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COMMUNIST PARTY  
OF GERMANY  
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# New Tasks of the Communist Party of Germany

BY WALTER ULBRICHT

## I. THE GROWTH OF THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES OF FASCISM

**T**HE domestic and international position of Hitler Germany bears witness to the growing difficulties of the fascist regime.

When Hitler came to power, the lowest point of the economic crisis had already been passed. By using up all the country's reserves in dictatorial fashion so as to create a boom in armaments, and by utilizing the economic revival which set in with the end of the cyclical crisis and was accompanied by a decline in unemployment, Hitler tried to convince the broad masses that a "real economic revival was taking place."

Now, after four years of the Hitler dictatorship, it is becoming ever more clear that, as compared with the improved economic position in most of the capitalist countries, German fascism *creates especially serious obstacles to the development of the economic life of capitalist Germany*. Under the cloak of "providing work" for the unemployed, fascism squandered its gold reserves, reserves of raw materials and food, the enormous deposits in the savings banks and insurance companies, the social insurance funds and the funds of the mass organizations, etc., for armaments purposes.

German exports in 1936 were only half of what they were in 1929. The totalitarian war economy and war policy have become a most serious obstacle to the further development of exports. During the last four years the debts of the Hitler government increased by some 20,000,-

000,000 marks. The development of the home market is hindered by the declining purchasing power of the masses. Some 60 per cent of the country's production is concerned with rearmaments. Whereas in 1928 the amount of capital investments by the government was about 20 per cent of the total, in 1936 the government's share rose to about 70 per cent of the total. It is becoming ever clearer that the fascist economic policy serves the interests of the big capitalist plunderers, and that the fight of Hitler fascism against "economic liberalism" is nothing else but a propagandist cloak for strengthening the power and offensive of monopoly capital against the working class, the middle class and also the small and middle capitalists.

In the sphere of agriculture, where Hitler wanted to make Germany self-sufficient through "the struggle to extend production," the result has been a *crisis in food*. The total sown area decreased from 29,368,000 hectares in 1931-33 to 28,447,000 hectares in 1936. The production of milk and meat is declining and there is a decrease in the number of livestock. At the same time the import of food products has been cut 50 per cent in comparison with 1935, although the population of Germany increased by 4,500,000. Only the big landowners and a section of the rich farmers are getting the benefit of the fascist agrarian policy in the shape of increased prices for grain, and various subsidies. While the prices received by the large landowners are 20 per cent above the average price level, the prices received

by the working peasant for his produce are 3 per cent lower than the average.

The economic and food difficulties of fascist Germany are clearly shown by such facts as the introduction of ration cards for fats, "one course" dinners (on certain days only one course meals are permitted to be cooked), meatless dishes, the hiding away of products by the peasants, the worsening of the quality of clothes, which are increasingly being made of substitutes, and the collection of brass and nickle waste and rags by the Storm Troopers and "Hitler Youth."

The population is more and more frequently drawing comparisons with the position of the war period of 1914-18.

*The more inexorably German fascism squanders the economic and financial resources of the country in the interests of its war policy, the more it decreases the purchasing power of the masses, and the greater become economic difficulties of Hitler fascism.*

Now already fascism, with pistol in hand, is demanding economic aid and loans from the democratic countries, so as the better to carry out its military and economic intervention in Spain and to prepare for war against the democratic countries.

## II. HITLERISM IS PLUNDERING THE GERMAN PEOPLE

What is the position of the masses in these conditions of war economy? *Formerly* fascism could make demagogic use of the want created by the crisis, the mass indignation against the burdens of the Versailles Treaty, and the disillusionment with the policy of the coalition governments, which placed unbearable burdens upon the masses. *Today* the growing weight of armaments is a new burden upon the masses. The burden of taxation is being felt more and more. Whereas in non-fascist countries, in connection with the economic revival, the purchasing power of the masses is slowly on the increase, as a result of the struggles of the workers; whereas in France, thanks to the People's Front, wages have risen and

the burdens of the peasants and middle classes are being alleviated, in Hitler Germany, on the contrary, the entire force of the state power is set into motion to hinder wage increases and to obtain resources on as big a scale as possible for armaments.

"There go our wages," say the workers, pointing to the tanks and armored cars. The Nazi press complains that the people say: "There flies our 'winter aid'" when they see the war planes.

It is true that the shortage of skilled labor led to wage increases for a small section of the skilled workers. In most industries exploitation was further increased through overtime work, and the introduction of the ten-hour day. At the same time the industries producing the means of consumption have introduced part-time work. In the provinces wages have been cut still more, those of the agricultural workers falling by about 12 per cent, together with a decrease in allowances in kind. To sum up it can be said that the wages of the upper categories of skilled workers (some 2,000,000) increased, while the nominal wages of the rest of the skilled workers (3,000,000) remained the same, but real wages decreased, the intensity of labor increased and the working day was extended. The wages of the other 11,000,000 industrial workers have fallen considerably. In this connection account must be taken of the fact that far-reaching differentiation in wages has been introduced, and that the workers under the influence of National Socialism are, for the most part, under the same conditions as the other workers.

*The dissatisfaction of the workers is growing.* The workers are demanding wage increases in the most varied ways, protesting against the numerous deductions and asking, "Where is the promised fair wage?" They are comparing their low wages with the growing profits of the capitalists, and are endeavoring to secure greater freedom to defend their economic demands. The slogan "Higher wages instead of millions for Franco" is meeting with growing sympathy among the masses. As soon as the danger of a broad

opposition movement manifested itself, the Hitler government concentrated its forces against it in order to split the workers' front and to hinder the development of mass resistance. This was done not only through terror, but often by means of temporary, partial concessions (extra allowances for Christmas, or bonuses at the end of the business year, special ration cards for miners, etc.).

*The masses of the peasants do not live any better than the workers.* Agricultural economy is being ruined through the low prices fixed by the state, high taxes and tributes, as well as compulsory sales of products of the state. The peasants say: "Hitler promised us that we would receive more for our products, and that the high salaries of the officials would be decreased to 1,000 marks. Now, however, not only have the prices of our products been reduced, but what we have to buy, i.e., fodder, is considerably more expensive than formerly."

The small peasant receives 48 pfennigs for a pound of live pork, but in the stores it costs from 1 mark 10 pfennigs to 1½ marks a pound. The peasants are burdened with all kinds of increased taxes, such as the land tax, trade tax (increased by 25 per cent), tax on the slaughter of cattle, tax on grain and potatoes, etc., as well as payments toward the cost of building roads and highways, and a new and higher individual tax schedule. The peasants say: "We deliver milk for 12 pfennigs, but the consumer has to pay 24 and the profiteers get the difference."

The members of the *middle class*, who in the beginning received some advantages from the general economic revival and the partial increase in purchasing power resulting from the decrease in unemployment, are now suffering from the general increase in prices and costs of production. The members of the middle class are above all indignant at the increase in taxes and other levies, especially since these were lowered for Big Business. Taxation in 1929-30 amounted to 12 per cent of the national income, while in 1935-36 it amounted to 17 per cent. In addition, one must take into special consideration the

transfer of taxation to the backs of the working people, and the special levies in the shape of the numerous donations and other tributes.

*Thus all sections of the people, with the exception of the big capitalists, the big landowners, a privileged section of the rich peasants and of the fascist bourgeoisie, are suffering more and more severely from the burdens of the war economy.* That is the reason for the growing opposition even among the masses of National-Socialists. This development of the inner situation caused General Blomberg to declare: "Modern war demands the triple unity of soldier, peasant and worker. *This is easier said than done.*"

In the interests of war and because the inner difficulties and dissatisfaction are growing, fascism is increasingly resorting to compulsion and terror in relation to ever wider sections of the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, Storm Troopers, and lower officials of the fascist mass organizations. The factories are being militarized to an ever growing degree, while the "Werkscharen" (fascist factory organizations to "improve" relations between workers and employers—*Ed.*) are being reorganized so that the members of the National-Socialist factory organizations and those who have finished military service constitute their backbone.

The introduction of employment books, the prohibition of skilled workers from changing their place of work, the cancellation of the "Confidence Council" elections, the check-up on the past of officials of the mass organizations and the dismissal of anti-fascists from war factories—all this goes to show how concerned fascism is to take preventive measures against the opposition of the people to its war policy.

The new civil servants' code, according to which every official is threatened with arrest if he "does not report manifestations of hostility towards the National-Socialist Party," the dissolution of Catholic organizations, the prohibition of collections for charitable purposes and the closing down of Catholic papers, the annulment of the most important points of

the Concordat, the suppression of the former sport organizations, the liquidation of the guilds and other handicraft organizations and their replacement by new statutes for handicraft organizations, the shortening of the study period in the higher schools so as the more rapidly to provide the army with officers—all of this goes to show *that compulsion and terror are merely used more severely in the interests of the "totalitarian war."*

As far as the young people are concerned, forced labor, compulsory service on the land and military service occupy all their young days and deprive them of all perspectives other than that of destruction in the trenches.

In so far as these suppressive measures are directed against very wide masses of the people, the struggle of the anti-fascist vanguard against the terror merges with the indignation of the masses aroused by the unbearable oppression.

### III. THE GERMAN PEOPLE DO NOT WANT WAR

*German fascism is also meeting with increasing difficulties and resistance in its international policy of conquest, proclaimed in an especially provocative manner at the fascist party congress at Nuremberg, a policy which has already led to the dangerous and expensive military adventure of Hitler in Spain.*

Hitler's constant provocations and his disregard for treaties make it ever clearer that Hitler wants not only to be "master in his own home," but also in the home of the Spanish people, as well as of the peoples of Czechoslovakia, Austria and other countries.

But the experience of the war has given rise to growing doubts in the military strength of Hitler Germany. Not only in workers' circles, but also in the leading circles of the German army attention is being directed to the military experiences in Spain and to the conclusion to be drawn as to the chances of winning the war that they are preparing.

Hitler's endeavors to create a bloc of the fascist war instigators (the German-Japanese pact, the Italo-German agree-

ment) have not only increased the mass hatred against the war policy of Hitler fascism, but have also resulted in a growing resistance on the part of the capitalist countries. Despite the pro-Hitler policy of the conservative bourgeoisie of Great Britain, the contradictions between fascist Germany and Great Britain are deepening, especially in connection with Hitler's colonial demands.

The strengthening of the People's Front in France, and the international peace movement make it ever more difficult for Hitler to convince the German people that it is these peace forces, these supporters of collective security that are threatening Germany.

In the recent period the machinations of Hitler Germany, of its direct agents, as well as of those elements that are orientated toward Hitler Germany have suffered defeats in a number of countries. This was expressed in the defeat of the fascists in the presidential elections in Finland; in the failure of the fascist onslaught in Rumania, and of the attempted putsch in Hungary, in the worsening of relations with Austria; and in the increased resistance of Czechoslovakia, etc. The insolent behavior of Hitler's interventionist troops in Spain and the failure of German arms are contributing to the isolation of fascist Germany.

*From all of this it follows that the most difficult period for German fascism is now approaching.*

While Hitler fascism is intensifying its war policy and driving the country toward a military catastrophe, the overwhelming majority of the German people do not want war; they want peace; they do not want to suffer any longer under the unbearable burdens of increasing armaments. Here lie hidden the profound contradictions of *the entire fascist dictatorship, its Achilles' heel.*

It is becoming more and more clear that Hitler's policy is driving the German people to war, and is thus facing the German people with the *question of the fate of Germany.* This policy can only end in defeat, in hurling the German nation into the most terrible misfortunes. *That is why*

*the struggle for peace, against the militarization of economy, against the policy of conquest, against intervention in Spain* is the question that can and must unite all sections of the German people, with the exception of those who benefit directly from this policy of war.

The workers, office employees, peasants, artisans, small dealers, intellectuals, and even certain sections of the bourgeoisie, are now already victims of Hitler's war policy. They must all stand together in order to avert the threatening calamity.

This decisive thesis has not yet been generally recognized by the Communist Party of Germany and the German anti-fascists. The struggle for peace has not yet become the central question with which must be linked all partial tasks, such as the struggle against the fascist, chauvinist calumny of other peoples; against the burdens placed on the masses by the growing armaments; against the armament speculators; the struggle for higher wages, against terror and measures of compulsion, as well as the demands of the peasants, middle classes, women, youth, men of science and art.

Sentiments are still current today to the effect that it is impossible, in the present circumstances, for the anti-fascists to develop mass movements, successful mass work, and a mass policy, and that it is necessary to wait passively until Hitler begins a war in Europe which will automatically lead to the fall of the Hitler regime. Such sentiments are harmful because, under the mask of radicalism, they inculcate passivity among the masses and objectively facilitate Hitler's war policy.

