 30 the strike extended, and in the 24-hour May Day strike the tobacco workers took a prominent part. In the first days of May the strike spread to Kavalla, Drama, Kanti, the Island of Samos, and Piraeus and on May 4 there were more than 300,000 tobacco workers on strike throughout Greece. Everywhere the strike was accompanied by meetings and demonstrations attended by many thousands of people. On May 6 the tobacco strike became a general strike of more than 40,000 workers.

From the very first days of the tobacco workers' strike the workers of other trades began to take sides with it, undertaking solidarity strikes and in many cases putting forward their own demands, as was the case with the handicraftsmen, artisans, small shopkeepers and others. In Volos, for instance, upon the initiative of the tobacco workers' union, a national conference was held on May 3, in which the organizations of the artisans, small shopkeepers, and office workers, all workers' organizations regardless of their views, ex-servicemen, refugees' associations, the large families' association, etc., took part. The conference decided to give every support to the tobacco workers to the point of carrying through a "national" strike. When the people of a village near Salonika called Sangevere heard that six of their compatriots were strike-breakers, they sent their mayor to Salonika to secure their dismissal. From the very first days of the strike, bloody conflicts took place in a number of towns between the demonstrating strikers and the police and gendarmes. But the position was such that on May 4 the soldiers in Salonika refused to fire on the workers.

On May 8, and on May 9 in particular, events so developed that

the struggle took on the character of action by all the urban working population of Greece against the existing regime.

On the morning of May 8, 7,000 striking tobacco workers led by a strike committee of 15 men marched to the palace of the Governor-General to hand him their demands. Detachments of mounted and foot gendarmerie barred their way, and a conflict took place in which the local population actively supported the workers. At the same time a procession of 3,500 strikers from another part of the city forced their way to the palace of the Governor-General. They broke through and combined their forces with the tobacco workers and other demonstrators. The soldiers refused to obey the orders of their officers to fire on the people. The strikers threw up barricades and beat off five attacks of mounted police and gendarmes. In the working class districts church bells were rung summoning the population to help the demonstrators. Large crowds of women went to the rescue of their fighting husbands and brothers. The fighting lasted for three and a half hours and as a result of the conflict 300 workers and many gendarmes were wounded. In the evening the unitary trades council, the unions of the railwaymen, tramway workers, lorry drivers, dockers and waiters, and also the shopkeepers from the adjacent streets decided to declare a 24-hour protest strike for May 9.

The government (led by Metanlos, who had returned from the conference of the Balkan Entente in Belgrade) declared all railway workers and tramway workers under mobilization, threatened them with court martial and the introduction of martial law.

Apart from the trades mentioned, the strike in Salonika on May 9 embraced the power station workers and the building workers, 90 per cent of the shop assistants and the university students. In spite of having been placed under military orders the railway workers and all the municipal transport workers in Northern Greece went on strike. The number of strikers reached twenty to twenty-five thousand. The striking dockers demonstrated early in the morning in front of the Italian consulate with cries of "Down with Fascism". The German consul who was passing in his limousine was accompanied by cries of protest from those in the demonstration.

From early morning small meetings were held in various parts of the city. Conflicts started between striking motor drivers and the gendarmes, who tried to move the strike pickets. The gendarmes sent for reinforcements, while masses of workers hastened to help the motor drivers. Barricades were put up in the streets. Two workers fell, slain by the bullets of the gendarmes. Three more workers were killed and scores were wounded in the fighting that followed. The workers retreated, but soon returned leading a demonstration of 5,000 people bearing in front of them the body of one of the killed. The police did not dare to open fire. The workers rang the bells in all the churches. From all ends of the city came new battalions of toilers who joined the demonstration. Instead of banners they carried handkerchiefs stained with blood. Speakers appeared on all sides. At one street corner the demonstration clashed with large forces of mounted and foot gendarmes armed with machine

guns, taken from the soldiers. The gendarmes retired under cover of the cavalry, and the demonstrators got the idea that the gendarmes were giving way. Suddenly the mounted gendarmes galloped away, and the demonstrators found themselves face to face with the pointed rifles and machine guns of the foot gendarmes, and tanks. Then began a monstrous slaughter. The roadway was strewn with killed and wounded. The firing went on until two o'clock in the afternoon. The killed numbered thirty, and there were several hundred wounded.

Indignation mounted in the city. Despite the prohibition from the general into whose hands the government had handed power over the city, a number of demonstrations took place in the evening, which merged into one great demonstration of 20,000 people. Popular feeling ran so high against the gendarmes and the police that the authorities shut the police in their barracks and left the army to keep order in the city. All through the day the soldiers behaved sympathetically to the strikers and the demonstrators, and did not take any part in action against the people. There was a case where a sergeant of a cavalry patrol shot a commander of the gendarmerie who gave the order to fire into a crowd among which was the sergeant's sister.

In spite of the fact that the authorities on the night of the 9th buried some of the killed in secret, the funerals of nine victims were held on the 10th in Salonika. The demonstration which gathered near the premises of the unitary trade union headquarters marched 20,000 strong to the cemetery. At the Spanish consulate the demonstrators loudly expressed their sympathy for the Spanish proletariat and the People's Front. At the cemetery the demonstrators were joined by fresh contingents numbering 150,000. Over the graves of the murdered, speeches were made by representatives of the unitary trade unions, the International Labor Defense organization, the Communist Party and Comrade Sinakos, Deputy of the People's Front. In addition an officer spoke for the army, and laid a wreath on the grave of the fallen. After the funeral all those who took part moved in a mass to one of the central squares of the city, where speeches were made by representatives of the Communist Party, the People's Front, the tobacco workers' union, the railwaymen's union, the tramwaymen's union and by a representative of the peasantry. During the singing of the funeral march the soldiers and officers present gave the salute.

Meetings were held all day. Soldiers fraternized with the working people. Not a single policeman or gendarme dared show his face on the streets. There was no movement of transport on the streets apart from the automobiles of the strike committee and Red Cross ambulances. Newspaper sellers sold nothing but the *Rizopastis*, the organ of the Communist Party.

In the morning the commanding officer gave his "word of honor" to release all the arrested. But to the degree that there arrived from the provinces more reliable troops together with four warships which anchored in the port of Salonika, he returned to his previous provocatory attitude. In the evening the youth organizations led by the Y.C.L. organized a demonstration of 40,000 people in the port, and sent delegations on motorboats to the sailors of the battleships. In spite of express orders

from their officers, the sailors responded to the speeches of the delegates with shouts of enthusiasm.

The events in Salonika met with a tremendous response throughout the country. On May 11, general strikes were declared in Kavalla, Lariss, Agrin and in a number of other cities. In Kavalla, at a funeral meeting held in memory of the victims in Salonika, 30,000 people were present. In Kokiniya (Piraeus) 20,000 people took part in a protest meeting and a demonstration. In Athens on the 11th there were solidarity strikes of taxi drivers and quarry workers of Athens and Piraeus, and of shoemakers and tailors. In Chania (Island of Crete) 3,000 strikers demonstrated. Students from the university of Athens went on strike and their demonstration was combined with the workers' demonstration.

In these circumstances the decision of both the unitary and reformist trade union federations, to carry out a 24-hour general protest strike on May 13 throughout Greece, coincided with the moods and desires not only of the workers but of the general public.

The character of the general strike was defined in the manifesto signed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece and the Parliamentary group of the People's Front, which ended with the following words:

"Metaxas the murderer must be removed. His fascist dictatorial plans must be thwarted.

"Call Parliament at once. Form a government to secure the operation of an agreement with the parliamentary group of the People's Front!

"Satisfy all the demands of the people! Restore in full the democratic liberties of the people! A general amnesty for all the people's fighters!

"Long live the general strike!

"Long live fraternization between the people and the army!

"We want a rich, powerful and happy Greece which will be a real fatherland for the toilers!

"Down with the monarchist government of murderers. Down with fascism!

"Bread, work, peace and well-being!

"All for the strike, all out on the streets!"

The success of the general strike was complete. Five hundred thousand people struck work, and of these 300,000 were factory workers, and the rest working people of various sections of the population. In Piraeus 70,000 people, 95 per cent of the workers, went on strike. Out of the sixty-two trains of the Peloponese railway only five left the station, and out of twenty-seven trains of the state railways, only four. In Kokiniya, 30,000 people demonstrated; the port came to a standstill, while the sailors from the ships which had put into harbor that day joined in the strike, leaving pickets on the ships. In Athens, 45,000 people went on strike, and numerous demonstrations were held. In Kavalla the general strike which had begun beforehand continued, and there was a meeting of 12,000 people. In Drama all the working class and toiling population took part in a strike, and a meeting was held, attended by 15,000 people. In Patras, 10,000 people went on strike. The same number

struck in Volos where the strike was general, and where, despite the threats made by the commander of the troops that he would disperse the demonstration by force, the soldiers fraternized with the demonstrators. Similar things took place in hundreds of towns and on the islands. It was difficult in Salonika where a regime of the most bestial terror had been established to estimate the extent of the movement of May 13.

On the 13th, the day of the general strike, there was a conference of the representatives of both federations, unitary and reformist. The resolution passed by the conference stigmatized the policy of the government which resulted in the bloodbath of Salonika, and advanced sixteen demands from the workers and office employees. The conference issued a call to the working class and all the toiling people of Greece, in which it noted the enthusiasm and discipline exhibited by them in the 24-hour general strike, and declared that the struggle was not ended by the strike, and that the working class must be ready to fight with still greater determination for its rights. The conference decided to organize collections throughout the country for the victims of the shootings in Salonika, and to continue to fight for the demand that these victims be cared for at the expense of the state. Finally, the conference decided on behalf of both federations to send a telegram to the United Confederation of Labor of France, the General Council of the English Trade Unions, the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions of the Soviet Union, the Amsterdam International and the Red International of Labor Unions for moral and material support for the Greek workers in their struggle.

* * *

What were the results of the May battles in Greece, which culminated in the general strike? What was the situation created as a result of these battles, and what are its prospects?

The events of May resulted in big changes in the alignment of class and political forces in Greece. The main line of the reactionary bourgeois and landlord camp, adopted at the end of last year after the restoration of the monarchy and the return of the king, was directed towards making peace between the rival bourgeois groupings, the monarchists and the supporters of Venezilos, to isolate and crush the People's Front being formed under the leadership of the Communists, to solve all economic, financial and political difficulties at the expense of the working people. The prosecution of this line met with insuperable obstacles even before the events in May.

The formation of a coalition government of moderate monarchists and the supporters of Venezilos was upset in connection with the question of bringing back to the army officers supporting Venezilos.

In the monarchist camp, split into several groups, the extreme elements openly steering a course towards the establishment of a dictatorship, as well as members of the military league connected with the fascist conspirators, more and more assumed the leading role.

After the death of Premier Demerdzas, who was followed by the Hitlerite Metaxas, and in particular after the recent death of Tsaldaris,

the leader of the moderate monarchists, the consolidation of all the monarchist groupings into a single "anti-Venezilos" camp took its place on the order of the day.

The Liberal Party which, together with the small republican groups, and supported by the parliamentary groups of the People's Front, could have formed a government based on a majority in parliament, did not dare to take the plunge on account of the opposition of the reactionary elements among its leaders and because the king disagreed with this. It supported the government of Demertzis and then Metaxas, but at the same time, so as to save its face in the eyes of the masses, was compelled during the election of the President of the House of Parliament to sign an agreement dictated to it by the parliamentary group of the People's Front, which contained a program of specific democratic and anti-fascist demands. On the other hand, the line of "pacifying" the country at the expense of the economic and social interests of the working people received a crushing blow from the irresistible growth of the strike wave and a number of peasant demonstrations.

During the events of May, the differentiation in the camp of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie who followed them took a gigantic step forward. The majority of the supporters and staff of the Liberal Party took an active part in the movement and really established firm connections with the People's Front. "The refugees" in particular, who by tradition composed one of the main sections giving mass support to Venezilism, fought in the ranks of the strikers and demonstrators. A considerable section of the "Venezilos" deputies had to act, although with hesitation, in defense of the strikers. Only the rabidly reactionary wing of the Venezilos party connected with the big bourgeoisie, the banks and foreign capital, was hostile towards the movement. The bourgeois, including the monarchist press, did not dare to oppose the economic demands of the strikers, only attacking the Communists for "using the strike for their own ends". Only the extreme monarchist and fascist press openly defended the authorities and the government, and urged the government to take drastic measures and to establish a dictatorship. In these days the king lay as low as could be. The open sympathy of a considerable number of the soldiers and even of the junior officers played a tremendous role. Some of the reserve officers, the Venezilos officers in particular, who were "cleaned out" of the army following the events of 1935 and who accuse the upper ranks of the Liberal Party of betraying them for the sake of a rapprochement with the monarchists, openly took sides with the strikers and demonstrators, and supported their political slogans.

The reactionary camp, which inclined towards fascist methods of government and towards dictatorship, emerged from the events of May deprived of a considerable section of its mass base. The influence of the People's Front and its chief marshal and organizer, the Communist Party, on the other hand, increased enormously. The center of the movement was occupied by the proletariat of Greece, welded together for the first time in the fire of struggle. Numerous sections of the working people rallied around the proletariat. That which the Communist Party of Greece had been day in and day out striving for during recent years and

months, by carrying out with persistence and consistency the tactics of the united anti-fascist People's Front, was achieved in action in the days of the battles in May. The organizational consolidation of what has been so far achieved, and the preparations for what is to come, namely, a still wider and still more decisive struggle, are the task of the coming months.

On the morrow of the general strike, on May 14, a Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece took place. In a resolution adopted on the report of Comrade Zacharadis (the General Secretary of the Party), and Comrade Georgiu (Secretary of the Salonika Party organization), the Central Committee gave an estimation of the events and drew tactical conclusions from them. Of especial interest both in the speech of the General Secretary and in the resolution is the self-criticism of the weaknesses noted and mistakes made in the course of the events.

In Salonika, from the evening of May 9, after the demonstration had been fired upon, and on May 10, the day of the funeral of the victims of the slaughter, the people and the soldiers in sympathy with them were actual masters of the situation in the city. The authorities (the general in command) were forced to withdraw all the police and the gendarmes from the streets. One hundred and fifty thousand people from Salonika and the surrounding districts took part in the funeral demonstration (the total population of Salonika is 250,000). Forty thousand people took part in the demonstration at the port organized by the young people. This was not utilized by the leaders of the movement so as to consolidate the victory and make a decisive attack on the enemy. On the night of the 10th, Metaxas brought more reliable troops into Salonika from the Peloponese, Larissa, and Western Macedonia, and undertook a counter-attack. All the promises made on the 10th were withdrawn, mass arrests followed, and a regime of bestial terror was established; on May 10, said Comrade Zacharadis, the moment slipped by.

"We should have formed a committee to save the people, established a people's guard, and made connections with the whole of Macedonia and Thrace. We should have demanded support from the whole country, and with it achieved the overthrow of Metaxas. Metaxas would have been forced to resign because the example of the troops in Salonika showed him that the soldiers would take sides with the people. . . . The events in Salonika led to a rapid change in the alignments of forces among the masses, and to such a revolutionary upsurge as could only come about after years of ordinary development. The situation was changing hourly, and this demanded the rapid adaptation of slogans and tactics to the situation. It demanded great mobility and at the same time unflinching determination in carrying out the decisions adopted. This was what was wanting in our leadership in Salonika, and that is why the events did not develop as they should and could have done. . . ."

Another mistake was made by the delegation of striking tobacco workers (including the secretary of the unitary confederation of labor, Comrade Theos) which in Athens conducted negotiations with Metaxas.

In the evening of May 11 it signed an agreement to call off the strike of the tobacco workers, on the basis of fairly considerable economic concessions, it is true (with no guarantee that they would be carried out by the employers) but without any satisfaction of political demands, in particular the demand for the release of persons under arrest. The resolution of the Central Committee emphasizes that in so acting these comrades did not trouble to get authority from the bodies they represented. The fact that they called off the tobacco workers' strike on such terms, on the eve of the 24-hour general protest strike, makes the mistake only the more serious.

Analyzing the situation which arose after the fighting in May, the resolution of the Central Committee states that,

“. . . the murderer Metaxas, the representative of the most terroristic circles of the bourgeoisie—of the crown and of the fascist military clique—is speeding up his measures in preparation for a fascist military dictatorship. The danger is serious, the danger is a great one, the menace of it hangs over the working people, and the working people will only decisively drive back the enemy's onslaught by uniting their forces and fighting as they fought in Salonika, and during the 24-hour general strike.”

The resolution put forward as the most immediate slogans those for which the people fought in May, namely, the removal of the government of the murderer Metaxas, the formation of a government capable of operating all the points of the agreement between the parliamentary group of the People's Front and the Liberal Party, as the beginning for the satisfaction of the demands of the people. The resolution defines as urgent tasks: to strengthen and unite the partial battles into a single mighty blow against the offensive of the bourgeoisie and fascism; to achieve trade union unity; to expedite the formation of a united democratic peasants' party; to develop the People's Front after the example of Salonika, and to form "save the people" committees in the workshops, in the hamlets, in the villages, and in the towns—to develop activity towards the establishment of the closest links between the people and the army.

In spite of the fact that the state apparatus has so far remained in the hands of the reactionary government of Metaxas, and that a wave of unbridled terror is spreading throughout the country and Salonika in particular, it was the working people of Greece who came out victorious in the battles of May. After the October days of 1934 in Spain, there was a new victorious offensive of the masses of the people against fascism begun in the spring of 1936. The interval between the events of May and the next phase of the struggle of the masses of the people may be—and probably will be—much shorter.

The Strike Movement in Poland

By E. ADAMOVICH

THE wave of strikes which is flooding the whole of Poland is embracing ever new detachments of the proletariat. The rapidly growing movement has already embraced, in the first quarter of this year, more than 300,000 workers—over one-half of the entire industrial proletariat of Poland. The accumulated dissatisfaction and indignation of the people against the new attacks made by government and capitalists, in the autumn of last year, developed into a powerful front of strike struggle.

In the autumn of last year, the Koszjalkovski government issued a decree concerning a special tax which reduced the wages of a considerable section of the workers and employees. It also introduced an income tax which reduced wages by from 7 to 12 per cent, issued new rules for municipal workers, which deprived them of numerous rights, and reduced unemployed benefits, which were already miserable enough.

Along with this more and more frequent attempts have been made in the mining, textile, metallurgical and other branches of industry to reduce wages and to worsen the conditions of labor. The capitalists have had to apply new methods of attacking the workers since, thanks to the successes achieved in the struggle for the united front and trade union unity, the menace of the working class undertaking action on a big scale has been created. The capitalists are inventing the most varied forms of attacks on the workers, and in some cases even without tearing up the collective agreement. Thus, in the coal basin, the mine owners reduced the workers' wages by transferring entire mines from higher scales to lower ones, and individual workers from higher to lower categories. In the textile industry a direct reduction of wage rates took place in some factories, while in others this decrease has been achieved by providing lower quality of raw materials, by raising the rates of output, increasing the number of looms tended, etc. With the same object of disuniting the forces of the peoples the government is also applying special methods. At the time when the miners were preparing for a strike the government attempted in one of the coal basins to disrupt the struggle by means of arbitration. The activities of the reactionary section of the Socialist leaders of the trade unions also assisted in dividing the struggle. They did not permit the chief detachments of the working class, the miners, the textile, metal and municipal workers, to conduct a combined struggle.

The successful course of the struggle for trade union unity, the close solidarity and the desire of the workers for the united front broke down all the obstacles in the way and created favorable conditions for the development of the strike struggle.

The first stage was the three-day protest strike of the workers in heavy industry of all the three coal basins in Poland—the Dombrovsky, the Cracow and the Silesian. The strike embraced over 65,000 workers,

i.e., all the miners and half the workers employed in the metallurgical plants. A characteristic feature of the strike was the demand for a six-hour work day, a demand put forward for the first time in the history of the working class movement in Poland. This demand was advanced by the workers in response to the constant mass dismissals of workers and the closing down of the mines. Besides, the workers advanced a number of other demands, such as the retention of their previous wages, the observance of the rights of pit committees, etc. The second characteristic feature of this strike is the fact that all the three basins—the Dombrowsky, the Cracow and the Silesian—were involved in the movement.

Such a development of the movement was the result of the persistent struggle of the Communists supported by the overwhelming majority of the workers. In the largest of the three basins, in Silesia, a bloc was formed between the leaders of the three trade unions, the reformist “class” unions, the “Z.Z.Z.” (fascist) unions and the Khadezky (so-called yellow) unions. To subject this bloc to the control of the masses, to force the leaders of the fascist and the yellow trade unions to fulfil the wishes of the workers, to transform this bloc of the leaders into real united action—such was the task which the Communists placed before themselves in the period of the preparation for the strike. And it must be said that this task was accomplished. In almost all the mines resolutions were adopted demanding of the bloc of the three trade unions that a congress be convened of delegates from factory, pits, etc., in all the three basins, and that a strike be declared. In eleven Silesian mines inter-union commissions were established, composed of representatives of all the trade unions.

This success became possible only after the Communists achieved unity of action with the Social-Democratic workers, livened up and consolidated the class trade unions, and made them into a powerful basis for struggle for the unity of the entire trade union movement. And, in fact, the inter-union commissions in the mines under the leadership of the active Left workers played an important role not only in preparing and leading the strike, but also in bringing together the members of the trade unions and the lower trade union officials of all the three trade unions, a fact which strengthened the position of the united front to a still greater degree. In this situation the “bloc of the three” was forced to agree to the strike, but aimed to make it insignificant. However, they did not succeed. The representative of the Social-Democrats, influenced by the united front, declared strongly for a three-day strike, and following him the representative of the fascist trade unions also agreed. The latter fact can be explained by the tremendous dissatisfaction among the members of the fascist trade unions, and by the fact that the members were moving to the Left, a circumstance which forced the leaders of these unions to resort to all kinds of “Leftist” gestures.

The protest strike which took place November 25-27 was therefore a great achievement for the united front and a stimulus for the further struggle for unity. The example set by the miners and the metal workers was soon followed by the workers of other branches of industry. The strike struggle is unfolding throughout the country. New government decrees on taxation are accelerating this struggle and making it more acute.

The most important confirmation of the growth of the fighting ability of the masses is the action of the munition workers against the tax decree. Fascism has for years shackled the will of these workers by a police regime which has not admitted of any show of dissatisfaction. A considerable number of these workers have been forced to enter the fascist trade unions. However, the workers responded to the deductions made from their wages by a mass protest which forced the government to make concessions. In Warsaw this protest developed into a street demonstration of munition workers before the offices of the War Ministry and the Army Inspection. The same workers only six months ago took no part in the general strike against the electoral law.

The next to join in the struggle were the working men and women of the state alcohol and tobacco factories, first in Warsaw and then throughout the entire country. Fifteen thousand workers have been engaged in a struggle for four weeks, leaving the enterprise for an hour every day.

Then the strike of the Lvov tramway workers occurred, lasting two days, and the strike of the Warsaw tramway workers. The latter declared a half-hour strike at the beginning of January in preparation for the general strike of the Warsaw municipal workers on February 3.

