

TOWARDS LABOUR UNITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

(By cable from Capetown)

The following official joint statement was issued on September 2nd:—

“Representatives of the National Executive Committee of the South African Labour Party and the Central Committee of the Communist Party met on September 1st in Johannesburg. A number of questions of vital moment for the workers of South Africa were considered. No definite decisions were reached, but after a friendly discussion it was agreed that the two parties would consider the possibilities of future co-operation on the points raised.”

The statement of the Communist Party Central Committee of August 24th called for Labour unity and sharply criticised a dangerous reactionary tendency of the Union Government towards withdrawal from the war. After an analysis of the urgency of the Second Front and a Three-Power Conference, the statement declares:

“The sweeping election victory of the Government was the people’s mandate for the Smuts Government to intensify efforts for victory. Instead, there is every sign that it is bent on slackening the effort. A Ministry of Demobilisation has been established. A new proclamation empowers the discharging of soldiers as ‘surplus military requirements.’ The food crisis is increasingly serious. Dominated by the big farmers and monopolists, the Government refuses to ration food and peg the prices. There is a grave trend towards segregation of non-Europeans.”

The statement declares: “The creation of a firm alliance of the Labour and Communist Parties and the Trade Union movement, based on a common policy of the defense of the people’s interests, can transform the whole situation and revitalise South Africa, check the swing towards reaction, and provide a great new people’s effort for the Second Front.”

Both Communist Party candidates were victorious in the Capetown municipal elections on September 6th. They are Sam Kahn and

Betty Radford, editor of the *Guardian*. They obtained a large majority for the Communist policy. Capetown is the second city in South Africa. The election result is expected to have an important effect on strengthening labour unity.

MICHAEL HARMEL.