This became clear in connection with the fascist intervention in Spain. While German anti-fascists have been heroically defending democracy and world peace at the gates of Madrid, in Germany itself the struggle against Hitler's war of intervention has not been carried on with sufficient energy. The Communists and anti-fascists in Germany have not developed such a mass policy for the maintenance of peace, for the withdrawal of the fascist German troops and warships from Spain, for the stoppage of arms shipments, as

would unite all sections who are not interested in war. Such an extensive mass movement is still lacking in Germany.

At the present time, when Hitler is beginning to discard the mask of "defense," when it is gradually becoming more and more clear to the masses that Hitler is driving Germany into the catastrophe of a war, when the masses are groaning under the burdens connected with the preparations for war, it is not enough to content oneself with a mere exposure of the war policy. What needs to be done is to carry on a *direct* struggle against the economic want and oppression that result from the war policy of ruling fascism.

The anti-fascists must realize that this struggle against the policy of war, this delaying of war—and international forces are working in this direction to an increasing degree—is increasing the difficulties of the Hitler regime and making it possible to overthrow it *before* it is able to realize its plans, *before* it hurls the German people into a catastrophe.

If Hitler was able to come to power under the slogan "Against the Versailles Treaty," then he can be overthrown under the slogan of peace, of the overthrow of a war government, of the establishment of a democratic regime, of peace, liberty and progress.

#### IV. WHAT IS HINDERING FULFILMENT OF DECISIONS OF SEVENTH CONGRESS?

Hitler promised the masses that when Germany received more "living space," that is, when she obtained possession of colonies and other foreign territories, there would be enough food and raw materials, and wages could be raised. The Nazi propaganda of "more living space" and "we are the masters in our own home," has had its effect upon the masses. Fascism has been able to utilize Germany's economic and social difficulties (shortage of foodstuffs, low wages, shortage of raw materials, high taxation and lack of fodder in the villages) as a lever for its policy of conquest.

By means of its social demagogy, by its measures against individual small business men, against Jewish shareholders,

and against individual small speculators, fascism has been able to deceive wide sections of people. It resorts to "symbolic" gestures, such as the distribution of gifts to *individual* poor people, the building of a "Strength Through Joy" recreation camp on the island of Rugen, the establishment of *individual* model factories, where there are improved sanitary-hygienic conditions, etc. The excursions organized by the "Strength Through Joy" organization, the visiting of theaters and cinema, and the sport circles and courses are also not without effect. Fascism has an especially strong influence upon the women, and the main mass of the youth, who are brought together into the "Hitler Youth" organization under compulsion.

The as yet unsurmounted passivity of the masses, and the feelings of helplessness are caused not only by terror, by the pressure of the fascist apparatus and the influence of fascist propaganda, but are also the result of the former Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration, of many years of the negation of the class struggle and its suppression during the period of the Weimar Republic, as well as of the rejection of united proletarian struggle and the anti-fascist People's Front by the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party and the trade union leaders.

If there have been no movements on any considerable scale, this is also the result of the following: *the sectarian lack of understanding, which still exists in the ranks of the Communist Party of Germany and of the anti-fascists, of the new conditions and the changed forms of the class struggle and of the anti-fascist struggle*: the line of conducting propaganda exclusively on an illegal basis; the neglect or rejection of the struggle for the daily interests of the masses in the fascist mass organizations; insufficient ability to utilize the social promises made by the Nazis to develop the mass struggle, and the delay in reorganizing the Party's forces to correspond to the changed conditions of the struggle, and the obstinate insistence on old organizational forms.

Sectarianism and schematization, and

the failure to understand the changed conditions of the struggle in Germany today—all these still remain big hindrances preventing the operation of the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern and of the Brussels conference of the Communist Party of Germany. It is especially necessary that the Party should appreciate how it is operating the advice given by Comrade Dimitroff, who gave us such a tremendous example of how to carry on the struggle against fascism. In his report to the Seventh Congress, which contained directions for the struggle against fascism and for international peace, Comrade Dimitroff said:

"We can lead the masses to a decisive struggle for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship only by getting the workers who have been forced into the fascist organizations, or who have joined them through ignorance, to take part in the *most elementary movements* for the defense of their economic, political and cultural interests. It is for these reasons that the Communists must work in these organizations. . . .

"Experience teaches us that the view that it is *generally impossible*, in countries with a fascist dictatorship, to come out legally or semi-legally, is harmful and incorrect. To insist on this point of view means to fall into passivity, to renounce real mass work altogether."

On the basis of the decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern and of the Brussels conference of the Communist Party of Germany, it is necessary to bring about a more powerful development of the *initiative of the Communist Party groups and cadres* as well as of the active anti-fascists, and to utilize the most varied methods of struggle. Use must be made of arguments that will make the masses listen to the Communists. The starting point should be the promises made by the fascists, while the main blow must be directed against the upper circles. Every Communist should become the best adviser of the working people in their poverty and want, and should become genuinely allied with the masses by capably and convincingly explaining the aims and

objects of the struggle against the fascist authorities.

If in Germany today the sentiments in favor of the People's Front are extending, while the masses do not yet understand how the struggle of the People's Front can be carried on under the specific and difficult conditions in Hitler Germany, then it is the task of the Communists, as the vanguard of the anti-fascist struggle, to join with the Social-Democratic and Catholic workers in establishing points of support for the anti-fascist struggle in all factories and mass organizations, to spread these bases, and lead the masses in their struggle for their immediate and urgent interests.

In order to fulfil these important tasks *it is exceptionally important to strengthen the Party ideologically, and to create such Party organizations, and such Party leadership, as will assure the consistent operation of the Party line.* In this connection, it is especially important to draw women into responsible Party work, and to help them in their work within the "German Labor Front," the Hitler "Women's Society," the "National-Socialist Charity Organization," etc.

In view of the connections between *counter-revolutionary Trotskyism and German fascism* as the main instigator of world war and deadly enemy of the Soviet Union and the international proletariat, the Communist Party of Germany has the exceptionally important task of carrying on energetic work within the Party, among the Social-Democratic masses, as well as among all friends of peace in Germany, to explain the role of Trotskyism as being hostile to the people. Trotskyism is especially dangerous for the anti-fascist movement in Germany because it is connected with the Gestapo, and plays into their hands through its undermining, disintegrating work.

#### V. UNITY ESSENTIAL IN STRUGGLE FOR INTERESTS OF THE MASSES

At a meeting of the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany, devoted to an estimation of the situation and the new tasks of the Party, Comrade Wilhelm

Pieck, Chairman of the Party, indicated the further development of, and methods of giving concrete shape to the decisions of the Brussels Party conference, to correspond with the changed conditions of the struggle. What is required is bold initiative for the creation of a German People's Front, the aim of which must be the victorious struggle for a democratic people's republic. By fighting in this way to save the German people from the catastrophe of war the Communist Party of Germany is defending the genuine national interests of the German people.

*What changes have taken place in the last months in the conduct of the masses of Germany? The masses are beginning to act in a new way, in that they are beginning themselves to defend their economic interests and rights within the framework of the fascist regime, within the fascist mass organizations. The unity of the workers is growing, and there is to be seen increased activity on their part in defense of their daily economic interests, in the attempt "to win something at any rate." The example of France, where wage increases were won as a result of the struggles of the French workers, is making itself felt.*

For example: In a large mining enterprise where comradely relations were developed among the workers of various political trends, complaints about conditions in six pits were sent to the "German Labor Front." (D.A.F.) The D.A.F. organized an enquiry among the workers by a commission composed of representatives of the D.A.F., the Department of Mines and of the company management. The commission went down to the pits and questioned the workers employed there. In all cases the workers, including the Storm Troopers, stood by their complaints. An "old fighter" (a Storm Trooper) declared: "I'm no grouser, I'm a National-Socialist; but such conditions in the mine cannot be tolerated." Afterwards a general meeting was called where the management tried to justify itself. While the representatives of the management were speaking there were interjections such as "Beware of the conse-

quences, if anyone is dismissed." The management agreed to take measures to eliminate the bad conditions and promised that "no one will be discharged for making complaints." But on the following day two workers, Storm Troopers, were not permitted to go down the mine, orders to this effect having been given by the management. Thereupon all the workers of this shift refused to go down and the two Storm Troopers had to be reinstated. This example proves that the workers know how to act together, *utilizing legal methods to defend their interests.*

In a number of other cases the workers complained about bad conditions to the "German Labor Front" and at the same time tried themselves to secure the elimination of these conditions with the help of the "Amtswalter" (representatives of the "Labor Front" in the given factory). A certain local office of the "Labor Front" received 200 complaints from only one factory. In their struggle against the worsening of working conditions and for improvements, the workers make reference to the promises of the Nazis to introduce a "fair wage," and the laws concerning the observation of minimum wage rates, as well as the statements of the fascists that the "labor power must not be abused."

The workers protest against the many fines, speak of the "honor and dignity" of the workers, in connection with the "Safety First" week in the factories put forward proposals for safety precautions, for improved sanitary conditions in the factories, for higher wages, oppose the special privileges of the employers and partially insist on the extension of the rights of the lower officials of the "Labor Front." The Nazi press complains of the fact that the slogan "The nobility of labor" is being utilized by the Marxists. *This activity in the "Labor Front" stimulates the collective activity of the workers, thereby gradually removing the danger of the dissipation of forces.* All movements of resistance show that partial demands are almost always won where they are linked up with the daily interests of the people, and where legal methods

of struggle are utilized to achieve them. And even where the supporters of the National-Socialists are a small minority in the works departments, the prerequisites for success are the *united front of the workers, including the majority of the National-Socialist workers and a large number of the officials of the "Labor Front."*

The majority of the workers, who, it is true, are anti-fascists, but who adopt a waiting position, are now inclined to engage in joint action only if the demands put forward are of a legal character and if the entire department or staff can be drawn into support for these demands. There is a growing recognition that certain economic improvements can be won even now, in spite of the fascist regime. The basically similar interests and common discontent of the anti-fascists and the masses of National-Socialists open up possibilities for the organization of action on a very wide basis.

In this regard it is becoming clear that the National-Socialist working people are honestly desirous of bringing about social justice, and of achieving the fulfilment of the other demagogic promises of Hitler, and are actively striving to secure the fulfilment of his old promises. Whereas the anti-fascists formerly would frequently only jeer at the National-Socialist workers, they are seeing now in the process of the joint struggle how these workers are learning to differentiate between the friends and the enemies of the people.

What lessons follow from this experience? *The lesson that the initiative of the masses in defense of the workers' interests, and above all in the Labor Front, must be developed so as to bring the decisive force, the working class, into movement.* The polemics in the fascist press about social political questions, and the endeavors of the leadership of the "Labor Front" completely to turn the organization into an instrument of war show the urgency of this task.

The Communists must know best of all the demands of the workers, their wage demands, as well as the fascist labor legislation. They must strive within the "Labor

Front" to bring about a joint movement of all the workers and office employees in support of higher wages to meet the increased cost of living, for the introduction of safety measures against accidents, and against fines. It is essential that, in the fixing of piece rates, the interests of the workers should be defended collectively by their representatives or commissions, that the election of the "Labor Front" "Amtswalter," of the "Blockwarte" (fascist representatives who look after the amenities in tenement blocks) and shop stewards should be insisted upon, that in some instances even the extension of the rights of these officials should be demanded, as well as those of the members of the "Labor Front." The more numerous the positions won in the "Labor Front" by anti-fascist trade unionists and honest defenders of the workers' interests, the easier will it be to defend the interests of the workers in and through the "Labor Front" organizations.

In the same way, it is necessary to defend the cultural needs of the working people in the "Strength Through Joy" organization, and to influence its organs so they can be utilized in defense of the demands of the workers and office employees (contributions by the employers for vacation trips, the right of the members of families to take part in these trips, discounts on theater tickets, the supply of clothing, shoes, and sports goods).

In the struggle for these daily interests of the workers comradesly relations have developed between the Communists and Social-Democrats in the factories and to some extent in the mass organizations, on the basis of joint activity. The progressive clarification of the problems of the struggle for a democratic republic, and the comparison between the bitter experiences of the former Social-Democratic coalition policy, and the successes of the People's Front policy in France and Spain, have also contributed to the establishment of the united front in various factories and localities.