This strike is of great interest in that it was conducted under conditions of exceptional disunity among the trade unions. Among the Warsaw tramway workers there are eight trade unions, one of which is a fascist union, which until recently had more members than the class trade union.

The disunity among the tramway workers and the treacherous policy of the fascist leaders and of some of the reactionary leaders of the class trade unions placed the tramway workers last year in a difficult position.

Since then, however, considerable changes have taken place. As a result of the joint efforts of the Communist and Socialist workers the class trade union has grown into a mass organization, having become a center of attraction for the members of the other tramway workers' unions. The desire for unity has increased among the tramway workers, and this has led (as in the strike in Upper Silesia, in the Warsaw printers' strike which followed later) to the formation of the inter-union commission consisting of representatives of all the tramway workers' trade unions. At the same time closer contacts are developing between the workers and the lower officials of the various trade unions at the various joint meetings and inter-union conferences of the tramway workers. A series of resolutions adopted by these tramway workers in favor of unifying all the trade unions into a single class trade union, bears witness to this.

These achievements in the struggle for unity among the tramway workers have considerably increased their powers of resistance. As far back as December of last year, in response to the robber decrees of the government, and to the offensive of employers against collective agreements, a movement in favor of a strike began to develop inside all the trade unions. At the meeting then convened by the inter-union commission the tramway workers adopted the proposal of the Left and Socialist workers to prepare the struggle against the decree and the attack on the collective agreement. Following this, protest strikes began against the

decree. A protest demonstration of 5,000 workers against the prohibition by the fascist authorities of a meeting of tramway workers was of great significance. As a result the employers were forced to give up the idea of attacking the collective agreement.

In the course of the struggle for the strike, the class tramway workers' union consolidated its increased influence, and has become the biggest union of tramway workers. In October last this trade union had 640 members, while at the beginning of December their number rose to 700, and by January 20, 1936, the membership was 1,000 members.

The general protest strike of the Warsaw municipal workers developed into a powerful demonstration of the united front. The strike was joined by all the municipal workers' unions. Attempts of the leaders of certain reactionary unions to oppose the strike met with strong resistance from the members of these unions themselves. The strike embraced all the municipal workers, including the tramway workers, gas workers, workers employed in the power station, water works and other enterprises, to a total of over 12,000 people. The exemplary organization of the strike excluded the possibility of its being disrupted by strikebreakers. Not a single tram or bus functioned on the streets of the city on February 3.

In the days that followed, strikes took place of 2,000 railway workers employed at the railway junction, who demanded the abolition of the new taxes, and of the printers employed in the 120 printshops in Warsaw, as well as at two munition plants. Strikes broke out throughout the country. According to incomplete data published on February 10, the number of workers on strike was, in Warsaw, 1,500 tailors; in Cracow, 800 workers of the state tobacco factory and 500 workers of the state alcohol plant; in Szernevizy, workers of the glass factory; in Chodzeji, workers of the porcelain factory (the strike lasting for seven weeks and ending with victory for the workers); in Chenstohov, at a textile factory; in Vodzislav, at a tobacco factory; in Silesia, at the coking-chemical plant. Strikes took place in Himzy, Grodzinsk, Szernevizy, Lide, Belostok.

The most widespread form of these strikes was the so-called "Polish strike", which was accompanied by the occupation of enterprises by the workers. Out of eight recent strikes by miners, seven were conducted as "Polish strikes". A considerable number of strikes in the textile, metal and chemical industries and in the "Semperit" rubber works in Cracow were of the same nature. These strikes were distinguished by the real heroism and tremendous persistence of the workers. It is sufficient to mention the three-month strike in the "Ardal" factory in Lide, the lumbermen's strike in the Belostok district which also lasted for a few months and which was regularly assisted by the workers of Belostok, the series of stubborn strikes in the textile factories in Lodz, the strike of the 2,000 miners of the "Yulyush" and "Kazimezh" mines, who did not leave the mines for eleven days, the strike of the "Silesia" mine, and in two mines in the Cracow basin, etc. There were numerous cases when working men and women, although seriously ill, did not yield to the persuasions of their comrades and did not leave the enterprises.

Masses of workers always crowded around the enterprises occupied by the strikers and expressed their solidarity by shouting greetings to the

strikers. Often this spontaneous support developed under the influence of the Communists into solidarity strikes involving other enterprises.

Attempts of the fascist dictatorship to suppress these strikes by means of terror gave rise to strong resistance by the workers. In the small town of Szernevizy, in response to an attempt to turn the workers out of the factory with the aid of the police, a general city-wide solidarity strike broke out which ended in a clash with the police. Similar facts at the "Ardal" factory led to the first general city-wide solidarity strike in Lide. In Belostok a general solidarity strike with the workers of the saw mills took place. A characteristic feature of this solidarity movement around the "Polish strikes" is the fact of the increased participation in them of the masses of the people. In Lide, during the second general city-wide solidarity strike with the workers of the "Ardal" factory, cinemas and shops were closed down, the cabs stayed away that day. In the Dombrowsky basin, during the strike in the "Yulyush" and "Kazimezh" mines, bakers, butchers, shopkeepers and neighboring peasants supplied foodstuffs to the strikers.

The biggest strike during this period was the one which covered 130,000 textile workers in Lodz and the surrounding district, in the period of March 2 to 16. As already mentioned, in spite of the fact that the attack of the Lodz textile manufacturers were almost general in character, it developed in various ways. Although the manufacturers systematically violated the collective agreement they did not, however, openly tear it up.

There could be no doubt that, this being the character of the capitalist offensive, a general strike would only be possible if supported by the trade union as a whole. The reformist majority of the trade union leaders, however, carefully avoided action on a big scale. At the beginning they stood for the organization of resistance only at certain enterprises, then, in connection with the growth of sentiment in favor of strike action among the textile workers, they inclined towards the idea of a strike at the enterprises which had not signed the collective agreement, and finally, at the end of January, they declared for strike action at enterprises not observing the collective agreement. Under these conditions the Left workers, without giving up the mobilization of the workers for a general strike, agreed to a joint partial strike with a view to raising the enthusiasm of the masses in the course of the strike, extending the strike and advancing new demands. This move of the Lefts was of great importance for the future development of the struggle.

Immediately following the adoption by a delegate conference and the Executive Council of the trade unions of the decision to strike at factories not observing the collective agreement, the Lefts, together with the trade union officials and Socialist workers, intensified the preparatory campaign for the strike. In the course of a week and a half, 20 meetings were held in Lodz. Another and still wider wave of meetings followed the delegate conference of February 19. Factory committees were elected at the meetings, while at many factories the core of the broader strike committees (composed of from 20 to 60 people) were the factory delegations. At the same time flying columns of strikers were organized to stop work at the various factories.

On March 2, however, the first day of the strike, attempts were still

made by some of the trade union leaders, particularly the leaders of the reactionary trade unions, to limit, to the greatest possible degree, the extension of the strike. That same day 4,000 workers struck work in Lodz. A change took place in the development of the strike in connection with the energetic activity of the central strike committee elected at the delegate conference on March 2. The central strike committee, basing itself upon the flying columns of strikers and strike committees in factories, succeeded in bringing 20,000 textile workers into the strike on the second day. This fact, as well as the campaign conducted by the Lefts, together with the active trade union workers in favor of a general strike, led to the demand being presented by large numbers of members that the trade unions should extend the strike to cover the entire textile industry in the Lodz district.

In these circumstances, on March 4, the inter-union commission, despite the resistance of the representatives of the fascist trade union, adopted a decision to extend the strike. The mass flying columns, which by that time developed into groups of 200 to 500 and even 1,000 workers, put this decision into practice under the leadership of the central strike committee. The struggle was transferred to the factories, where after mass meetings the workers declared strikes. In a number of cases the workers broke down the gates and broke into the factories where the strike had not been declared, and appealed to the workers to stop work. A regular siege was organized around certain factories.

As a result, 100,000 workers were on strike on the first day of the general strike. On each of the following days ever new groups of textile workers of the Lodz district joined the struggle, and soon the entire textile working population of Lodz and the district, amounting to 130,000 workers, had joined the strike.

The central strike committee, elected on the basis of the united front, and working in close collaboration with the trade union and the factory strike committees, ensured exemplary organization and an exceptionally high degree of activity on the part of those on strike. There were 30 Lefts out of 50 members of the central strike committee.

The mass meetings of the strikers, convened by the strike committees, the regular reports at the workers' meetings and delegate conferences as to the course of the strike, maintained up to the last day the fighting powers of the workers. Following a two-week struggle the workers achieved a partial increase in wages, and the retention of the collective agreements, etc.

A new feature in the strikes of the municipal and textile workers was the fact that the Communists were able to achieve unity of action not only with the workers supporting the reformists, but also with members of the reactionary and fascist trade unions.

The basis of the success of the struggle for the strike was the improvement of the work of the Communists in the class trade unions. The strike was prepared not outside the trade unions but inside them, and this in no way weakened the capacity to mobilize the unorganized workers. On the contrary, collaboration with the active members of the trade unions, the attraction of delegates into the preparation and conduct of the strike, ensured the wide extent of the mass preparatory campaign for the strike. This joint work attracted the membership to the side of

the Lefts and the active members of the trade union, and paralyzed the hesitations of the reformist majority in the leadership.

The strike struggle of this period—from the November strike of the miners to the March strike of the textile workers—showed the growing ability of the workers to resist and their desire for an organized joint struggle by the entire working class.

The biggest shortcoming of this period was that the strikes were linked up only to a small degree with the struggle of the broad strata of the people for democratic rights and the gains of the people. The events in Cracow, the bloody punishment meted out to the workers by fascism, have given rise to an outburst of indignation by the people throughout Poland, and lead to struggles being sharpened politically. In the process of the struggle following the events in Cracow and Lvov, the idea is growing among the masses of the need for the united front and the people's front.

In Cracow, and in the powerful wave of strikes which developed after the Cracow events, the combinations of the strike struggle with mass demonstrations against fascism appeared to the full.

In the spring, a powerful strike movement developed in Cracow on the basis of the united front. In the latter part of March there took place strikes of building workers, shoemakers, tailors, and workers employed in two chocolate factories, and in the "Semperit" rubber works. The strike also spread throughout the suburban districts where workers employed in the salt mines in Belinka and many other enterprises struck work. The workers of Cracow prepared a general solidarity strike in support of the strikers. As is well known, the savage beating up of women strikers accelerated the calling of this general strike. The shooting into the workers' demonstration on May 23, which was an attempt of the fascist government to put a stop to the drive for the united front throughout the entire country, not only did not frighten the proletariat, but called forth still greater resistance and a still stronger wave of strikes and political demonstrations.

On March 25, the day of the funeral of those killed, all enterprises and institutions in Cracow ceased work. Wide sections of peasants, intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie took part in displaying their solidarity with the fighting proletariat. Brief half-hour protest and solidarity strikes were held that day in numerous cities in Poland. Thus, in Warsaw, the tramway, bus and gas workers, and the workers employed in the power station and many other plants struck work on that day. Strikes took place in Lvov, Borislav, Czenstohov and Radom. On March 31 a general 24-hour protest and solidarity strike took place in the Dombrovsk coal basin, and finally, on April 2, a general one-hour strike took place throughout the entire country.

The developing strike movement is covering not only the workers and a section of the office workers, but ever larger groups of unemployed. If the weak connection between the struggle of the employed with that of the unemployed was formerly, and even during the last months, a shortcoming in the struggle, this weakness was eliminated after the Cracow events. In the coal basin of Poznania, Czenstohov, Petrokov, Lvov and other cities, big demonstrations of the unemployed took place. The savage terror, the shooting down of the demonstrations in Lvov, Czen-

stohov, and Hshanov, and the mass arrests throughout the whole of Poland cannot break down the developing struggle of the proletariat.

The strike movement of the Polish workers during the last six months clearly showed the rise of revolutionary sentiments among the toilers; it shows how the scattered strikes of the workers for the economic demands are changing into powerful joint united front action in the struggle against fascism. But the strike movement is not being accompanied by a corresponding development of the movement among the peasants.

Here are the characteristic features of this period of the strike struggle.

1. *The mass nature of the strike.* Workers of almost all the branches of industry were on strike. Munition workers, office employees and unemployed joined the struggle. General strikes took place in individual branches of industry, in cities and on a national scale. *The duration and persistence* of the struggle increased.

2. *Strikes were of a united front character.* The Communists succeeded in applying the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern regarding the tactics of the united front and the unity of the trade unions in the struggle against the attacks of capital. It was due to this that it became possible to bring about the strike movement on a wide scale based on the united front, with the aid of mass bodies, and in close collaboration with the trade unions, while *increasing the role of the class trade unions as the fundamental basis for united action.*

3. *The majority of the strikes ended in victory for the workers.*

4. *Economic struggles were linked up with the political struggle* of the proletariat, particularly lately.

5. *The strike struggle led not only to the further extension and consolidation of the united proletarian front, but also to the creation of the anti-fascist people's front.* In this respect, worthy of note is the participation of wide sections of intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie in numerous protest strikes and demonstrations, following the Cracow and Lvov shootings, and the congress in defense of culture which took place in Lvov on May 20. Hundreds of Polish men of culture and science took part in this congress. This congress represented a change where the speeches were distinguished for profound content, and displayed the close connections with the working class struggle in the moods of the intellectuals of Poland, and is a manifestation of the fact that the idea of the people's anti-fascist front in Poland is gaining strength.

Despite the efforts of the government, which resorted to all means of terror (mass arrests of thousands of people, closing down of scores of trade unions, exile to the concentration camp in Berzo-Kartuszk of over one hundred workers—first and foremost of Left active members of the trade unions, etc.), the strike wave continued to grow. The May Day strike embraced a considerable majority of the proletariat, while the new strikes breaking out daily, the struggle of the Lvov municipal workers which began on May 20, and the numerous demonstrations of the unemployed throughout the entire country (the recent militant demonstrations of the unemployed in Torun), show that the united fighting front against the capitalist offensive is developing and gathering strength in Poland.

Corrupters of Thomas Must Go, Too*

By WILLIAM GALLACHER

THE evidence submitted to the Tribunal, and the report presented to the Tribunal on the basis of that evidence, call for plain speaking.

Two Members of this House are being placed in the dock before the House and before the country.

The only thing that the House has to do is to accept without any hesitation the findings of the Tribunal, and, on the basis of those findings, to make the strongest possible condemnation of the members affected—Members who have shown, according to the evidence, an outstanding case of moral and political decay.

But it is not enough to condemn these men, important as that is.

Everyone can only hope that this example of moral collapse will be a warning to those who have been traveling, or are attempting to travel, the road which has been traveled by the ex-Colonial Secretary, in whom I am specially interested.

It would be folly to condemn the ex-Colonial Secretary as though this particular act on which the Tribunal has founded a decision has been some sudden aberration, dissociated from his past or from his colleagues.

What has the genesis of this present government to do with this moral and political collapse that is evident on the part of the ex-Colonial Secretary? Has the formation of the National Government nothing to do with it?

Here is one who, we are told, was an honored Member of the House. Men and women suffering in poverty spent their shillings and sixpences and pennies to make him a leader of his union, and you corrupt him and take him over there. *Has that nothing to do with what has been going on?*

Not just now should he have been prosecuted, but when he openly, callously and deliberately betrayed those who had spent their money and pinned their life's hopes on him.

The Prime Minister tells us about the blare of publicity in the press. Is he the only one that suffered from a blare of publicity in the press?

There was the honorable Member for Dumbarton Burghs (Mr. Kirkwood), there was myself, and there were others. Did anyone ever get up and protest against the blare of publicity, the lies and slanders that were made against us?

What are you dealing with? You are dealing with corruption.

Every Member who comes here immediately has temptation put into his path, and the very men to whom you are most considerate are the men who are subject to corruption.

But, while there may be one or two in the ranks of our movement who can always be corrupted, because the weakness is there, the main body of this party will never be corrupted, try as you may.

* Speech in the British House of Commons.

HON. MEMBERS: Which party?

MR. GALLACHER: This party here. It may be information to Honorable Members opposite to know that I am a member of this party, and pay my dues regularly to this party—the Labor Party.

But the Lord President of the Council and the man who wept for himself in this House were the men who were responsible for getting me denied my rights within the movement.

When you are attacking the Communists, remember that in 1924 the Communist Party of this country performed a miracle such as the world has never known before.

We succeeded, according to an intelligent jury, in libeling the right Honorable Member for Derby (Mr. J. H. Thomas) by calling him a traitor. At that time, unfortunately, he was receiving support from many members on this side of the House in every attack he made on us.

The Honorable Member for Dumbarton Burghs will tell you that it was possible for him and others to be corrupted when the war was on. The opportunities were put in front of us, but we refused to be corrupted.

Then the press came out with a blare of publicity to say that we were corrupt anyway, that we were engaged in what right honorable gentlemen on the other side call subversive activities.

But we were always open; we were very simple. When the police came to ask us, "Did you do this, that or the other?" we replied, "Yes."

We were so honest. We did not know that we had been too honest until we found ourselves in jail.

What was behind our subversive activities? Look back in the files of the press, and you will find references to German gold.

Is there an honest man anywhere? No, not according to your standard.

When the Germans were defeated, and had no more gold, there were still subversive activities, and it became Moscow gold.

The Moscow gold has gone the way of the German gold, and I still carry on my subversive activities, but the kind-hearted Chancellor of this country provides the gold.

If the German gold and the Moscow gold had been less of legend and more of substance, I should probably have been on the way to dealing on the Stock Exchange myself.

I want to return to the question of the association of the ex-Colonial Secretary with the government, and to the fact that the Government was started on a basis of the betrayal of the working class movement of this country, and, where you have a government built up on a basis of betrayal, every encouragement is given for the development of corruption.

Therefore, while I condemn in the strongest possible manner the ex-Colonial Secretary, and while I am prepared to take the most severe action against him, because of his whole career, which has only culminated now; *I declare it to be a shame on the part of the House that it can condemn the ex-Colonial Secretary and leave his colleagues alone.*

His colleagues are associated with him, and have known of his conduct all along—all of them.

He talked of his vices, "if they are vices", but whatever he was addicted to in the way of gambling or anything else, they were all con-

scious of it and encouraged him in it, because they knew that the more he played about and frequented race-courses, and the more he got into society, the more he was in their hands.

If you could get the Honorable Member for Dumbarton Burghs and other Honorable Members here to come into your net—a tea party here, a tea party there—you would corrupt them if they came in contact with you, and you know it.

You corrupted the ex-Colonial Secretary. He was once an engine driver—an honest occupation, an occupation to be proud of.

He left that because his colleagues had confidence in him, and he was made a leader of a great trade union, a man in whom his colleagues had confidence.

What went wrong with him to corrupt him?

He did not suddenly develop corruption in himself, but he got into contact, as a result of being a trade union leader, with captains of industry, and politicians representing captains of industry.

They took him to the bar and they patted him on the back.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: And dressed him up.

MR. GALLACHER: The expert in corruption may well smile. He knows his own handiwork, and, when his handiwork is cast out, he is ready to go on with the job with somebody else.

Members on this side of the House have had a great lesson; let us hope that it will affect every one of us.

The working class movement ought to be protected against the corruptive influences of capitalism.

What does getting on in life mean? It means: "Get property, get money, get into society."

There are some of us here whom all the gold that was ever minted would not induce to leave our class, because we are proud of our class.

It is the only constructive class in the country. Take away the Royal Family, the aristocracy, the Stock Exchange, and all the great financiers and ship them off to Timbuctoo, and society would go on, industry would go on. There would be no corruption.

But, by the waving of some magic wand, get rid of the working class and where are you?

The ex-Colonial Secretary has gone and we must see that the government of which he was part goes.

I do not want to deal with individual Members of the Government, but the Lord President of the Council (Ramsay MacDonald) should be associated with the ex-Colonial Secretary, and should be with him now.

The ex-Colonial Secretary was always known as the "Artful Dodger" in the labor movement.

But the Lord President of the Council was a Fagin, who knew how to dangle before the eyes of his victims the delights of illicit activities.

"Get a career", this was always on his tongue. Never any suggestion of coming into the Labor Party to get an opportunity of fighting the workers' enemies—but "careers".

We do not want careers. We want a great united movement which will put those responsible for corruption out of business, and we will put them out of business.

I want to make a few remarks about the Attorney-General.

I have never studied law in the schools or technical colleges, but I study it quite a lot from practical experience in the dock.

I have never heard, in any case with which I have been associated, such remarks as were made by the Attorney-General yesterday, I never heard such palpable absurdities.

There has been talk about the necessity of being soft-hearted when a man is down.

I am a bit of an Irishman and there is a story of an Irishman who knocked a man down, and, when he was told to let him get up, he said, "No, I will not. I had too much trouble in getting him down."

That is how I feel about the ex-Colonial Secretary. I am not soft-hearted, but the Attorney-General seems to think that we on this side are soft-headed when he comes forward with such arguments as he presented yesterday.

Lawyers are chuckling at the best legal joke for years. They are laughing at the Attorney-General.

How can he tell us that it would not be fair to have a prosecution because all the material has been before the Tribunal and everyone knows all about it? What sort of story is that?

We are not told that it was not desirable to prosecute Dr. Ruxton. Was there a man or woman on the jury who had not been reading all about it day after day?

Can the honorable and learned gentlemen be serious in putting forward such a proposition, that there is no evidence to go to a court, and that the Tribunal has accepted all kinds of stories which would not be admissible in a court?

The Tribunal was composed of a judge and two barristers, men of experience in all that is acceptable in the law courts.

Do they not tell us in the report that they very carefully swept aside all that was not permissible and sifted out the evidence that was permissible, and on that basis came to their decision?

The Attorney-General's statement yesterday is an insult to the judge and the two barristers who weighed the evidence and decided that there had been an unauthorized disclosure.

The Attorney-General says that a man is innocent until he is proved guilty. Are we to understand that a man has to be proved guilty before he can be arrested and put in prison?

I have been arrested on many occasions, and the Honorable Member for Dumbarton Burghs and I have been in prison in cells next to one another.

We were held there week after week, although we had never been proved guilty. When we were tried, I was found guilty, and my honorable friend was found innocent.

What sort of story is this that a man is innocent until he is found guilty? That is what we are generally told, but, when an act is committed and some one is suspected of it, he is accused, and then the onus is on the authorities of preparing the case against him, and the jury has the responsibility of deciding on it.

I demand that these men be tried. It is the duty of the House to

accept the report of the inquiry and condemn these men and compel them to resign.

At the same time they have a right to appeal. If they feel that there is any possibility of injustice, they cannot be condemned for life.

With all the corruption that is going on, with all the insidious and insistent corruption that one feels, one gets very suspicious that there are reasons why the government wants no prosecution.

It may be that, if there is a prosecution, other things will come out.

The Honorable Member for Balham and Tooting (Sir A. Butt) is right. He demands a prosecution, and I back up the demand.

He wants it in the hope that he will be cleared; I want it in the hope that both of them will go to jail as a warning and an example to the people of the country and to Members of this House.

But a prosecution is demanded. The people of the country have demanded a prosecution.