Until recently the united front has been limited, for the most part, to agreements between Communists and the most active

Social-Democratic workers concerning measures for defending workers engaged in illegal activity against the Gestapo, concerning aid to the families of those arrested, and the distribution of illegal leaflets. Only seldom were efforts directed toward developing the initiative of the workers for the defense of their daily interests and rights through legal methods of struggle. This *extension of the content of the united front*, the development of a policy which is orientated towards the entire mass of the workers, will also bring the *main mass of the Social-Democratic comrades*, who today take no part in the illegal work, into active participation in the movement.

Today we can already see that collaboration with the Catholic workers is also developing in the main on a legal basis. But the example mentioned above shows that the National-Socialist workers can be better won for joint struggle by utilizing the joint initiative of the Communists and Social-Democrats in the "Labor Front."

In the decisions of the Brussels conference of the Communist Party of Germany it was already stated that we extend a fraternal hand to the National-Socialist working people. But in practice this task has, for the most part, been treated as something quite exceptional. If the united front of the Communists, Social-Democrats and Catholic workers advances such demands and operates such tactics as render it possible to establish unity of action of the entire mass of the workers, then the *winning of the National-Socialist working people to support the united front of the proletariat and the anti-fascist People's Front will become an integral and component part of anti-fascist policy.*

The struggle for the economic interests and rights of the working class and for peace is also connected with the problem of the restoration of an independent trade union movement. To accomplish this it is necessary to pursue a firm line toward rousing to activity in the "Labor Front" the former members of the free and Christian trade unions and the various office

employees' unions, and toward involving them in joint activity there.

The mustering of the active anti-fascist trade union cadres is of tremendous importance for the organization of the resistance of the masses and of strike movements. But trade union activity itself is only possible in legal forms. Therefore the *struggle for the workers' interests within and through the medium of the "Labor Front" is the basis for the creation of a united, independent trade union movement as the class organization of the workers and office employees.*

Today it can already be seen how the class struggle is coming to the surface in the most varied forms, above all in the "Labor Front." In many cases the justification of wage demands is sought in increasing profits, high dividends or directors' salaries. "An end must be put to such disgraceful profits," say the workers. And the press of the "Labor Front" is forced to criticize annual balance sheets which fail to mention cases where the salaries of directors are almost doubled, but which quote expenditures on social services, significant though they are. In developing such resistance a decisive point in the discontent of the masses is the protest against injustice, the struggle for "social justice."

The Communist Party of Germany directs its main blow against the *upper sections of society* through its struggle against the armament profiteers, against "the upper ten thousand," against the millionaires, and is striving to spur as wide masses as possible to take the path of class struggle. In this connection it is important to link this up with the promises of the National-Socialists to introduce a tax on millionaires, to confiscate war profits, etc. Not only does this not mean weakening the struggle against the main enemy, Hitler, but, on the contrary, still further facilitates the exposure of those who are interested in war; *and helps graphically to expose to the masses the essence of the Hitler dictatorship as a dictatorship of big business*, to show that the Krupps, Thyssens, Voglers and Henkel-Donnersmarks are an old ulcer in the

body of Germany. They always gained more than everybody else from the war, the inflation, the Young Plan and the armaments.

In this way we shall succeed in bringing those masses who still believe in Hitler to the struggle against the Hitler dictatorship. Therefore, we must use not only illegal means to inculcate and strengthen the principles of the proletarian class struggle and of Marxism-Leninism among the conscious anti-fascist workers, but must at the same time utilize legal means to assist in the awakening and deepening of anti-capitalist sentiments among the masses. All legal and semi-legal ways and means must be used in order to explain to the masses of Germany the victories of socialism in the U.S.S.R., the growing well-being, cultural development and genuine people's democracy being enjoyed in the Soviet Union.

There can be no doubt that the overthrow of Hitler will only be possible through the struggle of the widest masses of the people. *Hitler fears nothing more than unification of the people in the struggle for peace, for the basic vital interests of the masses.* That is exactly why Hitler accuses us, Communists, of being "splitters of the people." Against the "unity" desired by Hitler, which is nothing other than the subjection of the entire life of the people to the fascist war policy, to the interests of the most reactionary circles of monopoly capital and the fascist bureaucracy, it must be the task of all German anti-fascists to do everything to *unite the people for the struggle for peace, and against Hitler's war policy.*

Only through uniting the masses of the German people in the struggle for peace, for their vital interests, for their rights and for justice can Hitler be overthrown. Such, and only such was the content of the October (1936) appeal of the Communist Party of Germany, whereby the Party endeavored to develop a broader mass policy. It is basically wrong to interpret this as an appeal for reconciliation with the National-Socialist Party, as the Social-Democratic papers tried to do—utilizing a single unhappy formulation ("the rec-

conciliation of the German people for freedom, liberty and well being"). Such a distortion of the idea of rallying the masses of the people for the struggle for peace and against Hitler's war policy must be resolutely opposed.

*The unification of the people demands, however, not only the unity of the working class and of all anti-fascist forces, but that wide masses of National-Socialists be drawn into the struggle.* The bearer of this unification can only be the German People's Front, which will also be the guarantee that after the overthrow of Hitler the unification of the anti-fascist forces will be preserved to maintain the newly won freedom.

#### VI. FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE, FOR A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Nevertheless, the unification of forces against Hitler cannot be achieved only through an agreement concerning immediate, partial demands. The unification of the forces of the working class with those of the peasants, middle classes and the supporters of democracy among the bourgeoisie, the mustering of all of these forces in the German People's Front, can be attained and achieve victory only if *all the anti-fascist forces have a single common aim.* This common aim is the democratic republic. This aim, at the present stage, unites very wide sections of the masses. In Germany fascism has liquidated all the people's rights and democratic institutions, it has thrown Germany back hundreds of years. That is why a number of tasks of a bourgeois character are again on the order of the day in Germany.

*A profound urge for democratic forms exists and is growing in Germany, embracing workers, peasants, the middle classes, intellectuals, and to some extent even bourgeois circles.* This urge has received added strength from the success of the People's Front in Spain and France, and the introduction of the new Stalin Constitution in the Soviet Union. This urge is expressed in the most varied and sometimes very primitive forms. The workers want to state their opinions, they

demand that they be drawn into participation in drawing up piece-rate prices; as members of the "Labor Front" and in other organizations they are striving to secure additional rights and themselves want to elect the people who enjoy their confidence to the posts of "Blockwarte" and "Amtswalter."

In the municipalities the working people are demanding that public reports be given by the municipal authorities, and are insisting on the convocation of meetings of the municipalities, and in some cases have succeeded in having especially brutal Nazi mayors removed from office. In the City Council of Gelsenkirchen in connection with the discussion of the budget, a representative of the middle classes openly made a proposal to maintain the former, low business taxes, otherwise the burden would fall upon the shoulders of those least able to bear them. These sentiments find their expression in an article in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*.

"At least once in every four weeks," it stated, "*the municipal councils should meet publicly; and here the task of the press begins.* If the meetings of the municipal councils take place in such a way that only the order of business is announced while as far as possible no reports at all are made, then even the best press report cannot awaken any interest among the public in such meetings. The interest of the public can only be awakened and maintained by a genuine spark, and this genuine spark is called 'freedom of opinion.'"

In connection with the struggle of the Catholics in Oldenburg against the prohibition of the crucifix in the schools, meetings of the inhabitants and deliberations in peasants' homes in the village were successfully carried through. Should not the demand of more rights for the inhabitants and the election of municipal councils be raised in the name of moral cleanliness, as a most immediate and pressing question? Thus the *struggle for the right to elect* in the factories, the "Labor Front," the organizations of the "Reichsnahrstände" (Imperial Peasant Estate) in the municipalities and every-

where becomes one of the main demands in the movement for democratic liberty.

The new prohibition of the election of the "Confidence Councils" shows how fascism is afraid of this struggle, is proof that fascism cannot now rely upon a considerable section of its own supporters. This is evidence of the correctness of the tactics of the Communist Party of Germany in the struggle for the elections of "Confidence Councils." The Communist Party of Germany was correct when it demanded that reports be given by the former "Confidence Councils" and that new "councils" be elected, demanding also the right to put forward such candidates as could be depended upon to defend the interests of the working class. But this lesson also shows that the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party, which rejected the struggle for the election of the "Confidence Councils," by its shortsighted tactics only played into the hands of Hitler, who succeeded in canceling the elections without any great difficulty. It is essential to develop all democratic strivings, especially in the mass organizations, to achieve joint action by the members of these organizations, to call for disobedience to the orders of the fascist leaders, and to place at the head of these organizations people who have the confidence of the rank-and-file membership.

It is worthwhile to consider such a fact as the speech of Professor Sauerbach at the Physicians' Congress in Dresden, where, before an audience which held its breath, only to break into stormy applause, he expressed the opinion of all progressive scientists:

"The higher schools have the right to decide for themselves where their place is, and they are able to do this, in spite of all attempts to refuse to recognize this right. . . . The new path, now being recommended, is no path at all. . . . *The essence of science and of the scientist is inner freedom.*"

No less characteristic is the fact that at the performance of Schiller's "Don Carlos" in the State Theater in Berlin the words "Give us freedom of thought, sire"

are greeted by stormy applause. The German youth also desire the free development of their forces. They protest against the suppression of the ardent spirit of youth through drill and the blind discipline hammered in by the club: they want to decide the content of their lives themselves, and in this regard make reference to the rights of the young generation freely to display initiative and critically to estimate the existing situation.

The great, militant task of the German People's Front is systematically to develop and to support all these strivings for freedom. Hitler's calumny against democracy only proves his fear of the urge of the masses of the people for the extension of their rights; he fears that this will lead to joint action and to big mass struggles.

The enemy understands very well that at the present stage the slogan "*For the rights of the people, for a democratic republic,*" rallies together very wide masses of the people. Certain "Socialist Workers Party" leaders and Left Social-Democrats do not see the great progressive significance of this struggle. They are forever looking backwards, and pointing to the Social-Democratic coalition policy and the capitulation of the Social-Democratic trade union leaders. They are right when they condemn this policy, but they completely forget that the social and democratic achievements after 1918 were the results of the struggles of the German working class, and that these achievements were liquidated step by step by the Social-Democratic coalition policy.

They, that is, certain "Socialist Workers' Party" leaders and Left Social-Democrats, also overlook the changes that have taken place in this period. The bankruptcy of the Social-Democratic coalition policy, the shameful capitulation of the Social-Democratic Ministers who fled at the sight of a lieutenant and three soldiers on the 20th of July, 1932, now stand out in sharp contrast to the successes of the People's Front in France, and the lessons of the heroic struggle of the Spanish people on the basis of the People's Front.

In the interests of the struggle against

Hitler, the supporters of the People's Front must declare their opposition to those falsifiers of history who wish to identify the heroic struggle of the German working class with the coalition policy of the Social-Democratic Ministers. It is no accident that Hitler in general vilifies democracy, for he wants in this way to hit at the struggle of the workers for freedom, for the right to organize, for freedom of assembly and the press, and the right to hold elections, and for social insurance. He wants in this way to hinder the working people from recognizing that the struggle for a democratic republic is the way out of fascist barbarism.

In the coming democratic republic, a republic of a new and higher type, the people will enjoy predominant influence, the privileges of big business being destroyed, and the roots of fascism extirpated. *In advancing the slogan of the democratic republic, the working class comes forward as the bearer of, and foremost fighter for the unification of the people to overthrow the Hitler dictatorship.* In the last period sentiments in favor of the People's Front have been growing in Germany. This reflects the successes of the Front Populaire in France and of the struggle of the Frente Popular in Spain, but it is also the effect of the propaganda of the preparatory Committee for the Establishment of a German People's Front, and the inspiring declarations of the great German writer, Heinrich Mann. The masses are aroused.

In the struggle for the establishment of the People's Front in Germany it is necessary to take into consideration the concrete situation; the fascist terror, the destruction of the legal organizations of the working class, peasants, middle class and of the democratic bourgeoisie. Comrade Wilhelm Pieck, Chairman of the Communist Party of Germany, has shown, in his directions regarding the creation of a German People's Front, how to organize the struggle for peace, freedom and well-being, in the spirit of a broad People's Front policy, by making the starting point the immediate interests of the masses and by working first and foremost in the fas-

cist mass organizations. Just as the workers, either voluntarily or through compulsion, belong to the "Labor Front" and other such organizations, so the peasants are covered by the organizations of the "Imperial Peasant Estate," and the middle class, doctors, scientists, writers, etc., by the fascist mass professional organizations. It is within these organizations that they are striving to defend their interests, and there lies the possibility for joint action.