I ask the Attorney-General to give up this foolish playing about with phrases which have no meaning, and to take the responsibility of making a prosecution against these men on the basis of the Official Secrets Act.

I demand a prosecution in the name of the people of this country.

Men and women in buses and trams, wherever you meet them, want to know why others are prosecuted and these are not.

They want to know, down in the south, where there have been acts of sabotage, why a number of shop stewards, against whom there is nothing, are dismissed from their jobs because of their labor sympathies.

They want to know why men have been thrown into prison on the most circumstantial evidence.

Are you afraid of something coming out? Make a prosecution or, if you do not, open your prison doors.

If you are not prepared to make a prosecution of these two, there is not a man who should be in prison.

Men have been hanged on evidence more circumstantial than you have in this case. Deny it if you can.

Make a prosecution, and, when you make it, understand that you are making a prosecution which will expose and end the role of the National Government, which was founded on corruption and the betrayal of the working class. [*Interruption.*] Laugh at your handiwork. The ex-Colonial Secretary was not laughing when he walked out today.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: You were the only one to laugh.

MR. GALLACHER: Yes, I had the right to laugh. For years and years he carried on every kind of duplicity, and when any charge was brought against him he could always get out of it by saying, "It is the Communists. I have not done anything wrong; it is these dirty Communists who are spreading these stories."

It was not the Communists who spread the stories about the Budget leakage, and he cannot use the Communists today to get out of that.

What a happy man he would have been if he could have got up there, and, instead of talking himself to tears, an old practice, had said, "Oh, it is these dirty Communists who spread the story."

He could not do that today, and now he is finished. I want to say that if there is a prosecution——

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: Swine.

MR. G. GRIFFITHS: On a point of order. Has an Honorable Member the right to call an Honorable Member who is speaking a swine?

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Withdraw.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Captain Bourne): It is certainly not Parliamentary.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Withdraw.

MR. J. GRIFFITHS: May I ask that the Honorable Member who made use of that unparliamentary expression should be named?

COLONEL MASON: I apologize to you, Sir, for using that unparliamentary word.

MR. J. GRIFFITHS: The honorable and gallant Gentleman has apologized to you, Sir. May I ask you to ask the honorable and gallant Gentleman to apologize to the House?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The honorable and gallant Gentleman must withdraw the expression formally.

COLONEL MASON: In deference to your ruling, Sir, I withdraw the expression forthwith.

MR. GALLACHER: I know that I have a very provocative manner, and therefore I did not myself feel like taking any exception to the remark.

So long as such remarks are directed towards me, it can be taken for granted that I am free from corruption.

I want to demand a prosecution, but while I demand it, I must make it clear that a prosecution would so expose this National Government, which is founded upon corruption and has carried on a career of corruption as evidenced by subsidies and what not.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: What about murders in Russia?

MR. GALLACHER: I am dealing with this particular matter, but if there is any occasion to make a discussion on Russia, please arrange with your Front Bench, and I shall be only too happy to discuss it.

If there is a prosecution, this government, which has been based upon corruption and which threatens the country with wholesale corruption and destruction, will come to a speedy and well-deserved end.

I am glad that the ex-Colonial Secretary has gone from the scene, and I shall be happier still, a thousand times happier, when his colleagues have been forced to follow him to obscurity.

The Plot of the Enemies of the People Against the Franc

By E. VARGA

THE new government has only recently been established in France, following the victory of the People's Front in the elections, but the reactionary circles of big capital, who always shout about their patriotism, are already clearly attempting to bring about a currency crash, in order to discredit and overthrow the new government. In passing, they are not against raking in huge speculators' profits in this way. After the victory of the People's Front in the first round of the elections a determined attack was begun on the gold reserves in the Bank of France. Within two weeks the outflow of gold amounted to 8,000,000,000 francs. French gold was carried over the frontiers in automobiles and airplanes and over the railroads. The fascists in particular distinguish themselves in this respect. For example, Jean Lovier, member of the Fiery Cross organization, was arrested while attempting to smuggle a half million gold francs over the border. This takes place at a moment when Hitler and his troops are ever more threateningly approaching the borders of France! Would-be patriots, whose corrupt press eternally howls about the "internationalists without a fatherland" without stopping to think, are engaged in transferring over the border *one of the necessary means of defense*, thus undermining the defensive power of the country.

This is what the French capitalists are doing!

In previous years, foreign loan capital was invested in France as an insurance against the depreciation of currency. The year 1935 saw the outflow of foreign capital investments as the result of factual, although not formal, stabilization of the dollar and the pound. The entire press in England and America is in agreement on this point.

The tremendous scale on which the present outflow of gold is taking place is undoubtedly the result of the widespread attack by the French capitalists directed against the stability of the franc. This flight of gold is not at all the result of economic need arising out of the balance of payments. While France's imports are in excess of her exports (the deficit in the balance of trade for the first four months of 1936 equals 2,000,000,000 francs) this is made up by the income France gets from foreign investments and tourist receipts. If it were not for the outflow of capital for speculative and political considerations, the payments of France would, without any doubt, maintain its equilibrium.

What is urging French capitalists to export gold abroad? Various strata and groups of the bourgeoisie are guided by various considerations.

A section of the big bourgeoisie of France is consciously striving to bring about the *devaluation of the franc through economic considerations*. They argue approximately in the following way: The cost of

production in French industry—in spite of the sharp decline in the prices of the means of production and raw material, as well as the reduction of wages during the period of the crisis—is still too high. In addition the burden of the internal debt, because of the decline of prices, has become simply unbearable. To lower wages still further, to make any head-on attack on the conditions of labor, are at present impossible because of the unity of the trade unions, the united front and the victory of the People's Front. On the contrary, the workers are striving to bring about an improvement in their conditions of labor. Therefore, they argue, real wages must be lowered in a roundabout way, by devaluing the franc (depreciating it by 20 to 30 per cent). This was the line of thought, even before the elections, of a section of the big bourgeoisie, headed by the former Minister of Finance, Reynaud. Among the French Social-Democrats supporters of "regulated" and "moderated" devaluation were also found, who were influenced by the Belgian Social-Democratic leader, de Man.

The most reactionary fascist section of the big bourgeoisie is *conducting an attack against the franc, mainly for political considerations*. They want to place the new government in such a position that it will be forced to give up the stabilization of the franc. This, the reactionaries figure, will set the masses against the government, against the People's Front, and then it will become possible to create a mass base for fascism, destroy the People's Front, overthrow the government and in place of it put in power a reactionary fascist government of finance capital.

Still a third tendency exists within the ranks of the bourgeoisie, representatives of which may be called fellow-travelers of the first and second tendency. These are careful big coupon-clippers, landlords, etc., who have lost their heads as the result of the howls of the reactionary press, and have been scared by the systematically spread "horrible stories" of the activities of the Spanish People's Front. For this reason they are transferring part of their capital abroad to be ready for any eventuality and thereby, while they are not consciously striving to bring about the depreciation of the franc, in actual fact they support the attack on the franc.*

After the speech made by Blum, and thanks to the limitation of bank credits for speculative purchase of foreign currency, the outflow of gold has somewhat slowed up. This does not mean, however, that the danger of depreciation of the franc has passed. For the French bourgeoisie are conducting a struggle against the stability of the franc, not only directly through the systematic transference of gold abroad. Even should the outflow of gold abroad be made more difficult, it is still possible for the bourgeoisie to withdraw the gold from the banks and hoard it within the confines of the country itself. Of still greater importance is the systematic way in which the state credit of France is being undermined by the French bourgeoisie.

For short term credits of any magnitude the governments of

* The *Times* of May 8 writes: "The present flight of the franc means that the French [i.e., the French capitalists—E.V.] instead of holding their gold reserves fully in France, are transferring part to London, Brussels, New York, Amsterdam and Switzerland. These foreign deposits are an insurance against possible devaluation." (Retranslated.)

England and the United States pay $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent and lower; for long term loans they pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 per cent (in spite of the fact that the budget deficit in the U.S.A. for the current year amounts to \$6,000,000,000, 90,000,000,000 francs). The French treasury, on the other hand, is always in a difficult position and must pay up to 6 per cent for loans. This means that the English bourgeoisie provide their government with long term credits at interest rates 50 per cent lower than do the French bourgeoisie.

This robbery of the state by the French bourgeoisie is not at all a result of the shortage of loan capital in France. On the contrary, there is not a country in the world where such colossal sums of loan capital are available as in France.

In France, the money in circulation is approximately 30,000,000,000 francs in excess of the sum which is actually necessary under the present conditions for commodity turnover. These banknotes are kept in safes. The sum of gold kept outside of the Bank of France can, by comparing the imports and exports of gold and the gold reserves of the Bank of France, be approximately determined to be at least 15,000,000,000 francs. In the savings banks of France there are deposits amounting to 63,000,000,000 francs. The deposits in four large deposit banks amount to 28,000,000,000 francs, and non-interest-bearing deposits in the Bank of France amount to 8,000,000,000.

From this can be seen that there is capital available to the amount of 140,000,000,000 to 150,000,000,000 francs in France which either yield no interest at all (hoarded bank notes, hoarded gold and deposits in the Bank of France), or yield only the minimum interest (savings and bank deposits). And in spite of the existence of such a sum of available capital the French government has to pay rates of interest on loans twice as high as those paid in England or the United States or even Belgium, Holland and Switzerland! The French government has even been forced to secure a short-term loan in England to the sum of 3,000,000,000 francs. It is clear that it is not a shortage of loan capital in France itself, but that the credit of France is being systematically undermined by the reactionary bourgeoisie of France, who want in this way to bring about the devaluation of the franc, or inflation. The national debt of France has not at all reached such proportions as to undermine the credit of the government, as can be proved by a comparison with England. In 1934 England's internal state debt amounted to approximately 525,000,000,000 gold francs. In France the internal state debt amounted to 290,000,000,000 francs. We have no more recent figures available for purposes of comparison, but, although the debt has increased since then, no substantial changes have taken place.*

It is clear that one of the most important tasks facing the new government will be to beat back the attack made by the most reactionary section of the French bourgeoisie on the franc and consequently on the government which has resulted from the victory of the People's Front in the elections. There can be no doubt that this is quite within the bounds of possibility. Preservation of the gold standard of the franc is quite possible, while, on one hand, fully satisfying every legitimate demand for

* Figures from the *Statistical Year Book of the League of Nations*, 1934-35.

gold for the payment of foreign debts, but, on the other hand, if no withdrawals of gold from the Bank of France are allowed for speculative purposes. The parties of the People's Front have clearly shown the people of France that the export of gold for the purpose of personal enrichment weakens the power of France to defend itself against the threats of Hitler and that this is equal to treason. By explaining this, the parties of the People's Front will be able to mobilize public opinion and so to force the speculators to the wall and energetically support the struggle of the government against speculation. This is point number one.

On the other hand, a decisive policy of protecting the franc will restrain from further participation in speculation those who while not consciously striving to depreciate the franc are *being led on by the enemies of the people*. Further, the task facing the new government will be to establish faith in the financial stability of France, and in this way to make available for social needs and particularly for the organization of public works on a big scale the huge sums that lie available. During the past year the economic position of France has begun gradually although very slowly to improve.* This improvement could still further be facilitated by the organization of public works which would lead to increased tax receipts and to an improvement in the financial situation.

It is undoubtedly possible to protect the franc and to improve the financial situation, but only on the condition that the new government decisively and consistently deprive the enemies of the people of all avenues to the shaking of the stability of the franc.

* Index of Industrial Production in France taking 1929 as 100: May, 1935=66; December, 1935=68.8; February, 1936=71; March, 1936=75.

The Electoral Defeat in Belgium of the Supporters of Devaluation

By E. VARGA

THE most important result of the elections in Belgium is, as is well known, the defeat of the government parties, particularly of the Belgian Labor Party, and the victory of the Communists, on the one hand, and the Rexist-fascists, on the other hand.

The Labor Party of Belgium lost about 110,000 votes, while the Communist Party gained 77,000 votes in comparison with the elections of 1932. In place of the 39 per cent of the total votes cast at the last elections the Labor Party received 36.6 per cent while the number of votes cast for the Communist Party increased from 1.6 to 4.5 per cent of the total.

Such an outcome of the elections was the consequence of the policy pursued by the Van Zeeland and de Man government, a policy carried through in the interests of capital. The most important government measure taken was the devaluation of the franc by 28 per cent. Wide circles of the bourgeoisie in France also declare that devaluation is the only way out of the crisis. Under the influence of the Labor Party's propaganda in favor of de Man's "Plan of Work" the point of view exists in the ranks of the French Socialists that devaluation is one of the possible solutions of the problem. Therefore it is advisable to sum up the experiences of devaluation in Belgium.

The main argument in favor of the policy of devaluation is usually that the number of unemployed declined during the year (between February, 1935 and February, 1936), from 221,000 to 168,000.

In the course of one year, 53,000 unemployed, *i.e.*, 3 per cent of all workers and employees in Belgium, found work. However, this is not *wholly* due to the devaluation of the franc, since in consequence of the general tendency to economic improvement in the majority of countries in the world a certain decrease in the number of unemployed has taken place even in those countries where the currency has remained stable.

In spite of an increase in the number of employed workers, the total sum of the real wages of the working class in Belgium has without doubt sharply declined as the result of devaluation. According to the data of the State Bank of Belgium* which even if exaggerated are without a doubt by no means in favor of the workers, the cost of living index rose from 164 in March, 1935, to 183 in March, 1936, that is, by 12 per cent. The expenditure for food increased, according to official figures, from 131 to 157, that is, by approximately 20 per cent. Thus, while the wage bill rose by 3 per cent as a result of the decrease in unemployment, the minimum cost of living index—according to official data—increased by

* *The Bulletin of the Bank of Belgium*, April 25, 1936, p. 341.

12 per cent. Thus it would seem that the real income of the Belgian working class fell by approximately 9 per cent during the first year following the devaluation.

The developing great strikes in Belgium, involving over 500,000 people, show that the workers are beginning to resist the policy of devaluation.

On the other hand the position of the big bourgeoisie of Belgium improved considerably as a result of devaluation. The total income of the Belgian industrial companies increased from 789,000,000 in 1933 to 1,655,000,000 in 1935,* while the quotations for industrial shares rose from 26.3 per cent in February, 1935, to 50.5 per cent in February, 1936. These figures quite clearly show that the devaluation of the Belgian franc served the interests of the big bourgeoisie exclusively and all that the Belgian working class got from this policy was a sharp fall in their real wages.

It could not be otherwise. Devaluation means that the gold content of a given unit of currency is decreased by a definite percentage and corresponding with this all prices must increase. If price increases were even all along the line then devaluation would correspond to an even reduction of all debts, but the distribution of incomes would remain unchanged. But the price increases called forth by devaluation do not take place evenly. First of all, wholesale prices on imported goods increase, followed after a given period of time by the wholesale prices of home products and then by retail prices, while wages remain at the former level if the working class does not succeed in raising its nominal wages by means of strikes. This delay in adjusting prices to the fall in the gold content of the unit of currency and particularly the maintenance of previous wages, is the source of the increase in the profits of the capitalists as a result of devaluation. For this reason all devaluation without any doubt whatsoever means increased exploitation of the working class, regardless of in what capitalist country and under what conditions it may be introduced.** At the same time devaluation means shifting the share of surplus value in favor of industrial capital and at the expense of loan capital.

That the policy of the Van Zeeland-de Man cabinet corresponds to the interests of the bourgeoisie, that the representatives of the Labor Party gave no resistance of any kind to this policy, but supported it, is convincingly proved by the former Belgian Minister of Finance, Jaspar, who said:

"The participation of the Socialists had practically no influence on the policy of the Van Zeeland ministry. Their representatives in the cabinet conducted themselves very loyally and very wisely put forward no special demands, refrained from making any reference to the mysticism of wages and strove to

* *The Bulletin of the Bank of Belgium*, April 24, 1936, p. 316.

** That all devaluation means increased exploitation of the workers is openly admitted by Otto Bauer as against de Man and the supporters of devaluation, in his book, *Between Two World Wars*, when he writes: "The capitalist class, whose profits are threatened, strives to lower wage rates. . . . Two paths are open to them, leading to this aim. One of them is the path of devaluation. The value of the national currency falls. If the nominal wages of the workers remain unchanged, then real wages decrease while the share of the worker in the product of his labor declines all the more rapidly." (p. 30).

aid in quieting down and overcoming any unrest among the workers. . . .”*

In its editorial of May 26 *Le Temps*, leading organ of the French bourgeoisie, wrote:

“The attempt made by Van Zeeland, who really succeeded in bringing about considerable improvement in the financial situation, called forth violent indignation among the almost ruined middle strata of the population and among the workers whose wage rates have not increased to correspond with the depreciation of money.”

Therefore there are no grounds for doubting that devaluation in Belgium has worsened the conditions of the workers and wide sections of the petty bourgeoisie. At the same time the results of the elections in Belgium show how dangerous are the political effects of devaluation, although the Communist Party of Belgium has won a great victory, on the other hand, the fascists-Rexists made demagogic use of the dissatisfaction of the petty bourgeoisie which developed as a result of the devaluation, and won 21 parliamentary seats against the six new seats won by the Communists.

This one fact alone should serve as a warning to those supporters of the People's Front who allowed themselves to be misled by the purposeful “scientific” propaganda in favor of devaluation. This devaluation in France would, first and foremost, make it possible for French fascism to strengthen its extremely weak mass base, and would only serve the interests of the big bourgeoisie, reaction and fascism in France.

* Information, correspondence from Brussels, June 20, 1936.

The Antikainen Trial

By O. KUUSINEN

THE trial of Antikainen, the revolutionary Finnish leader, still occupies the attention of the international press, especially that of Great Britain, France and the Scandinavian countries. The proceedings threw a vivid light on contemporary jurisprudence in Finland.

Comrade Antikainen is a splendidly courageous leader of the Finnish working class. When a proletarian revolution began in Finland in 1918, Comrade Antikainen was the leader of the Socialist Youth League of that country. He played a prominent part in the revolutionary struggle, which was defeated despite the heroism of the workers when the troops of imperial Germany came to the assistance of the Finnish bourgeoisie. After these events Comrade Antikainen spent several years in the Soviet Union, learning the art of war in the struggle against Yudenich, the interventionist armies and the mutineers of Kronstadt, and showing exceptional talent as a military leader.

When, in the winter of 1921-22, the Finnish fascist gangs organized an invasion of Soviet Karelia by Finnish White bands, Comrade Antikainen played a glorious part in the battles of the Red Army which beat back this attack.

Later Comrade Antikainen worked for a considerable time in Finland, in the underground leadership of the revolutionary working class. In the autumn of 1934 the Finnish secret police succeeded in arresting him.

The legal lights of Finland were commissioned to find a judicial formula which would justify the murder of Antikainen within legal forms of procedure. The first proposal was the introduction of a special bill imposing the death penalty (not applicable to political offenses in Finland), but the resistance of public opinion proved too strong. However, the legal advisers of the secret police found that a man may be sentenced to death without any change in the existing legislation if the offense can be qualified as a criminal and not a political offense. They thereupon proceeded to frame such an accusation. The secret police preferred the preposterous charge that Comrade Antikainen, after the battle of Kimasosero in Soviet Karelia, gave the order to burn one of the captured Finnish White Guards at the stake. All Finland knows that the whole story from beginning to end is an invention of the secret police. It is also common knowledge that it was not the Reds but the Whites who took such barbarous revenge on their captured opponents.

The complete absurdity of the charge brought against Antikainen was irrefutably proved in court by the evidence of witnesses who were on the scene of the alleged burning of the White prisoner at the time when this event was supposed to have taken place. Evidence was given not only by Reds, but by Whites who themselves had been prisoners of the Reds at the time.

The Finnish judges were blind and deaf to the evidence. At first the judge refused to subpoena the witnesses called by Antikainen, in his

defense, from the Soviet Union. When this roused public opinion too much, the higher court decided to refer the matter back to the lower court for re-investigation of the facts. The secret police got busy finding "proofs" for the prosecution, while the public prosecutor made a practice of instructing the witnesses in the very building of the court as to what evidence they were to give. Most of the witnesses for the prosecution, however, knew nothing at all or only repeated alleged rumors of which no one else had ever heard.

During the whole year 1935 the secret police succeeded in finding only one man who was prepared to confirm anything the secret police demanded without batting an eye. This man, whose name is Niemi (alias Remsuyev) was by profession a secret agent of the intelligence department of the Finnish general staff. But as, according to Finnish law, the evidence of a single witness is not sufficient to secure a conviction, the secret police went to a great deal of trouble to find a second witness. This man, Haitto, followed the calling of a liquor smuggler and very probably also that of an agent of the secret police. This person stated in court that he had seen with his own eyes the charred dead body of a man.

Thus the two witnesses prescribed by law were found at last and the fascist court could pass sentence without a qualm of conscience.

But the activities of the secret police were not limited to finding witnesses for the prosecution in the Antikainen case. Thus Lydia Rask, the occupier of the flat in which Antikainen lived, was arrested by the police—and found dead in her cell. The chief of the secret police stated that she had committed suicide. No investigation was made into the circumstances of her death.

One of the witnesses for the defense, Lauri Lagerbum, was to refute the evidence of the chief witness for the prosecution (Niemi) as Niemi had at one time stated in the presence of witnesses that he had not even been near Kimasosero at the time he asserted he had been in his evidence before the court. At the beginning of December, 1935, Lagerbum was arrested by the secret police, released again, but a few days later—on December 18, the day on which he should have given evidence in court—was found hanged. The persons who had heard Niemi boast of his false evidence in court suddenly disappeared and no one knew what had become of them.

Then one day in March, 1936, a group of unknown men came to the house of Antikainen's counsel and kidnapped him. It took counsel for the defense, whose name is Loutsenlahti, several days before he could escape from the lunatic asylum to which his kidnappers had taken him. The incident had made such an impression on him, however, that his behavior in court as counsel for the defense seriously prejudiced Antikainen's case.

The story of Matveyev, witness for the defense, is a matter of general knowledge. Matveyev had been subpoenaed by the Finnish authorities from Soviet Karelia (in the Soviet Union) and the Finnish government had guaranteed him a safe conduct under the Finnish laws. But despite the guarantee the witness was insulted in the building of the Finnish court by the witnesses for the prosecution and Finnish policemen, who threatened him with death and ill-treatment unless he gave false evidence.

unfavorable to Antikainen, in the witness-box. It was only with the greatest difficulty that Matveyev escaped from the clutches of the Finnish secret police.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the Finnish bourgeoisie, after having committed such a number of disgusting crimes in connection with the Antikainen case, should fear even the slightest free expression of opinion. When the Helsingfors newspaper *Tulenkantajat* published extracts from the comments of foreign Socialist and bourgeois newspapers on the Antikainen trial, the public prosecutor demanded the confiscation of the paper. And which were the newspapers the Finnish authorities considered it a crime to quote? The *Manchester Guardian*, the *Daily Herald*, the *New Statesman and Nation* and the Swedish *Social-Demokrat*, the mouthpiece of the late Swedish government. So much for "liberty of the press" in Finland.