If the movement for the People's Front in Germany as yet only covers a narrow circle of the anti-fascist forces, this is because it has only just begun to deal with the immediate questions, affecting wide masses of the people. It is essential to support such partial and urgent demands of the masses, as the masses themselves consider practicable. In this sense, it is necessary, on the basis of the central question of the struggle against Hitler's war policy and for the maintenance of peace, to make a careful study of the questions of wages, the food supply, problems of the rights of the people, economic and financial policy, the position of the peasants, the middle classes, the women and the youth. Further legal demands must be drawn up for the various sections of the people, and the masses shown the way to make use of all legal possibilities to improve their their conditions of life.

It is not enough merely to expose the policy of Hitler fascism as inimical to the people; what must be done, in addition, is directly to develop the initiative of the masses in the struggle to improve the conditions of the working people; they must be shown the goal and the means whereby the People's Front will solve the vital problems of the German people in the coming democratic republic. Thus, it is necessary to strengthen the *consciousness of the working class and mass of the people*, and their faith in their own strength, in convincing fashion to explain to all the people that by its struggle to maintain peace and against Hitler's war policy, the People's Front is defending the genuine national interests of the German people and is the power that will lead the German people to a happy future.

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# Results of a Year's Work and Current Tasks

BY G. COGNIOT

**I**T is a year since the Front Populaire won its electoral victory in France. The parties of the Front Populaire won a majority of seats in the Chamber of Deputies, while the votes of the workers' parties showed a considerable increase. The Communist candidates received 1,500,000 votes against 800,000 at the last elections. The Socialist Party became the strongest party in Parliament.

After the elections of April, 1936, a new government was formed, and was assured the support of the Communist parliamentary group in the fulfilment of the program of the Front Populaire. This government is still operating (April, 1937).

What benefits have the masses of the people received from the new political line pursued during the year? What advantages have been gained by the working class on the one hand, and by the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie on the other hand—these groups who joined with the proletarians in the Front Populaire to safeguard "Bread, Peace and Liberty"?

What problems arise, and what are the prospects ahead?

What strikes one's attention at the outset is the fact of the maintenance and consolidation of the unity of the masses of the people in the Front Populaire. The reactionaries vainly calculated on the working class and the masses of the people becoming disillusioned in the very first period of the application of the program of the Front Populaire, especially in the economic sphere.

However, not only was there no decline but, on the contrary, there was a big development of the activity of the masses themselves systematically to realize the economic and political demands,

A year has passed, and all the social groupings which constitute the main forces of the Front Populaire—workers and peasants, office employees and intellectuals, artisans and small shop-keepers—remain as heretofore firmly united, adherents of the realization of their common program, and steadfastly opposed to the "two hundred families," that is to say, to the financial oligarchy, and fascism at home and abroad. Far from the echo of the victory of April-May, 1936, having died down, the treacherous and repeated attempts made by capitalist reaction and its agents to disrupt the bloc of the Front Populaire have been shattered by the farsightedness and profound solidarity of the masses of the people.

In the minds of the masses the unity of the Front Populaire has become something dear and precious. This unity does not depend on the ups and downs of the surface of political life; it is not at the mercy of parliamentary maneuvers, however refined they may be. Henceforth it belongs to the people, it is their cause. The people are keeping a careful watch on those who are sabotaging and disorganizing the People's Front, a watch which is necessary in view of the fact that the machinations of the enemies of the people are increasing.

The Front Populaire has made it possible to secure the satisfaction of important demands of the working class. Immediately after the election victory the working class, without letting their heads be turned by their success, quite well understood that the realization of the program of the Front Populaire would demand much perseverance and serious ef-

forts; that big business would not disarm even before such a clear expression of the will of the French people, but that, on the contrary, it would not hesitate to resort to any means to prevent the realization of the Front Populaire program, and to divide and destroy this front.

And so, the struggle of the workers continued. It attained an especially high degree of tension in the powerful strike movement of June, 1936, when about 2,000,000 strikers, who drew along with them new elements such as the office employees, occupied the factories and building sites, department stores and offices, with a working class discipline which produced a no smaller impression on the bourgeoisie than did the formidable extent of the attack. The battles of June, 1936, brought about a decisive improvement in the lot of the working people and brought them en masse into the united trade unions.

The General Confederation of Labor came out of this struggle as the most highly organized force in France. At the same time the working class obtained important economic gains, while its social position was considerably strengthened. Its relative importance in the economic and political life of the country was suddenly increased, and it became possible to breathe more freely in the factories, while the possibilities for organization increased.

There can be no doubt that, above all, the standard of living of the working class was raised. The Matignon Agreements concluded between the General Confederation of French Industry (the employers' organization—*Ed.*) and the General Confederation of Labor on June 7, 1936, raised average wages by from 7 to 15 per cent, while the lowest wage rates were considerably increased.

Further, the employers had to accept the principle of collective agreements to which they had always been opposed. In the past about twenty-five collective agreements were signed in France every year. The new type of collective agreements concluded by virtue of the law of June 14, 1936, are to contain, apart from

wage rates and other similar points, the recognition of the freedom of trade union organization and of freedom of opinion for the workers, as well as the principle of the election of union stewards by the staff. Conscious of the power of their own organizations, which face the employers, and of the changes brought about in the relation of class forces, the working class considered the agreements to be a great achievement. In the new law the working class see the possibility of ridding themselves of the oppressive regime of the one-sided and often draconian "Rules of Conduct in the Works." About 2,000 collective agreements have been signed and the workers are vigilant in their protection of their union stewards against the vindictiveness of the employers.

Add to this the 40-hour week already applied to about 5,000,000 workers in the most important branches of industry, and in process of application in the rest of industry. Add the principle of the annual holiday with pay which has been met with enthusiasm by the working class, and which more than 500,000 working people were able to utilize in the summer of 1936, so as to undertake, for the first time, extensive excursions and holiday travels.

All these conquests of June have played a considerable role in the life of the working class, and have introduced substantial modifications into this life. And even though many of the demands have not yet been satisfied, the working class feels profoundly attached to the Front Populaire which was established on the initiative of the Communist Party.

The Front Populaire has also rapidly provided considerable gains to the lower civil servants and ex-servicemen, particularly by abolishing the exceptional laws passed by the Laval government, which cut down salaries and certain benefits of state employees, as well as pensions and assistance to war victims.

The Front Populaire has secured substantial improvements for the small traders and artisans. On the one hand their turnover has increased as a result of the increase in the purchasing power

of the working people and of the peasants who constitute the majority of the customers. A certain indication of this may be found in the decline in the number of bankruptcies in the second half of the year 1936 as compared with the corresponding period in 1935. For example, in December, 1936, there were 559 bankruptcies as compared with 815 in December, 1935.

In addition, the new parliament has adopted laws providing for the direct protection of those very important sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie whose position has been eased by such measures as the stopping of distraints, the provision of loans by the Banque de France (unfortunately on too limited a scale), the introduction of changes into the unpopular turnover tax schedule, as from January 1, 1937, and finally the recent law which puts an end to the abuses connected with the purchase and sale of small business premises.

The French peasantry were also not forgotten by the victorious Front Populaire, which secured the establishment of the National Office for the Regulation of the Prices of Grain in August last year, thus enabling the peasants to sell the 1936 grain harvest at 140 francs per quintal, *i.e.*, at double the price prevailing in 1935. The tendency with regard to the prices of the other agricultural products such as wine and cattle was similar to that of grain, although in a varied degree. In addition draft legislation to protect the *metayers* (peasants who pay rent in kind) and working peasants, etc., is either under discussion or examination.

These achievements do not, of course, exhaust the program of the legitimate and urgent demands of the middle classes. But facts have proved to them that the Front Populaire deserves their support, that it stands as a rampart against misery, against the terrible ruin to which monopoly capital doomed the petty bourgeoisie.

The big capitalists were taken by surprise and beaten by the powerful movement of June, just as they were surprised in April and May last year by the extent of the electoral defeat of their political

hirelings. And so from the summer of 1936 onwards they decided to renew the struggle by resorting to new tactics. The General Confederation of French Industry was reorganized in the direction of concentrating the forces of the employers and of establishing direct relations between the Executive Council of this Federation and the management of each enterprise. At the head of the federation there was placed M. Gignoux, a militant individual, an out-and-out enemy of the working class, formerly an official working in close contact with Pierre Laval, the Prime Minister whose government issued the anti-popular exceptional laws. He is also the director of one of the press organs of the Comité des Forges.

The method of compromise gave way to offensive tactics, which were given very supple and varied forms. Discontent was provoked among the workers by practising the systematic dismissal, on all sorts of pretexts, of the union stewards elected by the workers. A shortage of raw materials was organized so as to provide an excuse for dismissing workers and sabotaging production, even though this production was required for national defense purposes, and though, as everybody knew, the respective firms abundantly lined their pockets with profits from the government orders.

At the same time the trusts and combines methodically brought about a rise in prices so as to reduce to nothing the wage increases, to wipe out from the minds of the people the favorable impressions created by the beginning of the economic revival, to cut short the desire to put forward demands which might follow on it, and finally to discredit the government and the Front Populaire in general. It would be vain to hide the fact that the fascist leaders of the trusts and monopolies achieved successes in this systematic organization of the rise in the cost of living. Thus, in regard to sugar, milk, soap and coal there were increases of 18, 27, 35 and 25 per cent respectively in December, 1936, as compared with July.

By violating social legislation and provoking the workers, the big employers

hoped to damage the unity and strength of the trade union movement, to shatter the C.G.T. in order to be enabled to establish so-called "professional unions" in the factories, led by the "Croix de Feu" (Fiery Crosses). Further, they hoped to rob the working class of their social gains after isolating them from the middle classes and the peasantry, among whom they tried to spread the most shameful calumnies as to the causes of the new strikes, the occupation of the factories and the allegedly insatiable desires of the workers, etc.

All these maneuvers were rendered futile by the firmness and steadiness of the workers' organizations. The workers, office employees and lower officials did not allow themselves to be provoked to inconsiderate action, but neither did they give way to the capitalist offensive, nor "retreat in the daily conflicts." They demanded and in the main obtained wage increases to meet the general and rapid rise of prices. Steadily, trade by trade, they are securing the operation of the 40-hour week to which the big employers were most of all opposed.

This explains why big capital has had to seek new ways, and in the recent period has transferred the main weight to direct pressure on the government, more especially on the Minister of Finances and the State Treasury. The representatives of the trusts and banks did everything to sabotage the country's finances and to spread panic by organizing the flight of capital abroad, the withdrawal of the gold belonging to the rich from the Banque de France, the sabotage of government loans rendered necessary by the difficult heritage received from the previous, reactionary governments.

Since the government has not yet applied the points in the Front Populaire program which are designed to "make the rich pay" and, in particular, has not up to the present adopted the Communist proposals for the democratic reform of the fiscal system, and for these reasons has not been able through normal channels to find the necessary resources, it had at the beginning of March to make consider-

able concessions to the banks and capitalists on whom it called to subscribe to the new loan. The government announced a "pause" in the operation of the numerous demands of the Front Populaire not yet put into operation, and on March 6 appealed to the holders of capital, offering them participation in a loan on exceptionally favorable conditions, while re-establishing the freedom of the movement of gold and including several typical representatives of big business in a commission charged with watching the stock market.

How did the capitalist financiers on the one hand, and on the other hand the working people gathered around the Front Populaire, react to this announcement of a "pause" and to the deeds supporting it?

The capitalist magnates replied by helping to cover the loan with its so tempting terms, but also made the unanimous demand on the government that it cease collaboration with the powerful workers' trade unions and turn against them; that the government should give up the 40-hour week and the adjustment to meet the increased cost of living; that it should give up the struggle against profiteering and the whole of the economic and social policy of the Front Populaire, that it should in fact assist in bringing about a political front directed against the working class and the working people in general. According to the words of *Le Temps*, organ of the Comité des Forges, the concessions made in the sphere of financial technique were not sufficient. What was needed from the government was, in its view, a similar technique in the economic and political spheres.

The working people gathered around the Front Populaire were profoundly indignant at the insolent attempts of the fascist reactionaries to force their will on the government—which came into being as a result of the victory of the Front Populaire—to abandon its program. In a series of tremendous demonstrations they advanced the slogan of the Communist Party: "The pause? Let the trusts introduce one!"

How close are the fraternal bonds of

the working people united in the Front Populaire was shown some days later following the bloody provocation of the fascist leagues at Clichy, on the outskirts of Paris. The Parti Social Francais (French Social Party), which is nothing other than a camouflage of the fascist movement of the "Croix de Feu," which was dissolved by law after the victory of the Front Populaire, has only been able to constitute itself in opposition to the program of the Front Populaire, wherein there was promised the disarmament and dissolution of the fascist organizations. On March 16 this "Party" organized an act of provocation in the typical working class center of Clichy—an act which the fascist reactionaries calculated would result in disrupting the Front Populaire.

The "Parti Social Francais" succeeded in provoking a conflict between the police and a mass demonstration called together by the local Front Populaire Committee to protest against the activities of the fascists. The P.S.F. thus hoped to set the masses of the people against the government, and that the fall of the government would finally provoke schisms in the Front Populaire which would be of benefit to the fascists.

It is well known with what penetration and power the factory workers and working people of Paris reinforced their unity by the unanimous general strike of March 18 and by the tremendous demonstration on March 21 in which 1,000,000 people took part. They demanded prompt and resolute measures to secure the dissolution of the illegally constituted leagues, and the purging of the ranks of the police, the army and the higher state officials. The heads of the P.S.F. were handed over to the courts on the charge of reconstituting the fascist leagues.

Once again the hopes of the fascist reactionaries who speculated on splitting the Front Populaire were disappointed.

But they are far from having given up their arms. Against the unity of the French people they have powerful reserves in the shape of the sympathy and support of European reaction, and of German fascism above all. It is significant

that on the very evening when the French parliament was discussing the provocation at Clichy, it was the Hitlerite renegade Doriot, the "Fuehrer" of the so-called "People's Party" and the "Hope" of the Brown House, who resorted to cynical anti-Communist calumnies and vainly attempted to use the parliamentary tribune to carry through a large-scale maneuver to cover up the fascist leagues, and to save those responsible for spilling the blood of the workers and attempting to disrupt the Front Populaire.

Fascism in France quite clearly recognizes its solidarity with fascism abroad, in the shape of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. It is glad to see that international fascism is not only preparing a war of intervention, but that it has already begun intervention in Spain. It supports with all its power the traitor generals and the interventionist armies on the other side of the Pyrenees. It is only to be regretted that in the sphere of domestic policy the government based on the Front Populaire has been slow to bring about the democratic reform of the fiscal system which would have saved it from the humiliation of March 6, and that it has hesitated to disband the reconstituted fascist leagues and dismiss their accomplices occupying high administrative posts (all this hesitation was the indirect cause of the events of March 16).

In the same way the masses of the people are coming more and more to understand that the danger of war cannot be overcome, but will only be aggravated by continually yielding to the blackmail of Hitler and Mussolini, and aggressors who have attacked Spanish democracy. The policy of the Communist Party as regards Spain has the approval of ever growing circles, even of the sections of the petty bourgeoisie who were not always absolutely impervious to the calumnies directed against the Communists some months ago.

The Communist Party of France has proved itself to be the consistent and devoted defender of the economic demands of the working people, of the factory workers and of the petty bourgeoisie of

town and country, demands contained in the program of the Front Populaire.

The Communist Party has continued to work tirelessly to bring about the dissolution of the fascist leagues, overt and covert, and the purging of the police force, the army and the higher administrative bodies, to secure the withdrawal of the interventionist armies from Spain, and to support republican Spain against the fascist bandits who are menacing not only the security of France but also world peace.

The Communist Party has exerted all efforts to paralyze the maneuvers of fascist reaction which, with the help of the Trotskyite provocateurs who have penetrated the trade unions and the anti-fascist movement of the petty bourgeois (intellectuals), etc., is furiously striving to disrupt the Front Populaire, the fraternal alliance among the proletariat and the working farmers and urban petty bourgeoisie based on the united front of the working class.

The consolidation of working class unity constitutes a decisive condition for strengthening the Front Populaire. After so many months of joint struggle, the members of the Socialist Party, allies of the Communist Party by the Pact for United Action of July 27, 1934, are more and more understanding this necessity. What added strength the working class of France would receive if, following on the unity achieved in the trade union movement, there were brought about political unity, if the Communist Party with its 305,000 members and the Socialist Party with its 202,000 members were to unite and form a single class party which would immediately have more than 500,000 members, and possess a tremendous power of attraction.

This is why the Communist Party has

just asked of the Socialist Party that it should again examine the Communist proposal for joint meetings between the Communist and Socialist organizations in the localities, for the discussion of ways and means of bringing into being a united proletarian party based on the principles of democratic centralism and absolutely independent of the bourgeois exploiters and their parties—a united proletarian party capable of leading the masses of the people to victory over fascist reaction, and toward the introduction in the future of the French Republic of Workers' and Peasants' Soviets.

The big bourgeoisie in France consider the existing situation to be a temporary evil. They are arming the fascist gangs, and during the last few weeks have been trying to unite them into a single organization. They are preparing a new and powerful offensive against the working class and the General Confederation of Labor, the Communist Party and the Front Populaire.

The duty of the Communists is quite clear. It is to consolidate and extend the unity of the working class and the unity of the working people in the Front Populaire for the defense and realization of the economic demands of the various groups of the working population, as contained in the common program. It is to "make the rich pay" and to secure the purging of the army, the police, and the higher administrative apparatus, to strengthen the unions affiliated to the C.G.T., where all working people should be able to find the necessary support in all aspects of their struggles and of their life. It is to support republican Spain and the struggle against the fascist instigators of world war, to make preparations for the political unity of the working class, and the strengthening of all the forces of democracy and peace.

# The Power of the General Confederation of Labor in France

BY HENRI RAYNAUD

**T**HE General Confederation of Labor (C.G.T.) in France has more than 5,000,000 members today. It is the biggest and strongest of the national centers affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions.

The C.G.T. is organized on the dual basis of federations of industry and of regional and inter-regional trades councils. It has 44 industrial federations and 86 regional and inter-regional trades councils. Numerically it is the strongest organization in the country. If account is taken of the fact that there are about 11,000,000 employed workers of all kinds in France, the above figures go to show that the C.G.T. is not far now from covering the majority of the workers eligible for membership of the trade unions in France. But its most characteristic feature is the rapidity with which the C.G.T. has developed since trade union unity was brought about. The present strength of the C.G.T. is the result of the trade union unity finally brought about at the Unity Congress that took place in Toulouse in March, 1936. In less than a year the membership of the C.G.T. increased from 1,091,500 to 5,000,000.

Here are a few figures to show the importance of this increase. Taking the data for February, 1936, and February, 1937, we see the following:

|                                | NO. OF MEMBERS |              |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
|                                | Feb.<br>1936   | Feb.<br>1937 |
| Metal Workers Federation ..... | 50,000         | 775,000      |
| Building Workers Fed-          |                |              |

|   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| eration .....                                 | 65,000  | 540,000 |
| Office Employees Fed-<br>eration .....        | 15,000  | 285,000 |
| Food Workers Federa-<br>tion .....            | 15,000  | 300,000 |
| Miners Federation ...                         | 75,000  | 270,000 |
| Federation of Techni-<br>cians and Designers. | 500     | 79,100  |
| Railway Workers Fed-<br>eration .....         | 165,000 | 320,000 |
| Textile Workers Feder-<br>ation .....         | 47,000  | 360,000 |
| Civil Servants General<br>Federation .....    | 231,000 | 254,000 |

A similar development is of course to be marked in the affiliated membership of the regional and inter-regional trades councils, which cover all the trade unions in the various branches of industry in a given region or group of regions. Let us point in particular to the inter-regional federation of la Seine and la Seine-et-Oise (Paris district), which began with 200,000 affiliated members in January, 1936, and reached the figure of 1,100,000 members in January, 1937, *i.e.*, the absolute majority of employed workers in the Paris district.\*

There can be no doubt that the atmosphere of unity created by the Toulouse Congress, and especially the unanimous vote in favor of the resolution regarding the character and tasks of the movement, indicate not only that organic unity has been achieved, but also the abandonment of war among groups. This has thorough-

\* Comrade Henri Raynaud, author of the present article, is secretary of the Paris Regional Trades Council.

ly corresponded to the hopes of the working class of France, and explains why the workers have begun to join the C.G.T. unions since March, 1936.

It is this confidence of the proletarians in their trade union organization that has considerably increased their confidence in themselves, along with the electoral successes of the Front Populaire in May, 1936, and enabled the working class of France to develop the magnificent movement of June, 1936, the success of which exerted and still exerts a tremendous influence on the position and state of mind of the French workers.

The success of the strikes that took place in June, 1936, the signing of the Matignon Agreements,\* the considerable and general increase in wages, the recognition of the C.G.T. as the organization most competent to conclude the collective agreements, the signature of these agreements by the trade unions, the establishment of union stewards in the works, the voting in parliament by the parties of the Front Populaire of the social legislation long demanded by the workers (holidays with pay, 40-hour week)—all these points determined this tremendous movement toward the General Confederation of Labor, the membership of which has increased by five times.

The bourgeoisie, who were already surprised by the extent of the victory of the Front Populaire in the May elections, were still further surprised by the scope and suddenness of the June strikes.

In a few days, the movement begun in the metal industry of the Paris district spread rapidly to all the other industries in the district, and then to the whole province. Millions and millions of workers, together with even the most highly qualified technicians and the office employees, occupied their respective enterprises for several weeks, without even a screw being lost, without the slightest disorder, without the slightest accident.

As a result, collective agreements,

\* The Matignon Agreements were the agreements signed at the Matignon Hotel, the premises of the Prime Minister's offices.

guaranteeing to observe the rights of the trade unions, the operation of social legislation, the payment of minimum wages to the respective categories of workers, were signed in the various industries. This showed the tremendous role played by the trade unions affiliated to the C.G.T.

But when the big employers who had retreated before the attack recovered from their surprise, they collected and reorganized their forces, changed the leadership of their general staff, removed those who had signed the Matignon Agreements, and concentrated their forces in preparation for a counter-offensive.

The devaluation of the French currency brought about by the law of October 1, 1936, was used by the employers and big trusts to increase the cost of living; at the same time the counter-offensive against the C.G.T. developed along two lines—the line of establishing yellow unions, and of systematic dismissals of the best and most active members of the C.G.T.

On the political field during this period the employers, with the object of splitting the Front Populaire, strove to set the middle classes against the C.G.T. by making use of the prolonged period of the strike movement and the occupation of the factories, or the outbreak of new movements caused by the attacks and irreconcilable behavior of the employers.

The C.G.T. and the "extreme Left elements"—this term has the Communists particularly in view—were presented to the peasants and the small tradesmen as being responsible for the continuation of the strikes, as elements of disorder preventing the economic revival. At the same time, the big employers, by creating a shortage of raw materials, did everything possible to paralyze the revival, the first signs of which were beginning to be felt in the country.

Loyal to the Front Populaire, of which it constitutes the main mass organization, and having no desire in any way to become separated from the peasants and

the middle classes, the C.G.T. succeeded in the months of October, November and December, 1936, in overcoming the difficulties created by the counter-offensive of the employers, and deepened to a certain degree by the demagogy of the Trotskyite elements and other agents of the bourgeoisie.

In spite of the strike movements which were occasionally abortive, there were in some places cases of the dismissal of workers on the pretext of closing down departments or of reorganizing production. But the C.G.T. succeeded in securing wage increases to meet the high cost of living, through the medium of compulsory arbitration, increases which, if not entirely satisfactory, were still quite considerable. On the other hand the C.G.T. has succeeded, contrary to the expectations of the bourgeoisie, in maintaining its membership to the present day, in spite of the maneuvers of the yellow and Christian trade union.

Many branches of industry have secured increases in wages amounting to from 10 to 15 per cent, according to the collective agreements of June last. With the abolition of the extraordinary decrees, civil servants and employees in state and municipal enterprises have received increases of 100 francs per month.

The increase in the cost of living, which was developing with remarkable rapidity, appears to be slowing down somewhat during the last few weeks.

The increase in wages is lagging behind the increase in the cost of living, since the prices of goods increased by 20 per cent while the working class has received increases which are inadequate by comparison. But the workers understand the need for maintaining and strengthening the Front Populaire. They are continuing to demand the application of the sliding scale, so as thus to protect their wages against the fluctuation of prices, and to preserve their purchasing power. They are loyal as heretofore to the C.G.T. and are determined to secure the operation of the program of the Front Populaire. They are maintaining all their vigilance in re-

spect to the camouflaged fascist leagues, are demanding that these be finally and completely dissolved.

The bloody events at Clichy, at the bottom of which there lies provocation directed against the Front Populaire and chiefly against the Communist Party, enabled the working people of the Paris region to show their power, their discipline and their desire for order.

The several hours' strike carried through on a hitherto unparalleled scale in Paris and its outskirts by the Paris Regional Trades Council in agreement with the C.G.T.; the complete and conscious discipline with which more than 2,000,000 Paris workers renewed work at the time fixed in advance, and in a few minutes radically changed the appearance of the capital; the participation of more than 1,000,000 people in the dignified and calm funeral procession that followed the victims of the shootings at Clichy—all these are concrete manifestations of the strength of the C.G.T. which cannot fail to exert considerable influence on the further development of events.