Murder and false evidence were the means by which Comrade Antikainen was sentenced to penal servitude for life. The only reason the court dared not pass a death sentence was that the obvious flimsiness of the case for the prosecution had roused great indignation and energetic protest both in Finland and abroad against the passing of such a sentence. The courage and dignity displayed by Antikainen in court roused the admiration of the workers not only for Antikainen himself, but for the cause of the proletarian revolution which he defended with so much courage in the very shadow of death.

He said in court:

"Who am I? What is my aim? I am a Bolshevik, a responsible official of a Party affiliated to the Communist International. In my activities I followed the teachings of Marx and Engels and their faithful disciples Lenin and Stalin. I fought for the class interests of the workers, for the interests of all those who labor, for a better life for all mankind, for culture against barbarism, for a socialist world. I am responsible for my activities to the working class of Finland, its Communist Party and the Communist International."

When he left the court after the passing of sentence, he shouted "Red Front!"

In his courageous attitude before his judges Comrade Antikainen was inspired by the heroic example shown by Comrade Dimitroff during his trial in Leipzig. The Finnish workers call him "the Dimitroff of the North".

The struggle for the life of Antikainen is not at an end, it is only just beginning.

The Finnish bourgeoisie is thirsting for revenge on Antikainen, not only for his past deeds, but for his present struggle against their rule. The Finnish ruling class rightly regards him as the personification of the inexhaustible revolutionary energy of the Finnish working class and the whole Finnish people. Antikainen inspires the bourgeoisie with the fear that the time may come when the laboring population of Finland will rise as one man to fight for its liberty.

It is the sacred duty of the Finnish working class, of every honest Finn disgusted by the crimes of Finnish fascism, of the whole international proletariat to rescue Antikainen from the clutches of the hangman.

The Care of the Socialist State for the Mother and Child

By FRIEDRICH WOLF*

THE draft of the new law, dated May 25, 1936, drawn up by the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. which has called forth a lively discussion, contains four main ideas:

1. Prohibition of abortions, except in cases where there is medical necessity for same.

2. Increased and unusually wide material aid by the government to the mother and child; the provision of government aid to large families.

3. A series of important measures designed to strengthen the rights of the mother (increased alimony payments, punishment of the husband who urges his wife to resort to an abortion, higher divorce fees with a view to render divorce more difficult to obtain, etc.).

4. The call of the government to the toilers of the U.S.S.R. to engage in the broadest possible discussion of the draft through criticism, corrections and addenda, prior to its adoption.

For those in the capitalist world who, like myself, have for many years passionately fought against the "bloody paragraph", Paragraph 218 of the German criminal code, and have always used as a weapon the example of the Soviet Union which, through its law of November 18, 1920, made it possible for the women of the Soviet Union to prevent the birth of unwanted children—for us this draft law was at first unexpected. What impelled the General Executive Committee to replace the law of November, 1920, by a new law? What changes have taken place during this time? What does this "draft" mean? Is not this law again a typical "male" law? How will the women react? Will they be asked to state their opinion? And if so, will they have courage enough openly to state their opinion of this law?

The very day this draft was published a gigantic wave of discussion, criticism and suggestions spread over the entire land. Millions of working men and women from the factories, from the collective farms and Soviet farms, teachers, women aviators, sportswomen, wives of Red Army men, doctors, wives of engineers, cotton pickers from the collective farms of Turkmenistan, women from the fishery collectives of Arctic Siberia—all reacted immediately, expressed their personal opinions, agreed, rejected, proposed additions and corrections. Yes, the family of 170,000,000 people participated in drawing up the new, vitally important law by making countless individual proposals. Absolutely the only case of its kind in history! A shining example of the real rule of the people of Soviet democ-

* Friedrich Wolf, German revolutionary writer and doctor, is well known in Europe for his struggle in Weimar Germany against Paragraph 218, which prohibits abortion. In connection with this struggle he was prosecuted. He also raised the question of abortion in his drama *Cyanali*, which was very successful among workers in various countries. At the present time he lives in the Soviet Union.

racy. Of course, "popular votes, referendums", like "ostracism" in the ancient Greek democracy, have occurred under other systems as well. But this vote always amounted to a mere "Yes" or "No". Was there ever any legislation or state which, when bringing forward the draft of a law, turned to all the people, to all the citizens, and proposed that they introduce their own corrections, that they give detailed criticism?

Let us place this draft law alongside the German Paragraph 218, which has been cynically carried over in an unchanged and fixed form from the situation of the *Gründerjahre* following 1871, to the Germany which has 5,000,000 unemployed. Even the report of the reactionary 15th Congress of Doctors in Eisenach, which took place in 1928, calculated that the annual number of illegal abortions, punishable by law, was 800,000! In my drama *Cyanali* the following words are stated: "A law which annually transforms 800,000 mothers into criminals is not a law!" All jurists and doctors were well aware of this state of affairs and made official declarations in this regard, but our attempts in the "democratic" German republic to bring about a change in the law or to secure a referendum were answered by prison sentences, by a long series of trials, and the application of all methods of police abuse, the methods of the pre-fascist dictatorship. That which is now taking place in the U.S.S.R. where the government's draft bill is transformed into the law of the people, is a clear example of genuine rule by the people.

* * *

Many working women, who in the main agree with the draft bill, point out that it is necessary to permit abortions in some exceptional cases, that is, if the health of the as yet unborn child is endangered by a hereditary disease of one or the other of the parents; if the family has many children living in bad conditions; and if the profession of the woman does not permit having many children (aviatrix, sportswomen, artists, working women or collective farm women attending evening university, etc.). In addition some doctors have pointed out that "medical proof" for an abortion must be established with great scientific accuracy. And finally, in the discussion regarding the prohibition of abortions it has been repeatedly pointed out how urgent is the need for developing contraceptive methods and educational work in this sphere. Although a network of free consultation centers exists in the U.S.S.R., where any woman can receive the necessary information, it was nevertheless pointed out in the discussion the number of these centers must be increased, especially in the collective farms.

I consider that it is precisely the full utilization of the criticisms and additions brought forward by the wide range of public opinion in the enterprises, the collective farms, institutions, etc., and in the press, that basically justify the law. And I have not come to this conclusion only yesterday! I have not in the Soviet Union changed the point of view for which I fought in Germany—namely, my negative attitude to Paragraph 218. I will permit myself to cite here the following words pronounced by me at the preliminary investigation before the Stuttgart trial and published in the pamphlet *Storming Paragraph 218*, which appeared in 1931:

"In conclusion I must make the following statement in the name of my colleague, Doctor Frau Kinle and myself. We are opposed to the cessation of pregnancy and support the regulation of childbirth. In the cessation of pregnancy we see only the 'last resort', the last means in those cases where contraceptive methods have proven inefficient. We consider it an act of irresponsibility to create new people to suffer from hunger in Germany where hunger and poverty have assumed a chronic character. For myself personally, I would like to add: the problem of Paragraph 218 is only a partial problem of the entire capitalist system. It cannot be solved in a negative fashion! We know that in the Soviet Union the positive solution of this problem, the protection of pregnancy, and of the mother and child is the most important weapon against the epidemic of abortions. We know that our women in Germany as well will again gladly give life to children but not in the Germany of hunger, poverty and slavery, but in free Socialist Soviet Germany."

I would like once more to state that time and again I defended this point of view in court and at hundreds of meetings in 1931 and 1932. I defended it also in my drama *Cyancale* where the young working woman, Hete, and the fireman named Paul yield themselves to their natural feelings and are filled with joy at the coming of their child; only a lockout, unemployment and eviction from their apartment force them to resort to an abortion. So my point of view as a passionate fighter against Paragraph 218 was and is that each and every genuine proletarian woman will rejoice in a child which she can bring up under happy conditions. I have always rejected, as a malicious slander against our German working women, the statement made by some Thunselda from the "League of Queen Louise" that: "the wives of German workers only want pleasure, but not children."

Is it possible, even from the most far-fetched point of view, to compare the Soviet Union of 1936 with capitalist, fascist Germany? Have not the happy conditions, under which one can take on oneself the responsibility for a child, already been created to the highest degree in the Soviet Union? In the Soviet Union, are there unemployment, hunger, economic crises, wage cuts, the cutting down of the network of schools, of social insurance, and of the protection of mother and child? We recall how, even in 1928, the last five million for the feeding of children was erased from the German budget. The state of affairs in the Soviet Union of 1936 is entirely different.



By January 1, 1939, the number of places in maternity hospitals both in the newly built ones in the towns (4,000 beds) and in the villages has to be increased by 43,000; a corresponding increase will likewise take place in the number of nurses and the staffs of maternity hospitals. Regular creches in city and town will receive 900,000 additional places in addition to four million additional places in seasonal creches in the village. The number of places in kindergartens will be brought up to 3,100,000. This year's budget for the protection of mother and child—1,481,000,000 rubles—will immediately be increased by an additional appropriation of

692,800,000 rubles this year. This means that for this year the budget for the protection of mother and child amounts to 2,173,800,000 rubles as against 875,000,000 in 1935. The working woman has the right to 56 days' vacation with full pay before and after childbirth. Non-manual working women, who have hitherto received 42 days of vacation before and after birth, will now receive the same as the woman working at the point of production. It is self-understood that women will not lose their jobs in connection with this, but that, on the contrary, according to the draft law, every mother has the right to lighter work at the same enterprise, and at her former pay. Furthermore, the allowance for the feeding of infants is considerably increased.

What country can boast of even approximately equal achievements in the sphere of maternity and childhood, in the sphere of care for the human beings?

But in the process of the discussion numerous corrections have been introduced to this section of the draft law. Working mothers are making the following demands: that the creches stay open for a longer period during the day, so that each mother can utilize her evenings for study; the production of more and cheaper children's clothing, etc.; an increase in the number of special rest homes for pregnant women, and the establishment of children's sections in general rest homes and sanatoria so that each mother can take her child with her on vacation; the building of creches and kindergartens closer to the place of work or residence of the parents. These and many other corrections and additions have been proposed.

* * *

The draft law was placed for open discussion "from below" before the entire country. Already tens of thousands have expressed their wishes and additions and these proposals will, without doubt, be taken into account.

On reading daily the Soviet press, and listening to the lively, passionate arguments at enterprises, in the villages, at the clubs, one comes to the conclusion that it is precisely these countless critical comments and proposals which show that the basic idea, the kernel of the project has been understood and approved by the entire country. Everywhere one major note is heard: yes, in our Soviet state the conditions exist which make it possible joyfully to give life to children, to bring up children in *happy surroundings*. In some things we still need help from the state, as, for example, in the question of living quarters, birth-control appliances and methods, but if we take the problem in its perspective—within five to ten years, at the present speed of socialist construction, with the growing productivity of labor—these difficulties will, without question, be overcome. For this new world, the first socialist state of workers and peasants, will give a happy life to our children.

[This article by Comrade Friedrich Wolf was written prior to the adoption of the new law of June 27, 1936. Thirty-two days after the people had widely discussed the draft bill, the definite decision was taken by the government to prohibit abortions, to increase material aid to women giv-

ing birth to children, to establish state aid for families where there are many children, to extend the network of maternity homes, creches and kindergartens, and to increase the penalty for the non-payment of alimony. Certain alterations in divorce legislation are also made.

The text of the new law was only adopted after a thorough study and examination had been made of many tens of thousands of addenda and amendments proposed by the people of the U.S.S.R. The discussion of the bill, which touches on the vital interests of the millions of the citizens of the U.S.S.R., coincided with the discussion of the draft of the new Constitution.

In the new law regarding the prohibition of abortions, as distinct from the draft, an extension is made of the conditions for the permission of abortions, in case of the existence of serious disease which can be passed on by the parents by heredity. Alterations have been introduced into the article dealing with state aid for families where there are many children. Thus, a family which now has six children (in the draft the figure mentioned was seven) receives an annual payment from the state of 2,000 rubles, for a period of five years from the date of birth of every succeeding child. A point has been introduced to extend the operation of the law to families which already have many children. According to the new law, in accordance with the numerous proposals made by the people, a two-shift system is established in the creches which shall be open "for 16 hours per day, including rest days". Certain changes have been introduced into the figures referring to the exaction of the payment of alimony.

In the new law of June 27 there is reflected the care of the socialist state for women and the future citizens of the U.S.S.R. Mothers in the U.S.S.R., as in no country in the world, are surrounded by the love of the entire people. In the capitalist countries, as is well known, abortions are also prohibited. But what is there in common between the hypocrisy and the lying "care" for women in the capitalist countries where unemployment, hunger, poverty, prostitution, and the deprivation of rights exist, and the real day-to-day care by the socialist state of workers and peasants, for the mothers of the U.S.S.R., who have equal rights and are free and happy?

EDITORIAL BOARD]

The Toilers of the Soviet Union on the Draft of the New Constitution

By M. BROWN

SOME weeks have already passed since the publication of the draft of the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. This historically important document continues to occupy the center of attention of the population of the Land of the Soviets. There is not a factory, not an office, not an educational institution, or a collective farm where one or more meetings have not been devoted to a discussion of the draft of the new Constitution. There is not a single organ of the Soviet press—from the *Pravda* to the factory wall-newspapers—which in issue after issue has not devoted considerable space to this discussion. The workers of the Red capital and the collective farmers of the far-off national republics, professors and students, Red Army men, housewives, writers, masters of art and sport—the most varied strata of the population of all the republics and autonomous regions of which the Soviet Union is composed have joined in the discussion on the draft Constitution, speak at meetings, and send their opinions, remarks and amendments to the draft to the central and local papers.

It is difficult (even impossible) at the present moment to sum up the results of this broad national discussion which is as yet far from ended. It is possible only to characterize the discussion, by citing some of these amendments and additions to the draft which have been made by the toilers of the U.S.S.R.

The amendments are of the most varied character. Sometimes they touch upon separate formulations in the draft Constitution. A number of workers and Red Army men, for instance, propose to delete the word "service" (in speaking of military service) from the draft and substitute instead the words "honorable duty", since service in the ranks of the workers' and peasants' Red Army is not a matter of compulsion but a matter of honor for the citizen of the U.S.S.R. Some comrades, as, for instance, Professor Kulzhinski, Eugenia Vesnik (the initiator of the movement for the organization of the wives of the engineers), and others, argue against the formulation in the first article of the draft Constitution which reads that the U.S.S.R. is a "state of workers and peasants", proposing to replace this by the words "state of toilers".

The worker Barinov in the "Stalin" automobile plant does not agree with them. "Were we to alter Article 1," he writes, "it would mean that we recognize the point that classes have been liquidated once and for all. But we are only on the road to the final and complete liquidation of classes."

The national discussion of the draft Constitution was preceded by a discussion on the draft law on the prohibition of abortions, aid to

mothers, etc., in the course of the discussion on which a number of vital questions of Soviet morality and of the Soviet family were raised to heights of principle. Many of those who participated in the discussion on the draft Constitution, basing themselves on their conviction that the family plays a tremendous role in socialist life, proposed to add a special section or articles to the Constitution on the significance of the family, the protection of the rights of the mother, and the duty of parents. Such a proposal, for example, was made by Lieutenant Gorbunov, Ilenko, a working woman, Ivanova, an economist, Professor Archangelsky, a gynecologist, and Mitroshina, a chairman of a village Soviet.

A number of amendments introduced on the articles on the courts were dictated by the desire to provide the best possible protection of the rights of a Soviet citizen. The following corrections brought forward by the Stalin metallurgical plant in Kuznetz (Western Siberia), are characteristic of these amendments: Kalinina, a woman sweeper in the boiler department of the factory, demands that judges give an account of their work to their electors once or twice a year, Tzofmas, an economist in the coking department, proposes the addition of the right of the electors to recall members of the court elected by them. Other citizens propose amendments calling for compulsory legal education for judges, for the establishment of the shortest possible period for preliminary investigations, and so forth.

Many Soviet citizens bring forward amendments touching on the position of foreigners in the U.S.S.R. These amendments clearly show the feeling of internationalism inherent in the Soviet people, their solidarity with the toilers of all countries. For example, a proposal was made that all foreign citizens working in the Soviet Union be given active and passive electoral rights, that the right of asylum be extended also to foreigners persecuted in their countries not only for political, but also for literary and artistic activities, etc.

A big difference of opinion is aroused by the question of granting electoral rights to the ministers of religious cults, particularly in the backward national regions where the influence of the priest, mullahs and shamans is still strong. Members of the Young Communist League, Melnikov (Moscow), Jashkarin (Mordovia) and Ternersesjantz (Novocherkask) argue strongly in the columns of the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* against granting electoral rights to the ministers of religions, as the conveyers of religious dope. Many other toilers agree with them. Some voices are also heard against granting electoral rights to the "people with a past", the former kulaks, merchants, etc. But even more numerous are the voices in defense of unrestricted, general electoral rights, in accordance with the draft Constitution. For example, engineers Nugaram, Mamedov and Malishev write in the *Worker of Baku*:

"Can we, for example, deprive the many builders of the White Sea-Baltic Canal of these rights [electoral] simply because they are 'people with a past'? How many of these 'former' people have been re-educated by the Soviet Power and are now honest toilers?"

Evdokia Krasnova, the wife of a worker from the city of Kalinin, writes similarly:

"Some people worry that, now, when any citizen can be elected to the Soviets, some unworthy people may crawl into office. We will be vigilant. The enemies of the people will not be permitted to get into the Soviets."

It should be particularly noted that in the discussion of the draft Constitution great activity is also shown by the unorganized sections of the population, those who only recently stood aloof from political life—the handicraftsmen, individual peasants and housewives. The latter persistently demanded that their political rights should be separately specified in the Constitution. For instance, housewives in Kharkov (Chereshevski St. No. 88) placed the question of giving housewives an equal right with organized electors to put forth their own candidates.

The political activity of the collective farmers, boldly putting forth varied, often very original, proposals, strikes one even more strongly. For example, Burlakov, a collective farmer from the Karachaeviski Autonomous Region, writes in the *Peasants' Gazette*:

"The chairman of the Supreme Council is the head of the government—our Soviet, people's, president. And, according to my opinion, he must be elected not by the Chambers but by all the people."

Lipchik, a collective farmer in White Russia, proposes that the withdrawal of any republic from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics should be permitted only with the unanimous approval of the entire people of the given republic.

To the concluding section of the Constitution (in addition to separate proposals on changes in the emblem and flag of the U.S.S.R.), many toilers propose that the "Internationale" be recognized as the state hymn of the U.S.S.R. A very sympathetic response is given to the proposal of the Ukrainian writer Ivan Mikitenko that the Constitution should end with the words: "The present Constitution has been discussed and adopted by the people of the U.S.S.R., under the leadership of the great leader of toiling humanity—*Stalin*."

* * *

The response of the toilers of the U.S.S.R. to the draft of the new Constitution is not limited to amendments and corrections alone. A number of the most interesting written and verbal statements of workers, peasants and intellectuals of the Soviet Union regarding the draft Constitution give a general estimation of the draft, explain its significance and sum up the results of those long years of hard work by means of which the people of the Soviet Union have won for themselves the material and social prerequisites for the new Constitution, the most democratic Constitution in the world.

A number of statements by the people in regard to the Constitution represent vivid human documents in which the gruesome past of the people of former tsarist Russia is contrasted with their happy present.

Here, for example, is the statement of Zyeu, an old textile worker, who participated in the historic Morozov strike of 1885:

"In the draft of the new Constitution our remarkable life is reflected as in a mirror. I am happy that I have lived to see the epoch of Stalin.

"I receive a personal pension. The state has materially secured my old age. Prior to the revolution, an old man of 60-65 used to say: 'I wish I could die sooner.' These men felt that no one needed them. The old man was a burden on his family, an extra mouth. The manufacturer squeezed everything out of him, as from a lemon, and then threw him out of the factory. In those days old age was horrible. And now, in spite of my 72 years, I am not so old—I feel myself rejuvenated. I want to live and live. . . . And if the enemy dares to encroach upon our Constitution, then I, in spite of my declining years, I will be the first to pick up a rifle, I will go to the defense of my fatherland together with my sons, and I will go with a Red flag, as boldly and as proudly as in 1885."

Pchelkin, assistant foreman in the Vokova factory (Orekhova-Zyeva), writes in the *Moscow Worker*:

"I read in Maxim Gorky that 'the word man rings proudly'. The Party and the Soviet government have raised man—the citizen of the U.S.S.R.—to unheard of heights.

"I read the entire Constitution, line by line, at home in my family circle. My wife and my two sons listened attentively to the simple and wise words of the Constitution. I told my children in detail how we lived before. All of us—five brothers and two sisters—prior to the revolution, were illiterate. And now I am studying in courses for the job of assistant foreman—and I am studying algebra. The Constitution is the banner of our happy life. For this reason I and all the members of my family join in the proposal of the Tula munition workers that the day of the adoption of the new Constitution shall be declared a general people's holiday."

The representatives of the former backward nationalities, resurrected by the great socialist revolution to a free and happy life, met the draft of the new Constitution with particular exaltation—the draft which consolidates full equality for all nationalities, won by the people of the Soviet Union. Bektenbai Kosynov, a Cossack student, writes in *Labor*:

"In the second chapter of the new Constitution it is stated that among the eleven Union Republics is also my native Kazakhstan. When I read this my heart filled with pride. . . .

"The equality of the rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality and race, is an immutable law—reads the Constitution. For me, a Cossack in the past, a shepherd, the son of a farmhand—it is clear what a great meaning these words imply. In my family much is told about the horrors of the times when the tsarist gendarmes took away from the native people their best lands. It is easy for us to draw an analogy between the activity of the tsarist officials in the past in Kazakhstan and the contemporary practices of the Japanese generals in 'independent' Manchukuo. We know that in all countries where fascism rules—in Germany, in Italy, in Japan—the theories of race and national exceptionalism are taught, in the name of enslavement.

"In the Soviet Union such propaganda, in any form, is punishable by law."

No less ardently does K. Hoffman, a representative of a culturally advanced national minority, a railroad worker of the Engelsk railway center (German Volga Republic), write in the *German Central Newspaper*:

"The right to education! The right to education in one's native tongue! At one time I was forced to serve in the tsarist army, where we were forbidden to speak German, and letters from our relatives, written in German, were not given to us. . . .

"We Volga Germans have, thanks to the Soviet Power, become full-fledged citizens of our glorious Soviet country. . . . Let the toiling Germans, no matter in which country they live, read our Soviet Constitution and say whether they would not also like to live in a country with such a Constitution."

In a still better position to estimate the significance of the new Constitution is Fritz Shimansky, a German worker and political immigrant, who is well acquainted with all the glories of capitalist "democracy" and who has found a new fatherland in the Soviet Union:

"The draft is a world historic document. The citizens of the great Soviet Union enjoy all rights for the possession of which the proletarians of the capitalist countries are so stubbornly fighting.

"The toilers of the entire world will read with great exultation the draft of the new Constitution. They will see in it a new glorious success of the U.S.S.R.

"The only right which the German worker possesses is the right to be exploited, the right to die of hunger.

"In the Soviet Union the right to labor is established, the government guarantees work to every citizen. Here there are no unemployed, there is work for all. It is a joy to work in such a country!"