It is clear that the big employers consider the existence of the General Confederation of Labor, with a membership of more than 5,000,000, and the Paris Regional Trades Council, with more than 1,000,000 members, as intolerable. It is clear that these hostile forces have not given up their idea of smashing the Front Populaire, of breaking up the C.G.T. On the contrary, this desire and pressure of the enemy are growing in proportion as the Front Populaire consolidates itself and the C.G.T. develops its influence. Thus the struggle between the classes is developing without interruption, while the antagonism between the people and the two hundred rich families is growing.

With the successes of the labor movement, the responsibilities and dangers are increasing. The C.G.T. and its officials will avoid losing their heads from success, and are far from underestimating the forces and possibilities of the

enemy. Of course, the rebel leagues and fascism have been held up and driven back by the success of the Front Populaire and the C.G.T. But it only requires a moment's thought to understand how great the danger is when big capital is seeking all possible ways of profiting from the difficulties of the present situation in order to compel the government to make important concessions and abandon the program of the Front Populaire.

The C.G.T. has to understand this situation if it desires to strengthen its unity, and not only to preserve its present membership but to win to the trade unions those millions of workers who are still outside of their ranks. Inside the Front Populaire it must remain the decisive mass core, capable of taking the initiative in the forward movement, and at the same time displaying sufficient prudence and political acumen so as not to be isolated from the other forces of the Front Populaire—from the middle classes and the peasants.

In a few weeks, in June, 1937, the problem of the renewal of the collective agreements will arise. Discussions will begin between the trade unions and the employers' organizations. The trade unions will not fail to undertake the defense of the workers' demands, but they will take care to put forward demands which can be realized. In view of the forthcoming opening of the 1937 Exhibition, and the desire of the employers to sabotage its success by means of provocation, it is necessary to avoid all grounds which could be used by the employers against the working class.

The C.G.T., which plays a foremost role in the Front Populaire, is recognizing more and more its responsibilities in this movement which the bourgeoisie is engaged in attacking so fiercely, because it realizes that it is the main obstacle in the road to fascism and war. By preserving its unity and increasing its membership, the C.G.T. will thereby effectively preserve the Front Populaire against all disastrous schisms.

The C.G.T. will be able not only to maintain its membership, but constantly

to secure new members, if it carries on regular organizational work, if it copes with all the numerous tasks which face it.

It must constantly respond to the desires of the workers and follow their daily lives.

The immediate tasks facing the C.G.T. are to organize the leisure time of the workers, to organize and train the union stewards, who constitute its main support in the struggle for the economic demands of the workers.

It depends on the degree to which the trade union remains united whether it will secure its members a number of advantages and concrete gains. It depends on the extent to which it bases itself on the class struggle, to which it is realistic in the struggle for economic demands whether it will be able to withstand all the attacks of the bourgeoisie.

At the same time the C.G.T., which is today the strongest section of the International Federation of Trade Unions, has a particularly big responsibility in respect to its international policy. Inside the I.F.T.U. it has to pursue its efforts in favor of united international action, with more energy than ever before. What is at stake is the cause of peace and liberty, the fate of the Spanish republic and consequently the future of the French working class.

At the February conference, held in London, of the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions, the C.G.T., in conjunction with the Spanish delegates, demanded that an enlarged international conference be called to which all the anti-fascist forces in the world should be invited. Under the pressure of the British trade union leaders the I.F.T.U. still resists international united action. This will only be overcome if the C.G.T. speaks out loud and with sufficient firmness, if it is active.

In spite of the farce of non-intervention and control, the fascist countries continue to give all possible aid to the Spanish rebels. The war in Spain is not

only a civil war, but a war of the fascist countries against the Spanish people, a war which will continue if the forces of the international proletariat remain inactive.

The conference of the I.F.T.U. and the L.S.I. declared itself for the organization of an international week of aid for the Spanish republic. What is needed is that the C.G.T. take the lead in developing the international campaign in favor of Spain. The C.G.T. from the outset demanded that international law be respected and, in consequence, that Republican Spain—and Republican Spain alone—be given the right to purchase arms and munitions wherewith to defend

itself. Can it hesitate now when the Italian and German expeditionary corps are continuing to engage in action in Spain, to waver as regards to whether everything possible should be done to help to bring about the triumph of free Spain?

The maintenance of the Front Populaire, the defense of trade union unity, and the maintenance and further development of the C.G.T. will depend in no small degree on the outcome of the struggle for liberty on the Iberian peninsula. The C.G.T. will not forget this and will always take this into account in its activity.

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# The Struggle for the People's Front in the United States

BY EARL BROWDER

## I. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SUPREME COURT AND FOR THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

**T**HE results of the work of the Communist Party of the United States in the presidential election campaign and since have fully confirmed the correctness of its policy.

In the analysis before the elections evaluating the political forces in the country the Communist Party pointed to the Republican Party as the rallying center of all the reactionary fascist forces in America. The first task that our Party set itself was to secure the defeat of this reactionary camp in the elections. It was already clear to us that the mass Farmer-Labor Party movement which is arising in America would in the election campaign be committed to the re-election of Roosevelt, around whom the progressive forces of the country against fascism and war were mainly centering. The Communist Party set itself the task in the campaign to secure the maximum possible independent organization of these progressive forces which were supporting Roosevelt, to develop our united front relations with them, while maintaining our independent ticket and platform. While carrying out these tasks the Communist Party set itself the aim of building the Party and extending its influence.

It is generally agreed that the Communist Party was one of the effective forces in the campaign that rallied the great mass movement that defeated the reactionaries in America as they had never been before. The defeat of the

Republican Party was on a such a scale that has not been seen in American politics for more than a hundred years. It further was of such a character as to react directly to the advantage of our Party, inasmuch as the Republicans carried out their campaign on the slogan of the fight against Communism, going to the extreme of charges that the Roosevelt camp was tinted with Communism. This campaign against Roosevelt served to discredit all anti-Red propaganda in America. Every Red-baiter in America was defeated in the elections, no matter to what group he belonged.

Progress was made in the building of the independent organization of the Farmer-Labor Party movement. There was a wide extension of the idea among the masses, particularly in the progressive unions. There was a national conference which put forward a draft program for the Farmer-Labor Party movement nationally—a fairly satisfactory program. This movement took on the general orientation of a People's Front against fascism and war.

The same trend was seen within some large organized movements inside the Democratic Party, such as the EPIC movement in California and the Commonwealth Federation in the State of Washington. These movements within the Democratic Party developed along united front lines to include also the Left-wing forces. The Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota, with the support of the Communist Party, won a large degree of control of the state government. The Progressive Party of Wisconsin

sin won an electoral victory. Beginnings of Farmer-Labor Parties were established in Michigan, Iowa and in a few other states which did not get a large vote, but which established themselves as propaganda centers which began to exert an influence on state politics.

The Communist Party supported the creation of the American Labor Party in New York; although officially the Communist Party is excluded from it, Communists, representing trade unions, played a role in the mass work of this American Labor Party. This growing People's Front movement in various forms helped to bring the trade unions on a national scale, under the leadership of John L. Lewis, to establish a national political organization — Labor's Non-Partisan League—which was a step forward beyond any political action taken in America by the whole organized labor movement.

The growing organization and influence of these independent movements were possible in the election campaign, only because they were combined with support for the re-election of Roosevelt. If these growing people's organizations had come out against Roosevelt, they would have been wrecked by the wave of mass sentiment which rallied the overwhelming majority of the population to Roosevelt's re-election. This fact greatly slowed down the tempo of building a new Farmer-Labor Party. It held within the Democratic Party large mass movements which, except for the influence of Roosevelt, were on the point of splitting and setting up a new party. There was in fact a united front with Roosevelt by all these organizations.

This Roosevelt hegemony over the Farmer-Labor Party forces has grown even stronger after the election victory. At first the Roosevelt administration for several months made a big swing to the Right on the current questions of policy that were being dealt with, especially unemployment relief. This greatly pleased the reactionaries. On this basis they launched what they called the "era of good feeling," a reconciliation of all

campes that had been fighting in the elections. The worst reactionaries were leading the praise for Roosevelt. Hearst discovered that Roosevelt was not an "agent of Moscow" as he had thought a few weeks before, but a modern version of Andrew Jackson. During these months, the progressive and labor supporters of Roosevelt were very uneasy and sharply critical. But Roosevelt's swing to the Right for the time being came to an end with his proposals, in the beginning of February, for the reorganization of the Supreme Court.\*

The Supreme Court had canceled all of the main items of Roosevelt's legislative program. One of our sharpest criticisms of Roosevelt has been of his failure, up until the last weeks, to conduct any effective struggle against this judicial dictatorship. Roosevelt's proposals, however, have placed this issue squarely before the country, and started a politi-

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\* The Supreme Court, established by the Constitution of the United States for the administration of justice "arising under the Constitution, the Laws of the U.S. and Treaties" [Constitution of the U.S.], has usurped powers not granted it by the Constitution, particularly the power to declare certain laws passed by Congress "unconstitutional," and by this means set itself up as the supreme power in the country. The Supreme Court is composed of nine members appointed for life by the President with the approval of the Senate. At every critical period in the history of the U.S. the Supreme Court was used by the reactionary group to struggle against the people. Thus the progressive Presidents of the United States, Jefferson and Lincoln, carried on a struggle against the Supreme Court and for its reorganization. The Supreme Court annulled in the last two years all the important laws passed by the Roosevelt administration which made concessions to the people, especially the N.R.A. and the A.A.A.

On February 5, 1937, Roosevelt in his message to Congress proposed to reform the Supreme Court, aiming to increase it to fifteen members. This proposal would make it possible for him immediately to appoint six new justices. These six new pro-Roosevelt judges would create the majority necessary to protect the social and labor legislation advocated by the Roosevelt administration.

cal struggle which is going to change the whole face of American politics. The issue is splitting the Democratic Party from top to bottom. The Right wing of the Democratic Party is forming a single camp with the Republicans. This is forcing the President to move more to the Left to mobilize the masses, who alone can win victory for him on this issue, which has become decisive for Roosevelt's whole course, as well as for the whole political situation at this time. Now again, more than ever, all the progressive forces in the country are ready to align themselves with Roosevelt in a great mass crusade which is everywhere developing under the banner of democracy against fascism. Directly connected with this issue is the whole question of the improvement of the living standards of the masses.

The lines of struggle are drawn sharper than they have been in America since the Civil War. With the development of the Supreme Court issue, with all that flows from it, it has become clear that during Roosevelt's second term there is no perspective that those decisive forces that are necessary for building the Farmer-Labor Party, in the first place, the trade unions of the C.I.O., will break with Roosevelt. Thus, we have the situation where the organization of the forces making for the People's Front in America are growing at a great speed, and at the same time the movement for the organization of an independent party, the Farmer-Labor Party, is for the time slowing down.

The forces that are consciously orientating on the slogan of the People's Front are growing tremendously. The whole C.I.O. movement is definitely under the influence of the French experience of the People's Front and of the disaster in Germany caused by the absence of a People's Front. Mass movements inside the Democratic Party are openly operating under this slogan, like the Commonwealth Federation in Washington, which won a large section of the state government. The same thing is equally true in other organizations. But they are today

less prepared than a year ago to come together to establish the new Farmer-Labor Party. More and more, they tend to postpone their formal party independence. They are finding forms of independent activity within the legal structure of the Democratic Party.

The Supreme Court fight has thrown all the political camps into a state of fluidity. Reactionary forces, including the Right wing of the Democratic Party, which last year stayed with Roosevelt, are now moving definitely for a new combination.

In this regrouping of the political forces it is possible for the Communist Party to broaden the fields of its contacts and cooperation. The work of the Communist Party in the election campaign, the role that it played before the country, had already opened up thousands of doors to it that were closed before. The Communists have close and sympathetic contact with all of the mass organizations that are actively taking part in the progressive side of the big political realignment in America. More and more it is possible to move toward collaboration with the socially progressive and democratic groupings.

This has also been proven by the success of a series of conferences on social and labor legislation, carried through in January and February in fifteen states. All of these conferences were successful beyond expectations. The breadth of the representation was unusual. Their unity on all question of legislative proposals was almost complete and unexampled. At the same time each of these conferences also gave this characteristic—no unanimity on the Farmer-Labor Party. These state conferences in many cases also presented that new phenomenon of a broad united front in which the trade unions played a decisive role, and yet in which the Communist Party officially was accepted without question. This is of special importance; in much of the current united front work the Communists participate only as representatives of mass organizations, and the Party itself is not as yet fully recognized as a participant.