It is particularly significant that the draft of the new Constitution is sincerely and wholeheartedly greeted not only by the workers, not only by the members of the collective farms, not only by the representatives of the classes formerly oppressed by capitalism, but also by recent enemies of the Soviet power who have found happiness and a new meaning in their life in socialist labor. Here is one of the many letters written by people who were formerly deprived of citizens' rights (published in *Pravda*)—the letter of a former kulak, Sergei Tomnikov, who works as foreman in the Kirov mining region (Murmansk district):

"There is not a corner in our country where the Stalinist Constitution is not discussed. With special happiness do we former kulaks discuss it. . . .

"Seven years ago I was sent out from the Varnensk region of the Ural district. My new place of residence became the construction field of the apatite combinat on the Kolsk Peninsula. When I arrived I found nothing here but mountains, forests, lakes and valleys. At first I had to experience discomforts, but as soon as the construction began life improved perceptibly. . . .

"The better we worked, the better care was taken of us. I was taught the building trade. Soon I became a foreman at the wages of 550 rubles per month. All of my children entered school. . . .

"During the six years, factories, plants, mines of the apatite combinat grew up before our very eyes in the former wilderness, and to a certain extent with our own labor. The remarkable city of Kirovsk was created and grows with each day. Here are theaters, stadiums, educational and other public institutions caring for the welfare of the people. This district has become dear to me and particularly to my children. In case of necessity I and my children will not spare our lives to justify the confidence of the Party, of the Soviet Power, of the great leader of the people, Comrade Stalin."

And here is what Professor N. Ustralev, who formerly, in the years of the New Economic Policy, was the ideologist of those strata of the bourgeoisie and bourgeois intellectuals who dreamt of the degeneration of Soviet Power into capitalism, now writes:

"Yes, this remarkable document of world significance, in every atom of which shines socialist humanism and in which there is to be felt the Stalinist epoch, must be much and thoroughly studied. But now, in the first hasty response, one wishes first of all to express one's direct vital joy at the fact that our country, our fatherland, our great people of the Soviet Union have become the genuine advance guard of mankind, the hub of the new world—the world of freedom, of happiness and creative work."

* * *

The basic thought which runs like a red thread through all the statements of Soviet citizens on the draft of the new Constitution is that in the Constitution we see reflected the rights and liberties of the toilers which have actually been already realized in the daily life of those participating in socialist construction. In their statements regarding the draft, the people tell with pride how they already, in actual practice, enjoy the right to work, rest, education, social insurance and participation in the management of the state.

It is worth while to cite in full a letter to the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* of Galina Katsova, a young Soviet girl, which enumerates the Constitutional rights already enjoyed by her:

"Stalin's draft of the Constitution is the story of my happy coming of age. Like wonderful verses I read in the tenth chapter of the Constitution on the rights and duties of the citizens of the U.S.S.R.

"When my father died I was eight years of age and my brother was still younger. What would our mother have done with us in the olden days? Our lot would have been hunger and beggars' doles. In the land of the Soviets this does not happen. We were not orphans, we did not suffer hunger and we did not go begging. Mother lives a prosperous life in the 'Engels' collective farm in the Moscow district. I have everything that is written in the tenth article of the draft Constitution:

"The right to work:

"Happy, creative work—my pride and joy. I am a mechanic in the Kaganovich car shops of the Sverdlovsk railway, I repair automatic brakes. It is good to work here—flowers, pictures and carpets adorn our light, roomy, Stakhanov department. The people's Commissar of Railways, L. M. Kaganovich, rewarded me with an engraved watch and a 'Stalinist Shock Brigadier' badge. The government rewarded me with the 'Red Banner of Labor'.

"The right to rest:

"I work seven hours a shift. Evenings and free days I spend in the Park of Culture and Rest, in theaters, at the cinema, and out of town. I have just returned from the floating rest-home 'Almaz'. It was a marvelous two-weeks' journey over the river Kama.

"The right to education:

"I have finished the factory technical school. Now I am preparing myself to enter the transport institution and I know definitely that I will be a car-construction engineer.

"This year I will be 18 years of age. I will receive the right to participate in elections. The first time this will be under the new Constitution. Together with all those of my age I will cast my first vote in the elections for our own beloved Stalin."

The draft of the new Constitution is not the "music of the future", is not a program of action, is not a distant aim—but a record of that which has already been won by the happy Soviet people. This has been expressed in simple and touching words by Shevaleva, a textile woman worker in the City of Kalinin:

"No matter what article of the Constitution I read, everything comes out just as in life, as though those who drew up the Constitution came to me at home and asked about my own life."

The thought of the woman worker Shevaleva and of millions of other workers, collective farmers and intellectuals of the U.S.S.R. was expressed even better by an old Putilov worker (Leningrad), Comrade Nazarov. Comrade Nazarov named the Stalin Constitution a "golden book which will shine throughout the world". "Word by word, article by article", he stated at a meeting in the Kirov Plant (former Putilov), "all is joy, all is happiness, which all of us have won." This is how the happiest of all people in the world, the multi-national population of the U.S.S.R., speak of the draft of the new Constitution, drawn up under the direct leadership of the beloved leader and teacher of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.—the great Joseph V. Stalin.

The Struggle for Workers' and Peasants' Alliances in Spain

THE question of strengthening and organizing throughout the country the workers' and peasants' alliances, which are the main buttress of the People's Front, is now the central point of discussion among the workers' organizations in Spain.

A serious change has taken place in the position of the Left wing of the Socialist Party, which was against creating workers' alliances, considering them to be only organs of uprising.

Proof of this is to be found in the moods of the members of the Left wing of the Socialist Party. A number of Socialist organizations endorsed the draft of the program of the party drawn up by the Madrid organization, and are demanding that still greater stress be laid upon the need for establishing *workers' and peasants' alliances*.

Comrade Carrillo, secretary of the Young Socialist League, wrote an interesting article on the question of the "alliances" in the newspaper *Claridad* (May 13) in which he emphasizes the point that for the revolution to be victorious the necessary precondition is that the need for creating organs of proletarian democracy be recognized. The Socialist Party in its present state cannot, in the opinion of Carrillo, give leadership to such a mass organization. Only by "purging and uniting the Socialist and Communist Parties will it be possible to hammer out such an organization as will be able to guide the organs of proletarian democracy".

On May 11 of this year, at a meeting of the Socialist parliamentary deputies and the so-called *Compromisarios* (delegates appointed to elect the president), Largo Caballero, the leader of the Left wing of the Socialist Party, spoke and expressed himself in favor of establishing alliances to include also the Anarchist National Confederation of Labor.

The reactionary section of the leaders of the Socialist Party continue as hitherto to declare themselves against workers' and peasants' alliances. *El Socialista* wrote on May 15:

"To create alliances at the price of rejecting all that we must preserve at all costs, namely, the leading role and the discipline of the Socialist Party, means to call the masses to pass over to other organizations with flags flying."

The Congress of the Anarchist National Confederation of Labor took place at the beginning of May in Zaragoza. At this Congress the question of unity (or, as it was called on the agenda of the Congress, the question of a "Revolutionary Alliance") was one of the chief questions.

The masses of Anarchist workers, who were convinced by their own experiences during the October struggles (in Asturias, Leon, Valencia

and other provinces) of the need for working class unity, insisted that the Congress should categorically express itself in favor of unity and alliances. This imperative demand of the masses was also expressed in many telegrams from the lower organizations. For instance, the Gijon organizations of Anarchists, together with the local branch of the C.N.T.,* sent a telegram to the Congress which reads: "Fifty thousands toilers demand the creating of a revolutionary workers' alliance". The Anarchist trade union of Cardona sent a wire to the Congress, as did the railroad workers of San Geronimo (Seville). Forty thousand members of the Seville Federation of the C.N.T. demanded "trade union unity and the establishment of workers' and peasants' alliances", etc. In their speeches at the Congress a number of delegates demanded unity. For instance, the delegate from Barcelona, Faris Oliver, in his speech stated:

"The heroic legions of Asturias showed us very glaringly that in the existing situation, faced by a well-organized state power, we cannot count on victory; we need the union of all."

Alvarez, a delegate from Gijon, told the Congress that during the journey of the Asturian delegation, Anarchist workers mandated the delegation to demand from the Congress that alliances be set up everywhere.

Under the influence of these demands, the Congress of the C.N.T. was forced to express its attitude towards this question. The resolution of the Gijon organization proposed that close connections be set up between the C.N.T. and U.G.T.** to struggle for the immediate improvement of the conditions of the working class, and for the "victory of the social revolution in Spain", and also that a revolutionary workers' alliance be established to unite both trade union confederations. This resolution also made provision for the possibility of political parties affiliating to the alliance. To obstruct the adoption of this proposal the leadership of the C.N.T. introduced a resolution of their own (which was adopted by the Congress) which proposed that the U.G.T. conclude a "pact of revolutionary alliance", on the condition that the latter refuses "political and parliamentary collaboration". In other words, the leaders of the C.N.T. proposed to the U.G.T. that in essence they should break with the People's Front and limit the alliances to the participation in them of only the C.N.T. and the U.G.T., excluding the political parties.

There is a special supplementary point to this decision proposed by the C.N.T. leaders which states that the proposals are only of a temporary character, and should serve as a basis for establishing contacts with the U.G.T. until the latter drafts its own counter-proposals. This forced reservation is proof again of the profound urge among the masses for unity, and opens up the possibility for further negotiations.

After the Congress of the C.N.T., the *Mundo Obrero*, the central organ of the Communist Party of Spain, began a friendly polemic in its pages with the Anarchists as regards the decisions adopted by them regarding unity and the "revolutionary alliance". For instance, in the issue of May 19, the paper wrote:

* Anarchist Confederation of Labor.
** Union General de Trabajadores.

"We consider that the decisions on the alliances are positive because they express the desire of the masses for unity, and are negative because they place the question of alliances very narrowly. . . . We wish to tell our comrades of the C.N.T. that that which they call a 'revolutionary alliance' is a liaison or coordinating committee, a very good thing in itself from the point of view of united action in the struggle for economic demands. . . . Workers' and peasants' alliances are organs of the united front which guarantee united action and raise it to a much higher level."

In his article entitled "About the Workers' and Peasants' Alliances", published in the *Mundo Obrero* of May 14, Comrade Diaz, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain, noted with satisfaction the statement made by Caballero about the workers' and peasants' alliances, and wrote:

"From February 16 till today we have only achieved the first victories; we must go further. . . . The reactionaries are attempting to create difficulties of all kinds. They provoke conflicts, close down factories and organize sabotage. The task of the workers' organizations in the ranks of the People's Front is with the aid of the workers' and peasants' alliances to achieve the fulfilment of the demands of the workers and peasants, and at the same time to put an end to the criminal maneuvers of reaction."

The Communist Party is the consistent supporter and organizer throughout the country of workers' and peasants' alliances, which are organs of defense of the Spanish Republic against the fascists and the counter-revolution.

The Working Class Movement in England and the Fight for Peace

A STATEMENT of considerable interest entitled "Labor and the Defense of Peace" was published in the *Daily Herald* on May 15, by the National Council of Labor.

The statement adopted shows that the Labor leaders under the pressure of the masses have made a step forward as compared with the position occupied by the *Daily Herald* following the occupation of the Rhineland by Hitler's troops. At that time, the *Daily Herald* day in and day out defended the violation of the Locarno Treaty by Hitler, and asserted that Hitler is really prepared to preserve the peace for a period of 25 years as promised by him in his memorandum.

The position of the *Daily Herald* gave rise to tremendous dissatisfaction among the workers. It is characteristic that in its comments on this new declaration of the Labor leaders, the *Daily Herald* wrote that it was being published "in response to numerous requests". The words "numerous requests" must be taken to mean the indignation expressed by the masses in Great Britain at the line conducted by the reactionary section of the Labor leaders, and particularly by the *Daily Herald* itself in connection with the remilitarization of the Rhineland.

The statement now adopted under the pressure of the workers and evidently under the influence of the successes of the People's Front in France blames Germany, Japan and Italy for the fact that the world is being menaced by a new war. Dealing in detail with the violation of the Locarno Treaty by Hitler, the statement declares that the "peace plan" proposed by Hitler which aims at separating Western Europe from Central and Eastern Europe is *absolutely unacceptable* to the British working class movement. The best means of securing peace, in the view of the statement, is the establishment of an international force to guard peace, and to apply effective measures to prevent the outbreak of war.

As regards Italian aggression in Ethiopia, the document states that "it can be done (*i.e.*, "Italy must be prevented from reaping the fruits of a lawless, cowardly and brutal act of violence") if the penalty imposed by the members of the League is maintained and extended until Mussolini is willing that the League and not Italy should make the peace".

After this, the document proceeds to deal at great length with the line to be pursued by the Labor movement in relation to Hitler Germany.

The question is put: "Does Hitler recognize the rule of law?", Hitler being quoted as having said in March, 1936, that "we interpret treaties as we think right, and we do not submit to the judgment of others". The statement draws attention to the fact that "Soviet Russia is left out" of the non-aggression pact offered by Hitler to other states, that "the other signatories of the Locarno Treaties do not agree" with Hitler "that the Franco-Soviet Treaty is inconsistent with the Locarno Treaty".

The authors of the statement raise the question as to whether the states with which Germany proposes to conclude non-aggression pacts "remain free at the same time, as members of the League, to come to the assistance of any other member of the League, if it should be attacked, even by Germany". It is then stated that an honest attempt must be made to find a basis for agreement with Hitler, though Hitler must not be allowed to dictate his conditions.

There can be no doubt that this statement represents a considerable step forward as compared with the position adopted by the *Daily Herald* following March 7, but a close examination of the document reveals a number of negative features which the Communists and other friends of peace in England criticize.

Throughout the whole document, there is no recognition whatsoever of the need for the workers to act independently in defense of peace, and of the need for mass pressure on the government and the League of Nations to compel them to take action against the aggressor.

The warmongering role of the National government in making concessions to the armament of Germany is not dealt with. We are told "that in these grave times, the British government has a special responsibility as a peacemaker because it is a great power in which the democratic faith and practice have not been subdued".

There is no direct support of the Franco-Soviet pact and of a similar pact between Great Britain and the Soviet Union, but on the contrary, fundamentally the statement opposes the idea of special pacts between governments the purpose of which is to ensure that "other states will come to their immediate assistance if they are attacked". "There is always the danger", continues the statement, "of such pacts developing into old-fashioned military alliances and, therefore, they must conform to certain strict conditions." It is not, however, stated what precisely are these strict conditions. The authors of the statement are quite well aware that the Franco-Soviet pact, like all other regional pacts proposed by the U.S.S.R., is open for all who wish to be associated with it.

The statement ends with the words "labor seeks cooperation with all in the maintenance of peace, in the defense of peace, and in the enlargement of the sphere of social justice". But how can this statement be squared with the fact that the representatives of the Labor Party at the last Plenary Session of the Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International were against the International joining the movement of the International Peace Congress?

The Communists have on many occasions declared their willingness, and still do so, to cooperate in the defense of peace. How soon, then, will the British Labor leaders put the last sentence to their statement into practice and help to build the united front with the Communists against the warmongers, both on a national and an international scale?

The moods of the masses in regard to the establishment of the united front may be judged from a memorandum on the struggle against war and fascism issued by the Executive Committee of the London Trades Council, and adopted by a meeting of about 200 delegates to the Council in the middle of May.

The memorandum declares that "the most effective method of resist-

ing war and fascism is the building up of a powerful and united trade union movement in this country (Great Britain) and throughout the world", a point developed in a speech at this Council meeting by the secretary, A. M. Wall, when he declared that "all points on which we differ must be set aside. The I.F.T.U. and all working class organizations must unite to face this problem [*i.e.*, that of fascism and the danger of war] which is the most urgent today". This sentiment will be heartily supported by all who are really determined to carry on the fight for peace and against the warmongers. The rank and file of the British working class movement heartily supports the initiative of the London Trades Council.

The Elections in Belgium Are the Reply to the Opponents of the United Front

THE elections to the Belgian Parliament and Senate took place on May 24. The results were proof of the sharp polarization of class forces in the country. The parties constituting the government coalition lost a great number of votes: the Catholics losing more than 200,000 votes, the Liberals about 50,000 and the Socialists about 110,000 votes.

The small Communist Party of Belgium achieved great success. It received 143,234 votes (as compared with 65,905 in 1932), nine parliamentary seats (as against three in 1932) and four seats in the Senate (where it formerly had not a single one).

The fascist parties were very successful, the Rexists (Belgian fascists) who put forward their candidates for the first time, receiving 271,000 votes and 21 seats, and the Flemish nationalists winning about 50,000 votes. This considerable increase in the number of votes cast for the fascists is the result of the policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie pursued by Social-Democracy. The fact that the Socialist Party of Belgium had for more than a year participated in the government of "National Unity" only went to benefit the big capitalists. Thanks to devaluation, capitalist firms considerably improved their profits.

For the working people, however, the devaluation of the franc meant increasing poverty. The small rise in wages, which hardly reached 5 to 10 per cent, could not cover the colossal rise in the prices of products of prime necessity. Comrade Releckom, in *l'Humanité* of May 23, wrote that in Belgium the price of bread increased by 40 per cent, potatoes and meat by 35 per cent to 40 per cent, and that on the average the prices of articles of prime necessity increased by 30 per cent.

Such are the results of the notorious de Man Plan.

The reactionary bourgeoisie attempted to make demagogic use of the growing dissatisfaction among the people to set up and strengthen the fascist organizations. This was facilitated by the systematic refusal of the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party to set up a united front with the Communist Party, to create an anti-fascist people's front which could draw the broad masses of the people into the struggle for bread, peace and freedom.

The proposal of the Communist Party to put forward joint candidates at the elections was rejected by the leaders of the Labor Party. Then the Communist Party independently put forward its candidates in the majority of constituencies. The Communist Party carried on its campaign with the slogan of unity. The Communist paper *Drapeau Rouge* called for "the united front of the working class, the people's anti-fascist front".

The success of the Communist Party once more showed that more and more of the Belgian people are beginning to understand the need for creating a people's anti-fascist front. In voting for the Communists the workers voted for the united front, and against the coalition policy of Social-Democracy. It is interesting that in Limburg, where joint candidates were put forward by the Communists and the Belgian Labor Party, the Socialist Party did not lose votes.

The success of the fascists is a menacing warning to the leaders of the Belgian Labor Party. The reactionary elements of Social-Democracy, it should be noted, did everything possible with a view to sabotaging the united front to show that the fascist danger does not exist in Belgium. The danger signals from Belgium still more sharply face the working people of the capitalist countries with the alternative of the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie or the policy of the people's front. Everybody knows the experience of these two policies: on the one hand, Germany and Austria, and now the results of the elections in Belgium and, on the other hand, the victories of the People's Front in France and Spain.

Two policies—two results. The people of Belgium are drawing their conclusions from the elections. They are taking the road of the united working class and anti-fascist people's front.

After the elections the *Drapeau Rouge*, central organ of the Communist Party of Belgium, printed interviews with a number of leaders of the Belgian Socialist Party.

Louis Pierard, Socialist Deputy of Borinage, and one of the leaders of the Socialist Party, made the following declaration:

"I am a hearty supporter of the people's front. It is the only means of barring the way to fascist demagogy. And the elections which have just taken place confirm my view. The elections have this good side about them, that they will open the eyes of many opponents of united action."

Brunfaud, a Socialist Deputy from Brussels, declared:

"On every occasion when at open-air or trade union or unemployed meetings a speaker referred even in passing to the people's front or the working class unity, he was immediately heartily applauded by the audience. . . . Things would liven up . . . and hopes begin to rise."

And Brunfaud ended with the words:

"Just as in France and Spain, so we in fact of our common enemy must go through united action to working class unity."

Froideloeur, editor of *Travail*, declared:

"As to unification. Formerly I was not in agreement with the people's front and somewhat distrusted the tactics of the Communists. Now, however, I understand and fully endorse these tactics."

The forces and influence of the supporters of the united front are developing rapidly among the workers and in the ranks of the Socialist Party.

The Intensification of the Struggle for the United Front in Czechoslovakia

IN CONNECTION with the establishment of smaller territorial units in Czechoslovakia, elections were held on May 12 to the appropriate local authorities in six new districts formed. These were the first big elections since the parliamentary elections were held last year and, on the basis of these, certain fundamental conclusions can be drawn as to the development of the political sentiments of the population. The Communist Party met with success in all districts without exception, receiving a total of 20,027 votes as against 17,870 received at last year's municipal elections, an increase of 2,157 votes or 12 per cent. The Socialist Parties, participating in the government, suffered losses. The Czechoslovakian Socialists (Benes' party) lost 1,686 votes, the Czechoslovakian Social-Democrats remained at their former level, losing 48 votes; the Czechoslovakian fascists did not put any candidate forward at all—last year they received 845 votes in these districts. The Henlein party (Hitler's agent) in the German Sudet districts retained their position and even obtained 212 new votes.

The same day, works' committee elections were held at one of the largest Kladno plants, belonging to the Metal Industrial Company of Prague. (When workers are engaged in this plant a careful watch is kept that no members of the Red trade unions are accepted.) The reformists rejected the proposal of the Red trade union to form a united front and to put forward joint candidates at the elections. The Social-Democrats and the Czechoslovakian Socialists put forward a joint list of candidates, and called it a united front. The results of the elections were as follows:

	1934			1936		
	Votes	Seats	% of Total	Votes	Seats	% of Total
Red trade union....	1,185	8	54.8	1,913	10	58.3
Social-Democrats and Czechoslovakian						
Socialists	571	4	31	833	4	25
Fascists	308	2	14.2	548	4	16.7

Elections to the works' committee at a number of other enterprises produced similar results.

For the bourgeois parties and for the reactionary circles among the Social-Democrats, this was an exceedingly unpleasant surprise, since they firmly counted upon the defeat of the Communists; they believed that they would be able to "utilize" Comrade Gottwald's speech against the opportunist distortions of the tactics of the united front in Czechoslovakia, and the entire course of the discussions inside the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in order to "prove" that the Communist Party occupies a hostile position with regard to the defense of the republic and the independence of the Czechoslovakian nation.

The elections clearly showed that these calculations failed. They

showed how far the authority of the Communist Party has grown, and to what extent it has succeeded in refuting the slander circulated by the reformists following the article by Comrade Gottwald. The elections were marked by the victory of the adherents of the united front. Such results of the elections are a guarantee that the works' committee in Czechoslovakia will become fighting organs of the united front.

Immediately following the elections exceedingly animated discussions began in connection with the victory of the People's Front in France and in connection with a new article by Comrade Gottwald, where he not only proved the need for following the road taken by the French and Spanish workers, and of establishing a united workers' and people's anti-fascist front in Czechoslovakia, but also showed the possibility of creating a Left government in Czechoslovakia. The reactionary Social-Democratic leaders who at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International in Brussels were among those who opposed unity of action on an international scale, and openly threatened to split their own International, attacked the united front. But afterwards they were forced in a number of articles to "offer arguments" to the questions advanced by Comrade Gottwald. The press of the Agrarian Party, the strongest government party, in a number of articles urged the Social-Democrats under no circumstances to submit to the allurements of the Communists. The entire press of Czechoslovakia was forced to occupy itself with the questions raised by Comrade Gottwald in his article.