It is already a higher stage of the movement when the Communist Party can officially send its delegates. This is a direct result of our constantly improving position inside the trade unions. This is true, first of all, in the C.I.O., but even in the A. F. of L. our position is also improved.

We believe that in this period, in which it is clear that Roosevelt will be exercising hegemony over these trade union forces and others, the most effective way toward the People's Front will be the collaboration of these movements inside the Democratic Party together with the Farmer-Labor Parties where they exist, as in Minnesota, and the Progressive Party in Wisconsin, and the Left forces which are organizing in other regions. This is not any change in our main political direction. The building of the Farmer-Labor Party remains the key to this general tactic that would include a broader field. It would enable us to maintain what proved so advantageous in the elections last year—a general unity of all the progressive forces against the semi-fascist and fascist reaction, and at the same time to continue without a break the building of the Farmer-Labor forces.

## II. THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

The problem of organizing a serious mass movement against war and fascism, and for peace, is in America essentially and chiefly the problem of breaking through the ideology of isolation and neutrality. The mass sentiments for peace in America are still dominated with the idea that the road to peace is through neutrality. Our problem is to liberate the masses from this influence as a precondition for collective action with the peace forces of the world, a precondition for a real international peace policy.

We recently saw how the reactionary camp is able to manipulate the mass sentiments for peace through the neutrality program. This was in the case of the adoption by Congress of an embargo against democratic Spain. There is really

in the U.S. a broad mass sentiment in favor of Spain. There is a great indignation against the fascist invaders. This mass sentiment is even in Congress. Yet under the whip of the neutrality slogan, the vote in both Houses of Congress was unanimously for embargo, except one lone vote. It took considerable mass pressure to get a bloc of eighteen Congressmen to come out with a measure in Congress directed against Hitler and Mussolini and denouncing the embargo on Spain.

This conception of neutrality, in spite of its appearance of growing strength, is, however, undergoing a crisis and beginning to break up. While being attacked from the Left, it is, at the same time, under heavy fire from the Right. The reactionary forces in America, trying to find the weak points in the Roosevelt administration, seized upon neutrality and have opened up their journalistic guns upon it. There is already general recognition that neutrality is not realizable. But there is not any generally recognized alternative policy.

The Communist Party is trying to find those links that will tie up an international program with the existing mass sentiments for peace. There is widespread mass prejudice in the U.S.A. against the League of Nations. This is not the best link to connect the mass peace sentiment in America with collective security. The C.P. is trying to find that link by placing the policy in terms of traditional American precedents—something clearly not imported from Europe, of which the masses are suspicious. In spite of the fact that the League of Nations was the brain child of Woodrow Wilson, America has disowned it and now looks upon it as an alien thing. The Communist Party is, therefore, taking up that American contribution to international policy which is not repudiated, namely, the Kellogg-Briand Pact of Paris, outlawing war "as an instrument of national policy" and signed by more than fifty nations. The C.P. has adopted the following program on this question, which has met with a

very friendly response from all sorts of circles:

**"POINTS FOR LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH AN EFFECTIVE PEACE POLICY FOR THE UNITED STATES"**

"The only way to keep America out of war is to help keep war out of the world.

"An effective peace policy for the United States could be worked out, on the basis of established covenants already signed between the United States and the rest of the world, by a law with the following simple points:

1. Require that the President shall take notice when any nation signatory to the Kellogg Pact shall violate the provisions of that pact by making war, whether officially declared or not; and shall call it to the attention of Congress;

"2. That when the violation of this treaty with the United States is established, an embargo shall be placed against all economic transactions with the guilty power until the aggression is stopped and reparation made;

"3. That any government, not itself an aggressor in violation of the Kellogg Pact, but suffering from an attack by enemies from within or without, shall not be hindered in its continuance of normal commercial relations with the United States;

"4. That a violator of the Kellogg Pact should be considered to be that state which is the first to declare war upon another state; which uses its armed land, naval, or air forces, with or without a declaration of war, to invade the territory, or to attack the vessels, or to blockade the ports of another state;

"5. That a state should also be considered the aggressor, in violation of the Kellogg Pact, when it gives support to armed parties or factions engaged in insurrection against the democratically established government of another nation;

"6. That in accordance with the principles laid down in the Buenos Aires Conference, the United States shall consult with other countries in case of war or the imminent danger of war."

**III. THE EDUCATION OF THE MASSES**

The Socialist Party in the election campaign thought it had secured a great

advantage over the Communist Party by coming out with the "Left" sounding slogan: "Socialism Against Capitalism," as opposed to our slogan of "Democracy Against Fascism." The Socialists declared that this meant that they were the party of socialism, while the Communists had "abandoned" socialism. The Communists met the issue squarely and made use precisely of this Socialist Party attack against them in order to explain not only the slogan "Democracy Against Fascism," but also to explain what socialism is, how socialism can be achieved, and why the proposals of the Socialist Party are not calculated to bring socialism.

The Communists also took advantage of the opportunity for polemizing with all sorts of people to bring out the questions of socialism, Soviet power, etc. For example, while we were making a head-on attack against the Republicans and criticizing in milder terms the Democratic platform, we took advantage of one phrase in the Democratic platform in order to have an open discussion of Soviet power. As an example of how this question was handled, in one paragraph of a radio speech that was broadcast over the country we said:

"The Democratic platform takes a gratuitous fling at the 'despotism of communism.' It would have been the part of wisdom, not to speak of good taste, at least to be silent on this point, when the same platform complains that our American institutions are defeating the expressed will of the people, through the Supreme Court, at a moment when communism in the Soviet Union has just proclaimed a Constitution, the most democratic in all history, which guarantees to every citizen a job at union wages, with full social insurance, paid vacations, and opportunity for education, leisure and culture. When America, the richest country in the world, gives its workers half of what communism gives in the Soviet Union, it will be time to boast."

Another example was the case where the big newspaper barrage was made against the Communist Party that it, a revolutionary party, was but hiding its

revolutionary face under a reformist program. The Communists answered: of course we are a revolutionary party, but we are not proposing revolution in this election. We are a revolutionary party and about this there is nothing horrible or shameful as the Hearst press likes to make it appear. By their attacks they are only dishonoring the American revolutionary traditions. Then the Communists proceeded to bring forward all of the revolutionary traditions of the founders of America and proclaimed our Party as the American representative of these people.

The Communist Party has developed an energetic campaign against counter-revolutionary Trotskyism coming forward in the role of the agents of the most reactionary forces of the country ready for any criminal and wrecking activity against the working class.

In California, Minneapolis and other localities the Trotskyites allied themselves with the bosses against strikers. They are in alliance with the A. F. of L. bureaucracy against the C.I.O. In the state of Minnesota, where the Farmer-Labor Party won a great victory, winning a majority in the State Legislature, the steel trust utilized the Trotskyites in an attempt to smash the results of this victory. Every Socialist who supports the united front is attacked by the Trotskyites.

Penetrating into the Socialist Party, the Trotskyites began immediately their provocative work there, first and foremost, trying to hamper the joint activities of the S.P. and C.P. Masking themselves behind the slogan "defeat your own imperialism first," the Trotskyites won the S.P. to objective support of Trotsky's pact with Hitler and the Japanese militarists. While they openly spoke about the coming war between the U.S. and Japan, they preached the necessity to fight by all means against all tendencies to rapprochement between the U.S. and the bulwark of peace, the Soviet Union; they most bitterly assailed collaboration between the U.S. and the Soviet Union for the preservation of peace.

In the solidarity campaign for Spain, the overwhelming sentiment of its membership favored the entrance of the S.P. into the united front, but here again the Trotskyite wreckers showed their counter-revolutionary colors. Using the name of the S.P., they distributed leaflets at all meetings for the Spanish people, attacking the People's Front, calling for its dissolution, even issuing the slogan of open treason—"Turn the guns against the People's Front," "The People's Front is betraying the Spanish revolution." Although the Trotskyite reserves in the U.S.A. are insignificantly small, it would be the most serious mistake to underestimate their capacity for bringing harm to the working class and the people of the U.S.A.

In its entire mass work the Communist Party explained in detail the essence of capitalism, of socialism, of the present stage of capitalism as tending to the destruction of democracy and how only in a socialist society is there complete disappearance of all those factors that breed fascism and war. In addition to this mass agitational phase in which by radio, leaflets, pamphlets, etc., the C.P. has reached millions, we have a growing circulation of Marxist-Leninist classics, reaching hundreds of thousands, as for example: *The Communist Manifesto*; Lenin, *The State and Revolution*; Stalin, *Foundation of Leninism*, all in single editions of 100,000 each; Stalin, *On the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R.*, 530,000 copies; Dimitroff, *Report at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern*, 350,000 copies, etc. In addition the Party has published a few serious Marxist books by American authors.

The C.P.U.S.A. is faced with the tremendous task of further bringing before the broadest masses of America the full significance of the question of socialism and its relation to the immediate situation of the country, the immediate struggle of the American masses for the creation of the People's Front against fascism and war. This requires even more serious and sustained attention by the C.P.U.S.A.

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# The Renaissance of the American Trade Union Movement

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

**F**OR many years the conservatism of the trade union movement in the United States, represented chiefly by the American Federation of Labor, has been world-notorious. The A. F. of L. leaders, open defenders of capitalism, have opposed from the Right even the most opportunist forms of Social-Democracy, considering the Second International "too revolutionary" for their affiliation. They have fought against the formation of a Labor Party, their policy being to keep the workers affiliated to the big capitalist parties. They have clung to the antiquated craft union system in a country of trustified industry and mass production. They are indeed "labor lieutenants of the bourgeoisie." The general effects of their regime of corruption and class collaboration have been to render the American working class almost powerless: the workers have no mass political party of their own and their trade unions, largely composed of skilled workers, include hardly more than 15 per cent of the organizable workers.

At bottom, the causes for this ultra-conservative trade unionism were to be found in a number of economic, political and social factors; including the relatively favorable economic position of the large labor aristocracy; the presence of millions of immigrant workers of many nationalities with different social and cultural traditions; the passage of many workers into the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie and some even into the capitalist class during the period of rapid

industrial expansion, etc. All these factors tended to check the growth of class consciousness among the workers, to stimulate petty-bourgeois illusions among them, and to prevent the growth of powerful trade unions, a mass working class party, and a revolutionary perspective.

Now, however, the picture is rapidly changing in the United States. Seven years of crisis and depression, with millions of unemployed living in semi-starvation and with the employed workers suffering heavily reduced living standards, with the growth of an incipient fascist reaction, etc., are having profound effects. The working masses are rapidly becoming radicalized. They are beginning to cast off their capitalistic illusions, and to develop a more militant spirit. They are at last taking up seriously the questions of building a powerful labor movement and developing class political action. In short, the American trade union movement is at a turning point; it is breaking with its old conservative past and is crossing the threshold of a new era of progress.

## THE RISE OF THE C.I.O.

The center of this new trade union renaissance is the Committee for Industrial Organization (C.I.O.). The C.I.O., headed by John L. Lewis, is composed of fifteen unions with some 2,000,000 members. It was formed about a year ago with a program of organizing the armies of unorganized workers in the mass production industries into industrial unions.

The actual establishment of the C.I.O. did not take place until after Lewis had fought for two years to induce the A. F. of L. itself to undertake this work. Lewis himself has a very conservative background, but he saw the necessity for industrial unionism. His proposals, however, were rejected by the craft union reactionaries—Green, Woll, Frey, Wharson, Hutcheson, etc.—who dominate the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. The Lewis forces then launched the C.I.O. and began this fundamental organization work themselves, meanwhile maintaining their regular affiliation with the A. F. of L.

In the intervening months since then the C.I.O. has been signally successful in its organization work. In the automobile industry, in February of this year, the C.I.O. carried on a strike against the giant General Motors Corporation, involving 150,000 workers. This was followed by another strike of 70,000 against the Chrysler Company. Both were sit-down strikes (occupation of the factories) and both were won, forcing the automobile kings to grant many economic concessions and, for the first time, to recognize trade unionism in their plants. The Auto Workers Union grew almost overnight from a skeleton organization to a union of 300,000 members and it is still rapidly expanding.

This great success of the C.I.O. in the automobile industry was even surpassed by its victory in steel. After a several months' organizing campaign, and right upon the heels of the General Motors strike, the C.I.O. forced the great moguls of the United States Steel Corporation to meet with Lewis and agree to recognize the C.I.O. steel workers' union. This union has also leaped from almost nothing to an organization of at least 300,000 members and is still growing swiftly. The powerful General Electric Company was also compelled to sign an agreement with the rapidly developing C.I.O. radio and electrical workers' union.