The *Lidove Noviny* (a newspaper close to the Czechoslovakian Socialists) wrote on May 20, 1936, in connection with Comrade Gottwald's proposals and results of the district elections:

"We leave it to the Communists themselves to appraise their prospects at the new elections (which will follow in case of the possible downfall of the governmental coalition). It is certain that they see the elections in an exceedingly rosy light. We have no doubt that they have grounds for such hopes. In certain places the last district elections showed an increased number of votes in favor of the Communists. But however great the success of the Communists at the elections, it will not be sufficient to assure the Socialists and Communists a solid majority."

In spite of the reactionary bourgeoisie, and despite the resistance of the Right circles among the Social-Democrats, the movement for the united workers' front is developing in Czechoslovakia, as is the movement for the creation of a people's anti-fascist front for the defense of the republic against enemies without and within.

In Czechoslovakia, more than anywhere else, is it necessary and possible to bring about trade union unity. The last big strikes (of the forest workers, agricultural workers in Slovakia, etc.), in which tens of thousands of workers took part, proceeded under the banner of working class unity. These strikes ended with a full victory of the workers.

Czechoslovakia is threatened with the direct menace of a fascist attack. All the anti-fascists will join forces in a powerful people's front for the defense of freedom and the independence of the Czechoslovakian republic, against the aggression of Hitler and his fascist agents within the country.

The Struggle for Democratic Demands in the Factories of Vienna

ON MAY 7, 1936, at the moment when the differences in the camp of governing fascism were becoming acute, just on the eve of the open government crisis, a delegation of workers from Viennese enterprises came to Schuschnigg. On behalf of the workers they handed him the demands which were adopted on April 30 at the Vienna conference of the factory representatives. These demands were formulated by the Austrian working class as an independent force, opposing the fascist cliques which were torn by inner conflicts.

But what did the workers demand? First of all, the full and unlimited right for the free trade unions, their actual independence, and self-government by the workers in all the social organizations. Further, the workers demanded a full and unlimited amnesty not only in the political but in the economic field as well; in other words, the liberation not only of the revolutionaries now in prisons and concentration camps, but also the return of all the class conscious workers dismissed from the enterprises. Not satisfied with presentation of their immediate demands, the workers declared the necessity of democratic rights for the entire people.

"What we demand", states the memorandum, "is the re-establishment of the freedom of voting, speech, and press, as well as self-determination and self-government."

The workers justified these demands not only by their material needs, for the satisfaction of which the freedom of the trade unions is indispensable, but also by the interests of the Austrian people as a whole, whose independence is being constantly threatened by Hitler fascism, the "neighboring state which is ready for an attack". Disclosing the various forms of exploitation and oppression of the workers in present-day Austria, the memorandum at the same time states that the workers of the large Viennese enterprises are striving to defend the interests of the entire working class and of the entire Austrian people, for whose freedom and independence they stand.

How did this document come into being? The workers of the numerous Viennese enterprises demanded their wages for May 1, which was officially declared a holiday. The coordinated "united trade union" conducted "negotiations" with the government and the owners, on the basis of which the workers were permitted to make up this day by working overtime in the course of the next two weeks. Since in any case the workers have to work overtime at the Viennese metal factories, for which, however, an addition to the normal hourly wages must be paid, the entire "success" of the fascist trade union bureaucracy resulted in the fact that the workers were not only deprived of the wages for May Day but also of the additional pay for overtime work during the first two weeks of May.

When this became known, the workers of the numerous Viennese metal factories, and certain enterprises of the food industry (in all 70 enterprises), organized a protest strike lasting several hours. These included such leading enterprises as Fiat, Zaurer, Siemens-Halske, Floridsdorf Locomotive Plant and others. The workers who gathered at the plants sent their representatives to the Chamber of Labor, where over 100 representatives gathered. The factory representatives demanded that the coordinated "united trade union" organize a conference, which was held under the chairmanship of one of the members of a Floridsdorf factory committee. In his opening speech the chairman referred to the most acute problems facing the working class, namely, the demands of the workers of the automobile industry, high cost of living, wage cuts, non-renewal and numerous breakings of the wage agreements, mass removal of the unemployed from relief, the scandal in the "Phoenix Insurance Society" and the limitation of the rights of insurance employees undertaken by the government in this connection, etc.

The delegation which was elected by the meeting, and which presented Schuschnigg with the demands of the workers, went to the Chancellor accompanied by the leaders of the coordinated "trade union", who wanted to use Schuschnigg's reception for their own purposes. They demanded the introduction of a law on arbitration and corporative chambers. But they could not thereby lessen the great importance of the political actions of the Viennese workers. Schuschnigg felt this himself, and ordered the confiscation of the Czechoslovakian semi-official newspaper, the *Prager Presse*, where the contents of the memorandum were published. In all the Austrian enterprises, the workers are now discussing the concrete steps which must be taken for the realization of their demands.

The Congress of the Socialist Party of Switzerland

THE question of the defense of the country and the attitude towards war credits is still the most disputable problem of the Swiss labor movement, and is still the most dangerous rock in the way of the Right Social-Democratic leaders.

While, at the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Switzerland, the delegates adopted a unanimous decision on this question, this same question has caused a deep crisis in the Swiss Socialist Party.

The majority of the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party has, for the first time since the 1917 discussion, again introduced a proposal unconditionally to approve extraordinary war credits, to the sum of 235,000,000 Swiss francs. The Right leaders were so certain of the success of their resolution that they declared the congress "a congress of war credits".

The minority of the Central Committee (Nichol, Graberg, Sneider, Negeli) voted for the rejection of this proposal and introduced an explanatory resolution, declaring their readiness to defend the "democratic form of state, the rights and freedom of the people" by intensifying the struggle against reaction and fascist tendencies in Switzerland itself, and also by participating in the collective security for peace.

Following a heated discussion, the congress of the Socialist Party decided by a vote of 263 against 255 to reject the war credits. The Zurich Right Social-Democratic newspaper *Volksrecht* wrote the following about the composition of this majority: "Workers from the factories constituted the largest group, so that the decision did not come from the 'bureaucrats' but actually from below, from the ranks of the masses". This majority arose due to the unity of the various political currents. This majority was made up of the delegates of the French-speaking part of Switzerland who for the most part supported an abstract anti-militarist point of view, who were joined by the pacifists, and then—by the majority of the delegates from the German-speaking part of Switzerland, the ones closest to the Communist point of view.

For the first time in sixteen years the majority of the Central Committee of the Swiss Social-Democrats suffered such a defeat at the congress. This decision upset Grimm, Reinhart and other prominent members of the Central Committee to such an extent that they immediately handed in their resignations. This, of course, was at the same time a means of pressure with a view to securing concessions for the parliamentary fraction.

This maneuver was successful: the Social-Democratic members of the Federal Parliament were permitted to abstain from voting. At the same time the congress asked the old leadership to retain their post for the time being.

This was a weakness on the part of the Left wing and the Rights, encouraged by this, again began an attack the following day. With the exception of the three newspapers directed by Nichol, Sneider and Graberg, eighteen party newspapers opened a sharp fire against the resolution, declaring that the majority formed was an accidental one and that the decisions therefore are not obligatory on the cantonal party organizations, despite the fact that where the congress resolution was democratically discussed by the membership the majority rejected the war credits.

The leadership of the party organization of the Berne Canton was the first to permit its members, in the National Council, to vote for the credits. The chairman of the Party, Reinhart, published an article in the press with an appeal to vote in favor of the credits and against the decision of the congress. Thus, 24 hours after the congress, the following comedy took place: 21 members (including Grimm and Reinhart) out of the 50 members of the Social-Democratic fraction of the National Council, voted in favor of the credits, eight against, twelve abstained from voting, while the remainder left the meeting.

Sneider wrote as follows:

“Swiss Social-Democracy received a heavy blow. And this happened not in Zurich, where the congress was held, but in Berne in the offices of the National Council, since here, 21 Social-Democrats rebelled and showed disrespect for the decisions of the congress. Now, they can in no way reproach the National Council if it ignores referendums, laws and constitutions. They placed themselves above the supreme party organ and thereby dealt a painful blow at democracy—a blow which can hardly be compensated. Who shall prohibit the other cantonal party organizations from referring to the example set by Berne? But this would mean the end of the Swiss party.”

Sneider demands the convening of the Party Council in order to “introduce order”. The lower party organizations are adopting resolutions of protest against the Right wing of the Central Committee. The Social-Democratic trade union leaders suddenly declare that they, in the first place, are not responsible to the party, but to the trade union federation, which is for the “defense of the fatherland”. The struggle of the Rights has introduced a new source of decomposition into the ranks of the proletariat. At present the Rights occupy almost all the key positions in the party, and are doing everything possible in order to forcibly change the course and create sentiments within the membership against the adopted decisions.

Much attention was paid at the congress to the discussions on the united front and the people's front. Grimm undertook the attack and stated that a united front with the Communist Party is not suited for Switzerland and that collaboration with the Left-bourgeois forces is necessary. Nevertheless, the Central Committee was forced to consider the pressure exerted by the masses and to introduce a resolution, which, although introducing a stricter regime into the party, mentions that the Social-Democrats are ready in concrete cases and from time to time to

collaborate with other parties, and therefore also with the Communist Party.

By this, the decision of the Basle party congress of 1933 which completely rejected the united front has been formally thrown overboard and this has partly cleared the road for the united front. The decisions of the Communist and Socialist Parties in Switzerland, which are approaching each other in such vitally important questions as the struggle for work and bread, the defense of democracy and the independence of the country, create a very promising base for joining all forces of the Swiss working class and of the entire people. Much will depend upon the extent to which the Lefts are determined to put into practice the decisions of the party congress in their every-day work. As for the Communists, they will fight for the realization of these decisions, for the creation of a united workers' front and an anti-fascist peoples' front in Switzerland.

How French Communists Worked During the Election Campaign

A CHARACTERISTIC feature of the recent election campaign conducted by the French Communist Party was that the propaganda of the Party was carried out on a wide scale. For the first time it was carried on over the entire country, and reached even the farthest and most forgotten corners of France. In the past, the influence of the Communist Party did not penetrate the villages at a distance from the railways, and the inhabitants of these villages only learned of Communism from the slander and lies against the C.P. contained in the reactionary press.

This time things were quite different. The leaders of the Party spoke over the radio several times. The statements of the Communists were heard everywhere. The Central Committee of the Communist Party issued a great amount of agitational material, adapted to various strata of the population. Thanks to the growth of its organization and the great sympathy felt for it, the Party was able to spread this material far and wide. The Communist Party put forward candidates in all constituencies. The election campaign was carried out in the localities by all the Party members, and mainly by the persistent work of tens of thousands of active workers. For a period of one and a half to two months all the Party members were engaged in continuous activity, and they did great work. There were numerous examples of unwavering loyalty, wonderful initiative, and often even of heroism.

We will limit ourselves to a few examples:

The gardener Comrade Blachon, an old active Party worker, was put forward as a candidate in Montelimar-Nyons, in the department of Drome. He had to carry out the campaign in a district where the Party was exceptionally weak. On January 1, 1936, it had only 45 members. Comrade Blachon had to visit 148 villages, a great many of which were in the mountains at an altitude of 1,200 to 1,300 meters. Almost alone, without money, with only accidental means of transport, very often on foot, Blachon began in March to make his way from one end to the other of this constituency. He was everywhere, organizing meetings even in forgotten hamlets with only 25 or even 15 inhabitants, and where no active Party worker has ever been. A bourgeois newspaper published in Montelimar, which followed how our comrade, alone, with insufficient funds, threw himself into the battle, wrote ironically: "We should admire such bravery."

This bravery was combined with an ability to organize. Comrade Blachon set himself the task of recruiting 500 new members for the Party in his constituency before the end of the campaign. And while agitating for Communism, he at the same time recruited new members, and established a Party organization. In six days he traveled through two

mountain regions, organized 50 meetings, recruited 300 new members to the Party, formed cells and sold Party pamphlets. Everyone was surprised at the results of his work. "The district which has slept up till now is surprised", wrote Blachon. "The comrades of the district leadership cannot send Party membership cards fast enough."

In Montelimar, the largest city in this constituency, and where there are few industries, there was no Party organization! But twenty workers joined the Party after the first meeting organized by Blachon. In the canton of Remuzat Comrade Blachon recruited 70 members and organized six cells in one week. In the canton of Bois he recruited 40 members and formed five cells in two days. And even in the most out-of-the-way localities he was able to awaken the sympathy of the peasants and to rouse a warm desire among them to become acquainted with the decisions of the Communist Party. "Will there be war?" "What do you propose to do to overcome the agrarian crisis?"—such were the questions put by the peasants to the representative of the Communist Party. And in clear and simple peasant language Blachon stated the position of the Party in face of the threats of onslaught by the fascists, and concretely stated the program of the Party which is directed towards saving French agriculture. In a few villages the peasants met him with red banners, and sang the Internationale. The peasants, who were members of the Socialist Party, were very much interested in the meetings organized by him, and in a number of localities some of them asked to be accepted as members of the Communist Party.

On April 21 Comrade Cachin came to Montelimar and spoke at a meeting. On this day 4,000 people came to the meeting, and among them were very many peasants who came from far-off mountain villages.

The result of the work done by Comrade Blachon was the following: Instead of the 1,008 votes received by the Communist Party in 1932 it received 5,485. The Socialist candidate received 7,244 votes (the Radicals withdrawing their candidate). In the second round, Comrade Blachon, according to a decision made by the Communist Party together with the Socialist Party, withdrew his candidature in favor of the Socialist candidate, who was elected, while the reactionary candidate was defeated. But Comrade Blachon not only increased the number of votes cast for the Communist Party by more than 400 per cent. He also formed a Party organization in that constituency. Five hundred new members joined the Party, and so he fulfilled the task he had set himself at the beginning of the electoral campaign. The district Party Committee is setting itself the task of covering and consolidating the newly established organizations, and training the newly recruited Party members.



Here is another example. Comrade Le Quemets was put forward as a parliamentary candidate by the Communist Party in the first electoral district of Vannes in the department of Morbihant, one of the most backward sections of Brittany. His opponents were the Abbot Desgranges, the former deputy, the representative of the high clergy which kept the masses in ignorance, and Count Montaign, a big land-

owner and relation to Schneider—a member of one of the 200 capitalist families who rule France. It was against such powerful opponents that Comrade Le Quements had to carry on the struggle. There was no Party organization to carry on the campaign, there was no money to cover the cost of traveling through the constituency. From the very beginning Le Quements came up against difficulties. As everywhere else, it was necessary to get the names and addresses of the 18,000 electors in the district, in order to send them the program of the Party by post. Ordinarily, when you have funds, it is possible to ask the officials of the Prefecture to give you a list of the voters. Or if a Party organization exists, you can rally all comrades for this work. But Le Quements had neither. He had to do everything by himself. He was able to achieve something, thanks to his energy and initiative, by using the aid of sympathizers and even friends who have no sympathy to the Communist Party. He got his wife, his daughter, his parents, his brother, women and children to help.

Despite the atmosphere of hostility and the many difficulties which faced Comrade Le Quements, all the electors received the main materials published by the Party in connection with the elections, thanks to the energy and self-sacrifice he displayed.

He had no funds for traveling purposes, a sore foot made it difficult for him to walk. Nevertheless he covered five, seven and even nine kilometers a day in order to organize meetings. He would return home late at night, but the next morning would go to work, after finishing which he would once more begin organizing meetings.

Quietly and without complaint, Comrade Le Quements was able to get many sympathizers for the Party and increase the number of votes cast for it from the 148 cast in 1932, to 476.



Comrade Jardon, a mayor of a village community, an old Party worker, was put forward as candidate in the second electoral district of Montlucon, in the department of Allier. His opponent was the former Socialist deputy Max Dormoy, irreconcilable opponent of united action. The work of Comrade Jardon may serve as an example of how to carry on the struggle for the demands of the peasantry.

In February he distributed a very simple questionnaire which contained in particular the following questions: What funds did your community receive to provide aid to peasants in need? What money did you receive for easing the conditions of the unemployed and those in need? What part did the former deputy play in securing this aid? What are the needs of your community? etc. About 60 mayors answered this questionnaire. Then Comrade Jardon called a conference at which several dozen mayors and delegates of the People's Front were present. Then Comrade Jardon occupied himself with the question of all, even the smallest needs of the peasants, talked to peasants and as a Communist candidate listened to the stories of their conditions. In his talks with the peasants, he made his starting point the concrete questions put, and tried in reply to ex-

plain the part of the program of the Communist Party which refers to the agrarian question.

The work done by Comrade Jardon was so successful that Dormoy considered it necessary to attack him in his newspaper. But Comrade Jardon did not let himself be provoked by these attacks. As a real honest supporter of the united front he quietly asked Dormoy whether it would not be better to carry on a joint struggle to lighten the poverty of the peasants, who can win everything from unity among the people, and who should only be afraid of division of their forces.

As in 1932, Dormoy was not opposed by any reactionary or Radical candidates, and received 8,212 votes—losing nearly 3,000 votes. Jardon received 7,664 votes, instead of the 4,735 votes cast for the Communist Party in 1932.

* * *

This is how our comrades worked in the outlying districts. This heroism, self-sacrifice and stubbornness displayed by the Communists ensured the splendid victory of the Communist Party and the popular anti-fascist front during the elections.

Anti-Fascist Leaflets During the Last “Elections” in Germany

HITLER decided demagogically to crown the provocative act of German fascism—the remilitarization of the Rhineland zone—with a “plebiscite” in favor of his “peace policy” during the last “elections” in Germany. Despite all the difficulties of illegal work, many organizations of the Communist Party of Germany showed energetic initiative in the struggle against this demagogic maneuver. Here are a few characteristic excerpts from leaflets and other materials issued by the Communists on this question, some of them independently and some of them together with Social-Democrats and other anti-fascists.

A leaflet issued in Munich and appealing to all the Bavarian followers of the anti-fascist people’s front emphasizes the real idea of the Hitler “plebiscite”:

“Anyone who votes for Hitler votes for war. People of Germany, you do not want war. No, and once again no! You do not desire your sons to die under a barrage of fire or become cripples in order to satisfy the unquenchable thirst for profits of the magnates of war industry. You do not wish your defenseless women and children to be burned and crippled by murderous poisonous gases in order that the shares of the chemical industry should rise. You cannot desire that, for a long time, perhaps, in Germany, the lower strata of the population do not have any other food besides jam, cheese and horsemeat, and that rationed. You cannot want your children daily to be given only an eighth of a liter of skimmed milk. You cannot desire that Germany be without everything except hunger, poverty and tears. People of Germany, you do not desire war. But Hitler is war. Therefore answer on March 29 with a decisive ‘No!’ ”

In Berlin a leaflet was issued, not as ordinarily, on a mimeograph, but printed: “To all whimperers and critics in Berlin.” In this leaflet they give an estimate of the war policy of Hitler, which is hidden by a demagogic smokescreen, and then they place the main question which Hitler tries to evade in his demagogy. “For anti-fascist Berlin,” the appeal says, “The entire policy of the fascist hangmen is being put to the vote.” Following a detailed explanation of this policy, as a policy of robbing all strata of toilers, a policy of enriching the landlords and capitalists, the conclusion is drawn that the only answer can be a negative one.

“What do the people say about March 7?” is the question placed in the headline of another leaflet. Printed on one side of the leaflet are enthusiastic statements by the exploiters who are becoming richer, thanks to the Hitler dictatorship, and on the other side characteristic statements by toilers such as a fitter employed on the subway, an office employee, a

clerk in a milk store of the Balle Company, a worker on road construction, and a small handicraftsman. A Storm Trooper from Neukoeln writes here about the experience which he had during the pre-election agitation for the "plebiscite" which he carried on in civilian clothing:

"Now I will quit this whole thing. I will not participate any more because otherwise I would have to report to the secret police almost every kinsman as a traitor of the people and a whimperer. There are no traces of enthusiasm in connection with the elections. Everyone is dissatisfied with the low wages, the many deductions from the pay and the increasing prices."

In the second half of March a leaflet was issued jointly by the Communists and Social-Democrats of Berlin and was distributed in great numbers. Hitler's policy of preparations for war and his nationalist demagogy are characterized in the leaflet with the following words:

"Hitler speaks of equal rights, but in actual fact he has in view the military hegemony of fascist Germany in Europe. But Germany will not be liberated by cannons."

From this flow the political conclusions for a joint struggle:

"The examples of other countries, France and Spain, showed us, Social-Democrats, Communists and trade union workers, that only by collaboration and joint struggle against the Hitler regime can we be successful. . . . Unity is becoming stronger and will bring us success, complete mutual trust in our collaboration in the factories, in the departments, in the offices and in the streets. Therefore, the Social-Democrats, Communists and members of the free trade unions of Berlin call upon you to demonstrate your unity at the elections of March 29 and answer with a unanimous 'No' to the question of Hitler. It is true that our 'No' may be corrected by Goebbels, but nevertheless it will sound as a pledge of joint struggle in which we will be victorious."

Goebbels really did use all possible means to forge the results of the elections and even changed to "Yes" those ballots upon which were written words of burning hatred of the fascist hangmen, and he also counted the empty ballots in favor of the fascists. But the forgery was so crude that wide strata of the toilers could see through it. The *Mouthpiece of Siemens*, the illegal organ of the workers of the largest factory in Berlin, wrote about this in its April issue:

"On Monday, after the great 'electoral victory' in our cable factory . . . the National-Socialist functionaries quietly came into the hall with surprised faces. All the workers met the results of the elections with a frozen silence. I have heard that in other factories the same sentiment existed.

"The results of a few electoral districts have already become known. For instance, in one part of the eastern district of Berlin, 40 per cent of the votes were against and in other places as many as 50 per cent."

We must especially note the anti-fascist pre-election campaign in Hamburg. The agitation was carried on by the most varied means. Leaflets were posted, slogans were written in telephone booths, in the factories upon the walls of lavatories, and in many other places. One Sunday, out of the windows of the Karstadt department store in Barmbeck leaflets fell into the streets.

The most imposing demonstration of the will to struggle, of both the Communist and Social-Democratic anti-fascist workers of Hamburg, was the protest of the workers of the firm of Blohm and Voss, the largest Hamburg wharf, against being forced to listen to the radio broadcast of Hitler's speech on March 25.

The workers were provoked a few days before this by being let off work two hours earlier in order to hear the broadcast of another speech of Hitler and then being forced to make up the two hours on the following day, which, of course, were not paid for at the overtime rate. On March 25, the day on which the wages were to be handed out, when work ended, both the gates of the factory and the windows of the cashier's office were closed. This was done in order to force the workers to listen to the broadcast. When Hitler's Hamburg deputy—Kaufmann—appeared at the wharf in order to make a speech before the broadcast of Hitler's speech, thousands of workers who were already in the yards met Kaufmann with ironical remarks. During his speech masses of workers left the hall and when the transmission of the speech of Hitler began, out of ten thousand workers, five thousand were out in the yards. The workers formed in line and cried: "We do not want to hear this blabber any more." "We already know it by heart." "We want to go home." "We are kept locked up like prisoners." Then they collectively cried out: "We want our pay," and they moved towards the closed cashier's office. Masses of workers left the hall while those who remained behind attempted to spoil the broadcast of the speech of Hitler with cries of "Hunger, hunger, hunger", etc.

The political demonstration of the workers of the Blohm and Voss dock, as an expression of their anti-fascist moods, made a great impression upon Hamburg workers among whom the information quickly spread about the events in the largest establishment in the city. "The results of the elections" which were especially shamelessly forged by the fascists in Hamburg were accepted by the workers as a mockery of themselves. Even National-Socialists could be heard to say: "There was no reason to go so far."

The Communist and Social-Democratic workers jointly drew up and distributed an appeal to the workers of the Hamburg docks (the first printed leaflet in a long time), in which they spoke about the demonstration of the workers of the Blohm and Voss docks, about the indignation of the Hamburg workers at the forgery of the results of the elections, which showed that 99 per cent of the votes were cast for Hitler, and about the growing assurance of the workers in the victory by setting up the united front. Further the leaflet spoke of the necessity of joint struggle on all the docks, for the enemy not to know each one of his opponents individually and that therefore the workers must collectively place before the administration and the functionaries of the

fascist trade unions their demands: "For a general wage increase!" "Against retracting the wage-agreement of May 1!" "For strict observation of the wage-agreement!" "Against increasing the intensity of labor, and for restoring the former wages for overtime work!"

"Work to be given to the unemployed by abolishing overtime!"

"For large and clean washrooms, restaurants, and toilets!"

"Protest against the delay of a year in elections to the factory committees! Demand immediate re-elections to the factory committees, and the nomination of candidates by the workers!"

"Demand the right of self-government in the trade unions and the election of functionaries from among the members of the trade unions!"

In this way the struggle against the Hitler election fraud is coordinated with the struggle for the economic interests of the workers, and the struggle for democratic rights.

The Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Switzerland

ONE hundred and eighty-six delegates from all parts of the country arrived at the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Switzerland (May 30 to June 1). Of the delegates 171 were members of the trade unions (54 metal workers), 34 were members of the Party since its foundation, and 53 (the majority of whom came over to the Communist Party from the ranks of Social-Democracy) only joined in 1935 or 1936. Many guests were present at the Congress (more than 1,000 guest tickets were distributed); and among them were many Social-Democratic workers. A delegation from the Social-Democratic organization in Geneva was also present.

The central point of the Congress, which began with the reports of Comrades Humbert-Droz and Bodenmann, was the question of defense of the democratic rights of the people and the defense of the independence and democracy of Switzerland against the fascist aggressors. The resolution of the Congress emphasizes that a number of important prerequisites which are necessary for this defense are ignored by the present government, and because of this the Congress decided to reject credits to the sum of 235,000,000 francs which are demanded by the government for defense.

The Congress called on the masses to struggle against the war danger and against the present government, the policy of which assists the growth of this danger, for a decisive turn in the foreign policy of Switzerland in the direction of the defense of peace, and for unconditional recognition of the Soviet Union. The further demands of the Congress in this connection were the following: the prohibition and disbanding of all fascist organizations in Switzerland and the immediate deportation of all fascist agents; the cleansing of the army of fascist officers who are tied up with the foulest enemies of Swiss democracy; effective anti-air craft defenses and the creation of the means which are necessary for the defense of the country by a special tax on the rich; the nationalization of the war industries; complete restoration of constitutional rights and liberties, and a social policy which answers the interests of the toiling masses.

The Congress of the Communist Party decided to address a letter to the Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland (which took place on June 6-7 in Zurich). In this letter the Communist Party emphasized, in connection with the questions advanced by Social-Democracy this year, its preparedness to fulfil earnestly all obligations which it takes upon itself, and to cease all attacks upon members and organizations of the Social-Democratic Party who loyally support the united front.

The united front is not a maneuver of the Communist Party of

Switzerland directed against Social-Democracy, but a powerful and effective means of mobilizing the masses against war, fascism and the capitalist offensive. The Communist Party hoped that the practical operation of the united front would make it possible to create a united party of the Swiss working class. Concretely the Congress proposed that joint action be organized on the basis of demands advanced by both parties on the question of war credits; to join forces in the struggle against the extraordinary powers which the government wishes to be given, and to organize joint demonstrations on August First. The Congress elected a delegation of six comrades to hand to the Social-Democratic Congress the proposals of the Communist Party on united action. In a special resolution the Congress expressed in the name of the Communist Party its readiness to fight with all its forces at the coming canton elections in Geneva for the re-election of the Socialist majority now governing the canton and proposes that the Socialist Party work out a joint program of action. The unanimous election of the proposed list of members of the new Central Committee was a testimony to the political unanimity achieved by the Communist Party of Switzerland in the course of the last discussions. The Congress sent greetings to Comrade Stalin and to Comrade Dimitroff.

The most important of the bourgeois parties were forced to pay attention to the Congress. The representatives of the bourgeoisie were, of course, especially worried by the proletarian united front. For instance, the *Basil National Zeitung* on June 3 explained in a special article why it considers it necessary to brand the position of the Congress as heresy and "treachery to the state";

"The entire tactic of the Communists at the present time leads to one thing, namely, to the desire to give moral support to the Social-Democratic Lefts, who, for the same reasons as the Communists, reject the defense of the country.

"It is even more necessary that the Social-Democratic Congress next Sunday adopt an absolutely clearly defined position as it was, for instance, defined not long ago by the government adviser Nobs."

Nevertheless, the Social-Democratic Congress, at its session on June 7, accepted, by a vote of 263 against 255, a decision to reject war credits for the government. This decision was accepted despite the fact that the majority of the C.C. of the Social-Democratic Party demanded that credits be ratified. Such a result was, of course, helped by the struggle to create the united front in Switzerland.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Norway

THE Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Norway took place on April 9-12. One hundred and twenty-five delegates participated in the Congress. Among the guests were representatives of the British and Swedish Communist Parties. The central problem at the Congress was the establishment of organizational unity between the Communist Party of Norway and the Norwegian Labor Party. This question was reviewed in detail by Comrade Levlien in his report on the political situation and the tasks of the working class. The report, the discussion on the report and the resolution, unanimously adopted by the Congress, show that the Party as a whole is consistently following the line of political unity for the Norwegian working class. More than 60 delegates took part in the discussion.

The Congress resolution pointed out that the main task facing the C.P. of Norway in relation to the Norwegian Labor Party is to unite with all workers and officials having Left inclinations inside the N.L.P., with a view to transforming it into a revolutionary party. The existing bloc trade union membership of the N.L.P. implies that some Communists are already in the N.L.P. The Party recommended the trade unions which are not affiliated to the N.L.P. to do so. The Congress stressed the point that the precondition for the transformation of the N.L.P. into a revolutionary party is the rallying of all Left workers belonging to the trade unions, on the basis of a single and consistent class policy. The proposal of a comrade to bring about the unreserved fusion of the C.P. with the N.L.P. was unanimously rejected by the Congress.

The Presidium of the Congress addressed a letter, signed by well-known trade unionists, to the leadership and Congress of the Norwegian Labor Party, proposing to begin negotiations on the organizational merger of both parties.

Another important decision of the Congress concerned the position of the Communist Party of Norway on the elections to the Storting (parliament). The report of Comrade X. V. Christianson dealt with this question. Even before the Congress, the C.C. of the Communist Party proposed to the Norwegian Labor Party to come out with a joint list of candidates in a few districts and it expressed its readiness to support the candidates of the Norwegian Labor Party in the remaining districts. *The Congress unanimously approved this extremely important proposal and made a corresponding appeal to the Norwegian Labor Party in the interest of winning a Labor majority at the coming elections.*

Comrade Otjar Lee reported on organizational tasks, on recruiting to the Party, and on the distribution of the press. He dealt at length with the negative sides of the policy on cadres pursued by the Party and on the next tasks facing it in this field. The Congress worked out

new directives on the work of the Party in the villages and among the unemployed.

It was with great enthusiasm that the Congress sent greetings to Comrade Stalin and to Comrade Dimitroff.

The unanimously elected C.C. consists of 24 members and seven candidates; the Political Bureau consists of eight members and two candidates. Egede-Nissen was elected Chairman of the Party and Emile Levlien General Secretary.

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of Sweden

THE Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of Sweden took place on April 10-13, 1936. At the same time, the Congress of the Socialist Party, headed by Chilboom, was in session. The Sixteenth Congress of Swedish Social-Democracy took place before these congresses.

The Congress of the Communist Party of Sweden, in contrast to the Social-Democratic Congress under the influence of the Right leaders, and as distinct from the Congress of the Socialist Party of Chilboom, firmly and unanimously expressed its will to establish united action of the Swedish working class.

Comrade Friethoff Lagar reported on the work of the Party for the past period. The center of attention of the Congress was the main report of Comrade Sven Linderote on the political situation and the struggles of the working class. This report called forth lively discussion. The report showed the ways and methods whereby the Party must improve and extend its work of creating the united front on various fields. The objective possibilities of establishing the united front are favorable. In order to achieve success, it is necessary, as Comrade Linderote showed in his concluding speech, on the basis of concrete examples, to overcome the remnants of sectarianism, which were also expressed in some of the speeches at the Congress.

A thorough and correct analysis was given at the Congress on the trade union question. Trade union work in Sweden, with its powerful trade union organization, has a more cardinal significance than in many other countries for setting up the united front. For the first time the Congress of the Swedish Communist Party heard and discussed in detail special reports on such questions as the conditions of the farmers and workers in the villages, the question of the youth and problems of Party cadres. The Congress also made an analysis of the growing forces of reaction in Sweden, and explained how the policy of the Right Social-Democratic leaders really helped strengthen this reaction.

The Party quite definitely expressed its attitude to the sharp attacks of the reactionaries on the Social-Democratic government which has since then resigned. The Party reacted rapidly and correctly to the attacks, and called forth a powerful movement in the trade unions for the establishment of a bloc of workers' parties at the coming Parliamentary elections.

The C.P. of Sweden has already succeeded in establishing a united front with the Socialist Party at the coming elections. Whereas the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders have rejected the repeated proposals made by the C.P. of Sweden regarding the united front among the Social-Democratic workers, on the other hand, the urge to establish the united front at the elections is growing, proof of which is the numerous decisions adopted by trade union organizations.

The C.P. of Sweden will untiringly continue its struggle for the united front, and in particular will strive, in the interests of the struggle against fascism and reaction, to secure the putting forward of joint lists of candidates with the Social-Democratic Party in the Parliamentary elections.

In view of the powerful urge for the united front to be noted among the masses, we must estimate it as a defect of the Congress of the C.P. of Sweden that it did not display sufficient energy in appealing to the working class and the broad strata of toilers.

The Congress unanimously elected a Central Committee of 25 comrades headed by Comrade Svén Linderote, who was unanimously elected Chairman of the C.P. of Sweden. It is to be regretted that the Party press of the C.P. of Sweden was rather incomplete in the way it gave publicity to the decisions of the Congress and the speeches delivered there.

The Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Denmark

ONE hundred and forty-three delegates and guests took part in the Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Denmark, which took place April 10-12.

Comrade Axel Larson made the main report. With sharp self-criticism he reviewed the former policy of the Party and pointed out the future tasks.

A wide response in Denmark and in all the Scandinavian countries was called forth by the decisions of the Congress on the elections to the Landsting (the first House of Deputies). The First House, contrary to the Second House, has a reactionary majority, which rejected a number of bills which were in the interests of the toiling population and in general acted as a bulwark for reaction. In their programs, not only the Communist Party of Denmark, but Social-Democracy and the Radical Party demand the liquidation of the First House. In view of the existing reactionary election laws in the Landsting the Communist candidates would not have had a slight chance of election. The reactionary leaders of Social-Democracy would picture the putting forward of Communist candidates as a split. In case a democratic majority were not elected to the Landsting, the attempt would be made to place the responsibility on the Communist Party of Denmark. In order to break the reactionary majority and to clear the path towards really getting rid of the First House, the Congress decided beforehand not to put up Communist candidates independently in the elections, and called upon all democratic parties for closer collaboration in the election to the Landsting. This decision was discussed in the entire Danish press, and despite the fact that the leadership of the three democratic parties rejected this proposal of collaboration, their followers, and, first of all, the Social-Democratic workers greeted with joy the decision of the Congress of the Communist Party of Denmark.

The Congress adopted a resolution on the main report and also a declaration on the tasks of the Party, a resolution on the elections to the Landsting, on the press, on the municipal elections of 1937, and on the new statutes of the Communist Party of Denmark. In conclusion the Congress approved the text of the joint manifesto (drawn up together with the Swedish and Norwegian Communist Party Congresses) addressed to the toilers of the Scandinavian countries. All the decisions were adopted unanimously. The Central Committee, consisting of eighteen members and nine candidates, was also elected unanimously.

The Communist Party very clearly came out for the merging of the trade unions of all tendencies into a united trade union center. This is demanded by the present situation in Denmark. The Communist Party of Denmark, declaring that it will repulse any attempt of reaction to replace

the Social-Democratic government by a reactionary government, at the same time carries on an active and sharp criticism against all the measures of the Social-Democratic government that are opposed to the interests of the workers and toilers. The criticism of the Communist Party is directed especially against the pro-Hitler foreign policy and the anti-union policy of the government, which in its essence aims at the existence of the trade unions. In the question of the defense of the safety and independence of Denmark against Hitler fascism, the pressure of which is becoming more and more threatening, the Communist Party is working out concrete slogans and directives.

The Meeting of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. in May

IN MAY of this year a meeting of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern took place devoted to a discussion of the situation in Czechoslovakia and in Spain.

1

The representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Comrade Shiroki, made a detailed report at the meeting of the Presidium of the Seventh Party Congress which took place in April of this year and on the present tasks of the Party.

At the Congress there were 493 delegates with decisive votes, including 277 Czechs, 132 Germans, 33 Slovaks, 21 Hungarians, 14 Ukrainians, 6 Poles and 2 Jews. The Congress was composed of 170 city workers, 91 unemployed, 58 officials and employees, 14 peasants, and 14 small handicraftsmen. Three hundred and fifteen delegates were members of Red trade unions, 41 of Free and Czech Socialist trade unions. One hundred and seventy-seven delegates belong to the Party since its foundation and 39 joined the Party since 1934.

The main report, the report of Comrade Gottwald, was devoted to the tasks of the united front and the people's front in the struggle for peace, bread and freedom.

The increasing aggression of Hitler is creating an immediate danger to the national independence of the republic of Czechoslovakia. The central task of the Communist Party is to achieve joint action of the Communist, Socialist and Handicraft Parties for the carrying out of such measures in the field of internal and foreign policy as would be able to counteract this danger. The path towards the strengthening of the defensive capacity of the Czech people lies through the extension of the democratic rights of the masses and the satisfaction of their daily interests, the democratization of the army, and by restraining the activity of the agents of Hitler fascism, etc.

The struggle of the Communist Party for this joint action in defense of the country from the threat of an attack by German fascism will become the starting point for a broad movement to create the people's front in Czechoslovakia. The Party is concentrating all its attention on operating and developing the people's front. Of especial importance at the present time is the creation of a united trade union movement.

The Congress unanimously elected the new Central Committee headed by Comrade Gottwald. Out of its 50 members, 35 are of proletarian origin, 28 comrades are Czechs and 22 belong to other nationalities. In the new Central Committee are five women.

In the decision adopted by the Presidium the tasks proposed by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia were approved. It was pointed out

that the Party succeeded quickly and without loss in correcting the opportunist distortions of the line of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, ideologically to strengthen the Party, and the correction of the mistakes did not prevent the Party continuing a positive struggle for the united front.

II

The representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain, Comrade Hernandez, gave an estimate in his report of the present situation in the country and the basic tasks which stand before the Spanish proletariat and the toiling masses. Parallel with the basic tendency of development—the growth of the people's anti-fascist movement—there is also taking place the consolidation of the forces of the fascist and monarchist groups. The basic pressing task of the Spanish proletariat at the present moment *is to achieve the complete victory of the democratic and revolutionary forces over fascism and counter-revolution*. It is necessary to isolate the fascists from the masses of peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie on whom they have based themselves until now, by carrying out measures of an economic and a political character, along the lines of completing the democratic revolution.

The main condition which will secure the successful fulfilment of this task is to strengthen and further develop in every way the People's Front. *The alliances are the main bulwark of the People's Front*. The Communist Party is working towards the creation of elected alliances of workers and peasants. In those cases where the elections still meet with opposition, the Communist Party actively participates in setting up alliances consisting of representatives of parties and mass organizations.

The Communist Party loyally supports the Left Republican government against counter-revolution and fascism in realizing the program of the People's Front. The Communists, nevertheless, do not give up their right to criticize nor their own independent policy. The Communist Party has drawn up and more precisely defined a number of government measures, the operation of which it strives to achieve. These measures touch upon questions of general economic policy, agrarian policy, work in the municipalities, etc. The Communists demand decisive state measures against counter-revolutionists and those who are to blame for the economic chaos in the country.

With the aim of solving the basic task of the present moment, namely, achieving complete victory over fascism, the Communist Party is concentrating the greatest attention upon organizing the working class in the trade unions, upon coming closer in every possible way to the Anarchist workers, and gives regular aid to the organization of the united youth. Bearing in mind the extremely great influence of the church over very wide masses of the population, the Party is attempting to establish a line of demarcation, not between believers and non-believers, but between republicans and anti-republicans. The Communist Party is carrying on a determined struggle against the provocative burning of churches and monasteries, since such acts only add grist to the mill of the counter-revolution.

While strengthening the People's Front in all possible ways the

Communist Party is making all-round and careful preparations to merge with the Socialist Party and to create a real sound, united revolutionary party of the Spanish proletariat. The creation of such a party is the basic, decisive condition for the successful fulfilment of the great tasks which stand before the proletariat and the toiling masses of Spain.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist Party will take place in the near future. This Congress will outline the concrete path for the consolidation and development of the People's Front in Spain. The path of victory over fascism and counter-revolution is the path to a strong, free and happy Spain.

The Presidium adopted a decision in which it endorsed the policy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain.

Pages From the Life of William Gallacher

By JOHN SULLIVAN

WILLIAM GALLACHER, first representative of the British Communist Party in the House of Commons, in the first few months of the new Parliament has made himself into a powerful force. His voice is raised in defense of the workers, against the war incendiaries, for the unity of the British labor movement. His are the searching questions which cause so much embarrassment to His Majesty's government. He is recognized not as the Member for West Fife only, but as the representative of the growing political force of the working class.

Gallacher has written down in *Revolt on the Clyde* (Lawrence and Wishart, London 10/6d), some chapters from the story of his life, which is at the same time an inspiring record of some of the mightiest struggles in the history of the British working class, namely, the anti-war movement on the Clyde during the imperialist war.

Reading his memoirs, one is struck by the difference between this modest record and the memoirs of a number of "leaders" of the British labor movement whose life's ambition was achieved when they were invited to garden parties at Buckingham Palace or received a title as a reward for their loyal services to the British Empire. For Gallacher the highest title is the esteem he is held in by the workers, the highest honor his position as a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, his best reward the election by the Fife miners to the House of Commons, where he has a further field in which to serve his class. For Gallacher the greatest joy was to have known Lenin personally. The chief gap in Gallacher's book is that he does not tell us sufficient about his talks with Lenin. These conversations with Lenin at the time of the Second Congress of the Communist International helped in no small degree to make the leader of the Clyde workers into a leader of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

* * *

Gallacher started work as an errand boy when ten years of age. Later he worked in an engineering shop where he served his apprenticeship and joined a trade union. He had the experience of unemployment, the experience of serving in the ship's fore-castle, the many experiences of employment and small struggles that contribute so much to the making of revolutionary leaders, that temper their steel. Through the temperance movement, he came to Socialism. In 1906 he became a member of the Social-Democratic Federation and started on his work as a propagandist and an agitator. Under the leadership of John MacLean, Gallacher began to study Marxism. On the outbreak of the war, Gallacher

was the recognized leader of the workers at the Albion motor factory in Glasgow and a member of the executive of his trade union.

One of the great services performed by Gallacher in the book under review is that he gives a picture of the work and influence of the great fighter for the workers' cause, John MacLean. The Independent Labor Party opportunists, whose compromising and deceptive policy MacLean fought so bitterly, have succeeded so far in preventing the appearance of his biography. Gallacher's book gives the main facts of MacLean's life for the first time.

At a time when Henderson, Clynes, Thomas and Barnes had deserted to the capitalist class, while MacDonald vacillated, John MacLean was the vital force of the movement in England against the war. This gifted Marxist propagandist trained in his classes the active workers who became the backbone of the Clyde movement which in turn was the backbone of the resistance of the British workers to the war. Twice sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for his resolute anti-militarist work, MacLean was twice released before serving half of his sentence, as a result of the demand of the masses. The best of those whom he trained are now in the ranks of the Communist Party.

The treachery of the leaders of the British labor movement during the war betrayed the trust of the masses. On the Clyde, MacLean and Gallacher rallied the workers and raised the banner of the struggle against the imperialist war.

The first mass struggles against the "dilution" of labor, against industrial conscription, against the high rents and high cost of living began on the Clyde.

On February 16, 1915, the workers at the huge Weir munition factory struck against dilution. The following day the Weir workers called on the rest of the Clyde to support them. Gallacher led out his factory and by the end of the day the whole Clyde was out. Representatives from each factory came together to form the leadership. Under the "Defense of the Realm Act" striking on munition work was illegal. So the workers formed a "Labor Withholding Committee", of which Gallacher was elected chairman. The Clyde munition workers stayed out for fourteen days and then returned in an organized body to operate a canny policy in the factories.

After the strike, it became difficult both for professional patriots and the "Defend Our Country" trade union leaders to get a hearing in Glasgow. In all the principal factories, workshops and departmental committees were now functioning. The Labor Withholding Committee, with Gallacher as the chairman, remained to act as the central leadership of the workers.

Lloyd George himself had to go to the Clyde at the end of 1915, accompanied by Henderson and a retinue of trade union leaders, to deal with the dilution question. But the workers refused to be taken in by his demagoguery and would not negotiate with him except through the Clyde Workers' Committee. He had to appeal to the Clyde Workers' Committee for their cooperation in getting a hearing from the shop stewards. This was after he had publicly declared that he would not have anything to do with them under any circumstances. The Committee

demanded the placing of the factories under workers' control and denounced the war. To this Lloyd George replied that he had rarely heard of a case put so clearly and ably, but the proposals were impossible. He could never agree to them. "Why not?" interjected Gallacher. "Because it would mean a revolution, and you can't carry through a revolution in the midst of war". Two years later, Lenin and the Bolsheviks showed the whole world that this could be done.

Writing in his memoirs, Lloyd George describes Gallacher as "a Communist whose manners were quite perfect and whose tones were soft, but he left no doubt to my mind that his was the most sinister influence".

While Henderson, in a letter to a Glasgow correspondent about the "men of self imposed leadership" (!), whined:

"They have been appealed to by their own trade union leaders and by Cabinet ministers, but they appear determined to take their own course no matter what is said. It remains to be seen how *the stern enforcement of the law, such as transfer of the ringleaders from the affected areas, will assist.*"

But neither bribery, threats, nor imprisonment could hinder the Clyde revolutionaries. The arrests and deportations of the leading shop stewards, the trial and imprisonment of MacLean and Gallacher and their comrades, led to the movement taking on higher forms after the initial disorganization was overcome. When Gallacher was released after serving his twelve months' imprisonment, the movement again took on strength and militancy. The Glasgow workers forced the release of MacLean.

The February Revolution and the overthrow of tsarism in Russia inspired the movement. So great was the sympathy in Britain for the Russian revolution that a Congress was organized in Leeds in June, 1917, to hail the Russian revolution, to declare solidarity with the Russian workers, to form workers' and soldiers' councils in Britain, to organize the masses to follow Russia. Such was the title of the Congress; but the opportunist I.L.P. leaders filled it full of vague talk about "the new young democracy". But Gallacher was able to see that the Russian revolution was not yet completed, that the workers and soldiers of Russia would have to deal with their own capitalists as well as with tsarism, that their sharpest battles would be against the capitalists of Europe and that the British workers had the responsibility of developing revolutionary activity in Britain so as to make it impossible for intervention to take place against the land of the Soviets.

Further strikes for wage increases took place in Scotland under the leadership of the Clyde Workers' Committee, and, while the labor leaders were silent about the October Revolution, its news was hailed with joy on Clydeside. At a meeting arranged in conjunction with the Man-Power Bill designed to tighten up conscription, the workers laid bare everything—the secret treaties, the "Man-Slaughter Bill", the criminal war, for a peace without annexations and indemnities, and determined to oppose to the uttermost the government's call for men. May Day, 1918, saw the mightiest demonstration held in Glasgow. Once again John MacLean was arrested.

The weakness of the movement of the Clyde workers was its political immaturity. Gallacher and his comrades only saw the fight in the factories, they did not realize the importance of the political struggle in the elections and in Parliament. Thus the opportunists were able to win the day at the election on the basis of the reputation and the struggle of the Clyde workers, while Gallacher, MacManus, and the other outstanding leaders in the factories regarded the Parliamentarians contemptuously.

This immaturity was further seen in the mass struggles which took place in January, 1919, for the 40-hour week. British capitalism had won the war, but it was desperately weak. The masses were seething, there was an epidemic of mutinies in the army and sharp strike struggles, Ireland had declared its independence and was beginning to organize a fight for freedom, Egypt and India was smoldering with revolt.

But the workers' forces in Britain were divided. There was no revolutionary workers' party. Thus the greatest revolutionary possibilities were thrown away.

Lenin was able to see what was happening, and in *Left-Wing Communism* used Gallacher's articles in the British papers and his arguments in order to bring clarity to the movement. Lenin wrote (referring to a letter from Gallacher):

"In my opinion this letter expresses the excellent temper and point of view of the young Communists, or rank-and-file workers who are only just coming over to Communism. This temper is very gratifying and valuable; we must learn to prize it and to support it, because, without it, it is hopeless to expect the victory of the proletarian revolution in England or in any other country for that matter. People who can give expression to this temper of the masses, who can rouse such temper (very often dormant, not realized, not roused) among the masses, must be prized and every assistance must be given them. At the same time we must openly and frankly tell them that temper *alone* is not sufficient to lead the masses and the great revolutionary struggle, and that the mistakes that these very loyal adherents of the cause of the revolution are about to make, or are making, can do very serious harm to the cause of the revolution. Comrade Gallacher's letter undoubtedly betrays the embryos of *all* the mistakes that are committed by the German 'Left' Communists and which were committed by the 'Left' Bolsheviks in 1908 and 1918.

"The writer of the letter is imbued with noble proletarian (intelligible and near, not only to the proletarians, but also to all toilers, to all 'small men', to use a German expression) hatred for the bourgeois 'class politicians'. This hatred felt by the representatives of the oppressed and exploited masses is in truth the 'beginning of all wisdom', the very basis of the Socialist and Communist movement and of its success. But the author apparently fails to take into account the fact that politics is a science and an art that does not drop from the skies, is not acquired for nothing, and that if it wants to conquer the bourgeoisie, the proletariat must train *its own* proletarian 'class politicians' who shall be as skilled as the bourgeois politicians."

Shortly after this was written, Gallacher came, illegally, to the Second Congress of the Communist International. Here he defended his

point of view. Gallacher writes: ". . . I was hard to convince. . . . Gradually as the discussion went on, I began to see the weakness of my position. More and more the clear, simple arguments and expressions of Lenin impressed themselves in my mind."

Before he left Moscow to come back to the heights of the struggle against British support to the Polish war against the young Soviet republic, Lenin asked Gallacher three questions:

"Do you admit you were wrong on the question of Parliament and affiliation to the Labor Party? Will you join the Communist Party of Great Britain on your return? Will you do your best to persuade your Scottish comrades to join it?"

To each of these questions Gallacher answered "Yes". And he has honorably carried out his pledge to Lenin.

Gallacher became what Lenin demanded, "a proletarian 'class politician'", a fighter for the Party. Gallacher fought for the Bolshevization of the British Party, in its infancy, and still today he brings his great experience and talents as agitator to bear in defense of the line of our Party. Gallacher has mastered the Bolshevik art of self-criticism and from his own experience is able to help younger comrades to develop and to correct their weaknesses.

We would have welcomed from Gallacher further details of his conversations with Lenin, of his talks and discussions at the time of the Second World Congress and the period of the foundation of our Party. The new generation of revolutionaries which has come into political life since the 1930-31 crisis does not know of the work of those days, and can learn so much from them. Everything about Lenin and his work for the building of the Communist Party in Britain is of priceless value to us. Gallacher can tell a great deal more than he has done in the book under review, and all he writes will be really valuable.



It is only necessary to read his book to see how it is that Gallacher enjoys the respect and love of hundreds of thousands of workers in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland, who flock to his meetings, how it is that his speeches in Parliament are eagerly awaited, how it is that he was elected by the Fife miners, among whom he has fought for so long. When so many Labor leaders have failed in their trust, when so many who were attracted to revolution when it seemed near left the ranks, when so many wearied, Gallacher never tired, never faltered, never was overborne when the movement was weak and things looked black. In the dark days that followed the betrayal of the General Strike he looked forward and fought to keep the working class movement free from Mondism as he fought dilution on the Clyde during the war.

It is necessary that the British comrades study the life and work of Comrade Gallacher, that his book be found in every public library and factory library, in every miners' institute and workers' club. From the example of Gallacher's life and struggle, thousands of new fighters can be won for the British Party, and thousands of active workers in the general labor movement for the fight for national and international unity, to preserve peace and bring about socialism.

Pamphlets on the Stakhanov Movement

By M. TAMAR

THE popular Stakhanov movement, which has involved the entire land of the Soviets, and has created new and unlimited possibilities for the victorious construction of socialism, is up to the present a movement receiving much attention in the foreign press. Whereas in the hands of the revolutionary proletariat the spreading of the truth about the Stakhanov movement is a powerful means of popularizing the ideas of socialism among the masses, the enemies of the Soviet Union are persistent in attempting to bespatter the Stakhanov movement and to give the toilers of the capitalist countries an incorrect, false idea about it.

The Communists in the various countries are in great need of mass literature about the Stakhanov movement, such as would help the active members of the Communist Party and rank-and-file workers to get their bearings as to the essence of this movement, and of the basic problems of socialist construction connected with it, and which would arm them with arguments to counteract the slander of the anti-Soviet press.

The speech of Comrade Stalin at the All-Union Conference of Stakhanov workers, published as a pamphlet in German, English, French, Spanish, Italian, Danish and Norwegian languages at the end of 1935 and the beginning of 1936, is of great significance for the world Communist movement. But up to the present time a shortage has been felt of literature written or drawn up especially for readers in the capitalist countries. Only a comparatively short time ago were a few such pamphlets published in various countries.

A SYMPOSIUM, "NEW TIMES—NEW PEOPLE"*

In this small symposium, published by the Prometheus publishing house in the German language, all the basic materials—partly abridged—of the All-Union Conference of the Stakhanov workers is published, including the complete text of the report of Comrade Stalin, excerpts from the reports of Comrades Molotov, Orjonikidze, Voroshilov, Kaganovich and Mikoyan and the speeches of twenty Stakhanov workers who took part in the Conference.

The speeches of the leaders of the All-Union Communist Party and the Soviet government as printed in this symposium will make it possible for the foreign reader to understand the meaning and significance of the Stakhanov movement.

The Conference of Stakhanov Workers, at which the leaders of the country met for a businesslike and friendly talk with 3,000 leading working men and women, and at which Stalin thanked the Stakhanov workers

* Neue Zeiten—neue Menschen. Die Stachanov-Bewegung im Lande der befreiten Arbeit. Prometheus-Verlag. Strassburg. 1936.

"for lessons learnt" bore striking testimony to the fact of the broad character of Soviet democracy, and the close connections between the Soviet people and their leaders. This collection of the materials of the Conference of Stakhanov Workers, in the German language, will give the toilers in the capitalist countries a convincing and graphic refutation of the fascist slander to the effect that the Stakhanov movement in the U.S.S.R. is being developed "from above" "under pressure".

The speeches of the Stakhanov workers, who told in simple and warm words the story of their life and work, give a clear picture of the conditions of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. where ". . . life has become better, life has become more joyous", and before whom are open endlessly broad perspectives of further mastering the heights of culture and technique, and of further creative work. The collection is not free of various shortcomings. For instance, the translation of the speeches of the Stakhanov workers is in places polished, and this smooths out the individual peculiarities of these speeches, which are distinguished by their great simplicity and directness of tone; in other places, on the contrary, the striving to give a too exact translation has led to the literal reproduction of Russian manners of speech which are not characteristic of the German language. In some places explanatory remarks should be given, taking into consideration the point that not every foreign reader can understand a number of details concerning production and living conditions in the U.S.S.R.

Nevertheless, the appearance of this symposium must be welcomed in every way. Let us hope that it will appear in other foreign languages.

PIERRE SEMARD, "THE U.S.S.R. ITS SOCIALIST VICTORIES;
THE STAKHANOV MOVEMENT"*

This pamphlet of Comrade Pierre Semard, the well-known French Communist and trade union worker, on the U.S.S.R. and the Stakhanov movement, is his report at the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of France. It will be read with great interest first and foremost by the leading Party workers; it is full of facts and figures about the victories of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., on the growth of socialist industry and the rise in the well-being of the masses. This wealth of material makes it an irreplaceable aid to Party reporters and propagandists.

In the second part of the pamphlet Comrade Semard explains what the Stakhanov movement is, particularly emphasizing its significance in preparing the preconditions for the transition from socialism to communism.

In conclusion, he gives a convincing answer to those "theoreticians" from the *Peuple* and *Populaire* who make a dishonest analogy between the Stakhanov movement and capitalist rationalization.

"In the capitalist countries," he says, "Taylorism has made a gulf between physical and mental labor, and put up barriers between the workers of various qualifications. In the Soviet Union everything which is scientific and progressive as regards

* Pierre Semard. L'U.R.S.S. Les Victoires Socialistes. Le Mouvement Stakhanoviste. Discours Prononce au VIII Congresse du Parti Communiste. 1936. 31 pp.

the improvement of the conditions of labor is taken from Taylorism, and everything that destroys the organism and lowers human self-respect is removed from it.

"The Soviet Union has made a study of the forms of rationalization tested and applied in the capitalist countries, and made a selection from among them, but they are used in the Soviet industry only after account has been taken of the research made by technicians, physiologists and doctors."

And Comrade Semard supports this answer with many figures as to the growth of workers' inventions, and all the new manifestations of the productive initiative of the workers in the U.S.S.R.—the only country where labor is a thing of honor, glory, valor and heroism.

FERNAND GRENIER, "THE STAKHANOV MOVEMENT"*

Fernand Grenier, General Secretary of the French Society of Friends of the U.S.S.R., introduces with his pamphlet on the Stakhanov movement a series of pamphlets under the general title of "Here Is the U.S.S.R.", to be published in the near future and devoted to various sides of the life of the people of the U.S.S.R.

After explaining very briefly the basis on which the Stakhanov movement was born and has developed in the U.S.S.R., and using as his most characteristic example the life and work of Stakhanov himself, Comrade Grenier goes in detail into the basic arguments advanced up till now against the Stakhanov movement. He brings the testimony of French textile workers who indignantly reject the idea that the labor of the Stakhanov workers can have anything in common with the labor of workers in rationalized capitalist enterprises.

"We undoubtedly can achieve professional skill," write the workers John Ober and Susan Cashe, "but we only work with our body, our muscles. . . . In the weaving sheds in our country, and in general among the textile workers it is possible to meet quite a number of working men and women who have very flexible hands, but who can neither read nor write. . . . The working women know how to make the cloth, they know what movements need to be made (just as automatic as the movement of their machines) but in the great majority they have no idea of the technique of weaving.

"Can one imagine, for instance, old mother Cashe and her mates, weavers, running madly in the evening to 'courses for mastering technique'? Why? To master technique in order to raise the productivity of labor? To propose to the boss that they will produce more? No! The workers of our country have not the smallest desire to do this. . . ."

Thus, by using numerous factual data, and first and foremost the materials of the All-Union Conference of Stakhanov Workers, Comrade Grenier answers other hostile arguments: He proves the absurdity of the idea of the possibility of over-production in the U.S.S.R., and that Stakhanov work does not at all demand "exceptional physical strength". Then he explains the need for material inequality in paying the working people for their labor, under socialism.

* Voici L'U.R.S.S. Le Mouvement Stakhanoviste. Par Fernand Grenier. Bureau d'Editions, Paris. 62 pp.

LUIGI GALLE, "STAKHANOVISM IN SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION"*

The pamphlet of the well-known Italian Communist, Comrade Luigi Galle, was published in the Italian language in Paris. It is the stenogram of a lecture given by the author in a proletarian cultural circle for Italian workers.

The comprehensive pamphlet of Comrade Galle is a model of Communist mass propaganda. He gives an all-round serious picture, and in a form understandable to every worker, of the basic problems of the Stakhanov movement.

The author first and foremost shows the working conditions in the U.S.S.R., gives a detailed review of what the Soviet government has given the working class, namely, the extremely short working week, holidays with pay, protection of motherhood, various possibilities for study, medical aid, rest and participation in the management of production through production conferences. He speaks about socialist competition and about the various stages through which it has passed, and comes to the conclusion that the Stakhanov movement is a new regular stage in the development of socialist competition and the development of the productive initiative of the masses. Further, Comrade Galle makes use of a few examples of well-known Stakhanovites to show the essence of Stakhanov work, emphasizing that while the ideal of Taylor, the founder of capitalist rationalization, is "workers who serve the machine and do not attempt to think", in the Soviet Union, on the contrary, we have the real "triumphs of man over the machine".

The short concluding chapter of the pamphlet contrasts the land of socialism with fascist Italy, and ends with a call directed to Italian workers to struggle against Italian fascism. As a whole the pamphlet is without doubt of international interest, and it would be worth while to give not only the Italian reader the opportunity of becoming acquainted with it.

G. FRIEDRICH, "DUSYA VINOGRADOVA"***

The sketch by G. Friedrich of Dusya Vinogradova (which appeared as a separate pamphlet in the German and English languages, and as a supplement to the pamphlet of Grenier in the French language) is the first attempt to give a live portrait of one of the leading workers of socialist industry.

The enemies of the Soviet Union direct their most poisonous arrows of slander against the initiators of the Stakhanov movement, striving to present them as something extraordinary, as something which has almost lost all human form. And this is repeated sometimes by people who consider themselves as belonging to the working class movement. According to the definition of the Anarchist French journal *Primer*, an "illiterate giant, a massive and brainless 'robot'" can be an example of a Stakhanovite. The French Socialist Severaque, who writes in the *Populaire*, agrees with this definition:

* Luigi Galle. *Le Stakhanovismo Nella Costruzione Socialista*. Edition dell'idea popolare. Paris, 1936. 31 pp.

** G. Friedrich. *Dussia Winogradowa*. Verlag-Auslandischer Arbeiter. Moscow, 1936. (Miss U.S.S.R. International Publishers, New York, 1936.)

“A human machine which is continually keyed up to the extreme limits of its strength, in order to break records, is a sight which is not exceptional in its greatness nor beauty.”

One of these “human machines”, one of these “illiterate giants” is Dusya Vinogradova, a young girl who has mastered the complicated technique of minding 216 automatic looms, thanks to her own inventive initiative. An active member of the Young Communist League, she finds time to train Pioneers, to read, dance, engage in sport and prepare herself to enter a technical university. Such is Dusya Vinogradova, the young harmoniously developed socialist being, a typical representative of both the Soviet woman and Soviet youth. The whole of the Soviet Union knows her as such, and she is so described after a visit to her in Vichuga by G. Friedrich, who had the possibility of seeing with his own eyes the “secret” of the unheard of productivity of her labor.

We hope that a few more such sketches of the live people of the Stakhanov movement will appear in the near future. They will be the best answer to the slanderers who do not understand, or who do not want to understand, what the new being in the Socialist Soviet Union really is.

Books Received

FRENCH

1. *Pour Comprendre "Le Capital"*. By Friedrich Engels, Bureau d'Editions, Paris, 1936, 126 pp., 4 francs.

This collection of works of Engels contains his article "Marx's Capital", extracts from Engels' introduction to the second volume of *Capital*, his appendix to the third volume of *Capital* and his article about the stock exchange. The collection also contains extracts from Mehring's book *Karl Marx*, the story of his life. A great part of the material printed in this collection appears in the French language for the first time.

2. *Parler au Peuple*. Premier fascicule. Cours de M. Cachin, M. Thorez, B. Frachon, J. Duclos, J. Racamond, Ed. du Comite Populaire de Propagande, Paris, 1936, 31 pp., 75 centimes.

Parler au Peuple. Deuxieme fascicule. Cours de P. Bouthonnier, Vaillant-Couturier, P. Semard, G. Cogniot, Ed. du Comite Populaire de Propagande, Paris, 1936, 31 pp., 75 centimes.

The *Speak to the People* pamphlets contain the notes for speeches given by the leaders of the French Communist movement at "classes for political speakers", organized by the French Communist Party. The subjects of the lectures are as follows: "The Political Speaker", by Marcel Cachin; "The Political Speech", by Maurice Thorez; "A Speech in Defense of a Program of Demands", by B. Frachon; "The Political Speaker and the Problem of Unity", by J. Duclos; "The Speaker and the Problem of the Trade Unions", by J. Racamond; "Polemics", by P. Bouthonnier; "The Speaker and the Defense of Peace", by Pierre Semard; "The Art of Speech", by Vaillant-Couturier; "Speakers of the Revolution in France", by G. Cogniot.

3. *Les Etapes du Bolchevisme*. By B. Voline et S. Ingoutov. Bureau d'Editions, Paris, 1936, 80 pp., 1.50 francs.

This book, *The Stages of Bolshevism*, is a popular statement of the history of the C.P.S.U.

ENGLISH

1. *Industrial Unionism*. By William Z. Foster. Workers' Library Publishers, New York, April, 1936, 46 pp., 5 cents.

Comrade Foster deals in this pamphlet with a defense of the industrial principle of building the trade unions, and justifies the need of supporting the movement to reorganize the trade union on the industrial principle inside the American Federation of Labor.

2. *Unity Will Conquer*. Contains a number of the most important documents of the struggle of the Comintern for the united front in the international labor movement. This pamphlet contains the appeal of the E.C.C.I. to the Labor and Socialist International dated September 25 and October 7, 1935 and the *Down With War* manifesto of the E.C.C.I. which called for a united front against the aggression of Italian fascism in Ethiopia. In addition the reply is given of the Second International to the E.C.C.I. and the response of the Social-Democratic press of the various countries to the appeal of the E.C.C.I. The pamphlet concludes with the resolution of the E.C.C.I. entitled "For United Action of the World Proletariat" which gives an estimate of the reply of the Second International, and which shows the further tasks of the struggle for the united front. There is also an article by Comrade Gottwald about united action of the proletariat in the struggle for peace.

3. *Building a New World*. By V. Chemadanov. Foreword by George Soule. Workers Library Publishers, New York, April, 1936, 47 pp., 5 cents. The report of Comrade Chemadanov at the Sixth Congress of the Y.C.I.

Soviet Russia and Religion. By Corliss Lamont. International Publishers, New York, 1936, 24 pp., 5 cents.

A popular pamphlet which explains the attitude of the Communists toward religion and at the same time refutes the slander about the "persecution of religion" in the U.S.S.R.

Communist Affiliation. By Emile Burns. Published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, London, 1936, 24 pp., 1d.

This pamphlet, written by the well-known British Communist Party writer Emile Burns, explains the reason why the Communist Party of Great Britain is trying to secure affiliation to the Labor Party. The pamphlet is in the form of a talk with a Labor Party worker, and deals in detail with the arguments used against affiliation.

Peace—But How? The Peace Library. A workshop talk by J. R. Campbell. Published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, London, 1936. Price 1d.

I Accuse Baldwin. The Peace Library. By Harry Pollitt. London, 1936, 1d.

These two pamphlets, which are the first of the Peace Library series published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, give the position of the Communist Party on the question of the struggle for peace, in live, understandable language.

Social Credit. An economic analysis by John Strachey. Victor Gollancz, Ltd., jointly with the Workshop, Ltd., London, 1936, 24 pp., 3d.

Social Credit Discredited. By Maurice Dobb, M.A., University of Cambridge. Martin Lawrence, London, 1936, 30 pp., 3d.

We Ask for Life. Based on the report of John Gollan to the Eighth National Conference of the Y.C.L. of Great Britain. Published by the Communist Youth Movement, London, 1936, 24 pp., 2d.

Shows the conditions of the young people of England, and puts forward the proposal to establish a charter of rights for the youth.

The Irish Revolt, 1916 and After. By Sean Murray. Published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, London, 14 pp., 1d.

A popular pamphlet on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Easter Rebellion, published by the C.P.G.B.

The Great London Meat Strike. Issued by the Smithfield Strike Committee. London, 1936, 20 pp., 1d.

Gives the story of the positive experience of this strike which ended in victory for the strikers.

GERMAN

Volksfront gegen Herrenfront. Herausgegeben von den Kommunistischen Partei der Schweiz, 1936. S. Preis, 10 Rappen.

Issued by the Communist Party of Switzerland, calling for united front, the establishment of a broad fighting people's front for the economic demands of the people, and for the preservation of the people's democratic rights, and the maintenance of peace.

Für eine frei deutsche Volkskultur. Manifest und Beschlüsse der Reichenberger Kultur Konferenz vom 22 März, 1936. Verlag Kreibich. Prag, 48 S. Preis, 1.20 Kr.

A collection of the materials of the Conference in Defense of Culture held in Reichenberg (Czechoslovakia) in which representatives of intellectuals and workers' cultural organizations of Northern Bohemia took part.

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