Besides these notable victories, the C.I.O. has won strikes and is conducting big organizing campaigns in a number

of other industries, such as glass, ship-building, rubber, oil, textile, etc. The successes in auto and steel have created a veritable fever of organization and struggle among the workers in various industries. Most of the many strikes taking place are of the sit-down type and are extremely militant in character. The workers, fresh from their victory over the Landon-Hearst reaction in the November elections, are in a fighting mood and ready for vigorous action. The C.I.O. struggles are also favored by the improved economic situation and by the tolerant attitude of the Roosevelt government toward the trade union organization of the workers in the mass production industries.

In the many C.I.O. organization campaigns and strikes, the Communists are playing an important role, cooperating freely with the C.I.O. Especially is this true of the auto and steel industries. In the vital General Motors strike the Communists were an important factor and this was also true in the bitterly fought strike of 40,000 marine transport workers (A. F. of L.), the winning of which stimulated the workers' fighting spirit generally.

#### THE SPLIT IN THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

The reactionary leaders of the A. F. of L., fearing for the safety of their fat jobs and their corrupt regime, are bitterly fighting against the advance of the militant C.I.O. No sooner was the C.I.O. formed, early in 1936, as an organizing committee than the A. F. of L. Executive Council condemned it as a rival, dual organization. Then, a few months later, the Executive Council, in flagrant violation of the A. F. of L. constitution and in the face of a great mass protest of trade unionists generally, arbitrarily suspended the C.I.O. unions from A. F. of L. affiliation. The Tampa Convention of the A. F. of L. in October, 1936, made up principally of craft union bureaucrats and in which the C.I.O. unions were denied the right to vote, confirmed the suspension of the Lewis unions.

The Communist Party had played a very active part in mobilizing the trade unionists against the suspension of the C.I.O. unions by the A. F. of L. Executive Council and it now also took up the cudgels against the splitting action of the packed Tampa Convention. The Party put out the slogan "Keep the split from spreading." It called upon the workers to refuse to suspend the C.I.O. locals from the city and state central labor councils, and thus to keep the movement intact at the bottom in spite of the split among the officialdom. The Party also outlined a policy for reuniting the warring groups under the banner of the A. F. of L.

Realizing the mass resistance to their splitting policy, the Executive Council reactionaries did not dare at that time to order the local councils to suspend the C.I.O. unions. Thus was presented the peculiar situation of a split at the top of the labor movement and unity in its basic organs. This unity at the bottom was highly favorable to the C.I.O. as it was thus enabled to go ahead with its organizing campaigns in auto and steel unmolested by local A. F. of L. sabotage. In fact, the friendly cooperation of many A. F. of L. city labor councils was of great, if not decisive, importance in the crucial General Motors strike.

Deeply alarmed at the significant General Motors strike, the A. F. of L. Executive Council renewed its splitting offensive. President Green of the A. F. of L. denounced the strike as an outlaw affair, he condemned the sit-down tactics as illegal and imported from Moscow, and he repudiated the victorious strike settlement as a defeat and a betrayal of trade union principles. Later Green issued an instruction to the city central labor councils to unseat delegates of C.I.O. local unions and he has already revoked the charter of one council, of the very many such councils that have refused to obey his splitting orders.

Meanwhile, the C.I.O. has not taken these blows lying down. The miners' union (C.I.O.), of which Lewis is President and Green was a member, expelled

Green as a strikebreaker and a traitor. The C.I.O. locals and sympathizers are resisting Green's suspension order in the local labor councils and the C.I.O. has announced that it will issue charters for new councils where its locals are expelled. Meanwhile the C.I.O. has redoubled its organizing efforts in steel, auto, oil, textile and many other industries.

Thus the situation now is that Green wants the split and is doing all possible to deepen it, while Lewis, with his supporters growing rapidly both inside and outside the A. F. of L., is resisting the disruptive efforts of Green.

The C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. now practically constitute two distinct national trade union centers. The split, although steadily deepening, is, however, not fully completed. The C.I.O. unions are not yet officially expelled from the A. F. of L. (their status is one of suspension), and besides this, the trade union movement still remains united at the bottom, in the city and state labor councils, to which the C.I.O. unions, in the main, are still affiliated. And there the situation stands at the present time of writing, the end of March, 1937.

#### THE RELATION OF TRADE UNION FORCES

As between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. is numerically considerably the strongest, although its forces are not yet fully consolidated. The A. F. of L. claims a total membership of 3,586,567. But from this figure must be deducted over 1,000,000 C.I.O. members who have been suspended and who have since hugely increased their numbers. Besides, there are several unions in the A. F. of L. (printers, lumber workers, fur workers, etc.) totalling at least 200,000 members, which would promptly quit the A. F. of L. and join the C.I.O. if called upon to do it. Besides this, the C.I.O. has a tremendous body of active sympathizers in the A. F. of L., several hundred thousand at least. Not counting its large general following in the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. has now at least 2,000,000 actual members and it is grow-

ing with extreme rapidity, because of its successful organizing campaigns in auto, steel, textile, etc. Actually, therefore, the C.I.O. is numerically larger than the A. F. of L., and this factor daily grows more favorable to the C.I.O.

The C.I.O. is also far more strategically situated in industry than is the A. F. of L. The main strength of its fifteen affiliated unions lies in the basic and mass production industries—coal mining 500,000; auto 300,000; steel 300,000; textile 90,000; oil 80,000, and some 300,000 in the rubber, electric, aluminum, metal mining, shipbuilding and other industries. Besides this, the C.I.O. has a solid bloc of 400,000 members in the clothing industry. On the other hand, the A. F. of L. finds its chief strength in the lighter, non-trustified industries, and especially among skilled workers and government employees. Its main force is the building trades, 700,000 members. The other important industrial positions of the A. F. of L. are some 400,000 shop, trade and office workers in the railroad industry (the running trades are in independent unions) and a strong organization in marine transport, although the great bulk of these workers are open supporters of the C.I.O. and will eventually probably join it.

The advanced position of the C.I.O. over the A. F. of L. also expresses itself in a variety of other ways. It is based on the principle of industrial unionism, while the A. F. of L. still clings to craft unionism; it is developing a new and progressive leadership, as against the hard-boiled reactionaries of the A. F. of L.; it is awakening the political consciousness of the workers and arousing their militancy; whereas the reactionary A. F. of L. leaders have always been a brake on the class development of the workers.

Thus the C.I.O. is superior to the A. F. of L. numerically, in strategical position and in general political tendency. It is the most decisive of the two national trade union centers and it represents the broad path along which American labor needs to progress. When the

A. F. of L. reactionaries rejected Lewis' program and suspended the C.I.O. unions they signed their own political death warrants as the major leaders of American trade unionism.

#### THE FIGHT FOR TRADE UNION UNITY

The split in the American labor movement raises sharply the question of establishing trade union unity. The big employers are quite alert to use the Right-wing A. F. of L. against the progressive C.I.O. In the auto and steel industries they worked openly with the bosses against the C.I.O., even offering to furnish leadership to the company unions to beat the new industrial unions. Hence, the workers need imperatively to put an end to such a menace by moving toward the achievement of trade union unity.

In the eventually unified trade union movement the C.I.O. forces and policies will doubtless play the central role. In fact, the fight for unity resolves itself into a matter of extending all possible support to the new C.I.O. center, while at the same time developing a movement looking toward the uniting of all the unions in one general federation.

Of first importance is to give the maximum possible support to the C.I.O.'s campaigns to organize the millions of unorganized workers. Success in this vital work is the dynamic factor in the whole situation; the key to the future development of the American trade union movement.

Also, every effort should be put forth to keep the Green reactionaries from further splitting the trade unions. Especially important in this respect is it to encourage the widespread refusal of the A. F. of L. city and state labor federations to carry out Green's order to exclude the C.I.O. delegates. This refusal, where successful, has the effect of keeping the labor movement intact at the bottom and of throwing the rebellious local federations definitely into the orbit of the C.I.O.

It would seem necessary also to contemplate the eventual holding of a well-

prepared national union convention, called by the C.I.O., the A. F. of L. and the independent railroad unions to unify the whole labor movement. And in the meantime, so far as possible without deepening the split, the C.I.O. should consolidate its forces, both outside and inside the A. F. of L.

Of course, the Green reactionaries will bitterly fight this great unity movement as long as they can. But unless the writer is greatly mistaken, they face in the C.I.O. a mass movement that they cannot beat down. The handwriting is on the wall for them and their reactionary regime; the American labor movement is going to experience a New Deal of its own.

#### THE PERSPECTIVE

The basic significance of the broad organizing campaigns of the C.I.O. is that the American workers are finally beginning to organize as a class, both economically and politically. Heretofore the A. F. of L., with its narrow craft unionism and its anti-working class political policies, has definitely hindered such class organization. The class unionism of the C.I.O. is rapidly changing the make-up and outlook of the trade unions.

The advance of the C.I.O. is already resulting in vast changes in the labor movement. It is producing a new and progressive labor leadership, the Lewis-Hillman group; it is developing the new trade union form, industrial unionism; it is applying new tactics, the sit-down strikes; it is extending trade unionism into new fields, the basic trustified industries; it is winning real victories. Instead of the defeats and weak compromises of A. F. of L. craft unionism, it is rousing the militancy of the working class generally and dealing heavy blows at the A. F. of L. theories and practices of class collaboration.

The C.I.O. is also advancing the working class in politics. It displays many progressive political tendencies; it has a sharp and growing anti-fascist, anti-war trend; it was a powerful factor in de-

feating the Landon reaction in the November elections; it presses Roosevelt from the Left and as it organizes the Left wing in the Democratic Party it is driving in the direction of a Farmer-Labor Party; it strongly supports the trade union organization of Negroes; its leaders, unlike those of the A. F. of L., are carrying on no slander campaign against the U.S.S.R. and the Communist Party. In short, around the C.I.O. are grouping the major mass forces that should, with effective leadership, eventually crystallize into a great American People's Front.

The C.I.O. has already forced a sharp change in the traditional anti-trade union policy of finance capital. Hitherto, the big trust magnates enforced their infamous open-shop policy in the mass production industries. But the C.I.O., by its big organizing campaigns and aggressive strikes, has broken this down, shattered the company union system and compelled the reluctant big capitalists to recognize the C.I.O. unions in the strategic auto, steel and electrical manufacturing industries. This is a big achievement and it places John L. Lewis in a strong position of leadership of American labor.

It would be idle, however, to think that finance capital will tamely submit to the advance of the militant C.I.O. unions. Already their publicity agents are singing the praises of "strikeless England," and are advocating that various methods of state incorporations, semi-compulsory arbitration, strike right limitation, etc., be enacted so as to hamstring the American unions somewhat as was done to the British unions after their betrayed national general strike. They will doubtless try to make a bargain with the C.I.O. upon some such class collaboration basis.

The big employers are also maneuvering for a more favorable time to smash violently the new unions if they cannot otherwise destroy their effectiveness. In fighting the C.I.O., the employers now face the triple handicap of a militant working class, a rising economic situa-

tion and the policy of the Roosevelt government. But they expect all this will soon change. For one thing they expect a fresh economic crisis within a year or two, and they hope either to defeat Roosevelt or to "take him into camp" by an agreement with him. In any event, we may be sure they are biding their time for a good opportunity to castrate or destroy the C.I.O. unions.

Great struggles are now taking place in the United States and still greater struggles are in immediate prospect. The masses are being rapidly radicalized. So swift is the realignment of class forces that in the past year it has caused deep splits in the Republican

Party, Democratic Party, Socialist Party, Townsend movement, Coughlin movement, as well as in the A. F. of L. itself.

All this presents a splendid opportunity. The Communist Party gives all possible support to the present great organizing campaigns; it exercises the maximum initiative of leadership in these mass struggles; it is the indefatigable champion of trade union unity; it strives to develop the C.I.O. movement in the direction of creating a great People's Front. And in the doing of all this it must be alert to extend its own leadership among the workers and in the developing struggle to build itself into a mass Communist Party.

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# The Negro Masses in the United States

BY JAMES W. FORD

**T**HE Negro people occupy a special position in the economic, political and social life of the United States. The ruling class has developed special forms of oppression of the Negro people, such as racial discrimination, social antagonisms, political inequalities, economic distinctions and cultural hindrances. The Negro people, in the interest of their liberation and cultural advancement, have made a rich contribution to the advancement of the cause of democracy and the revolutionary and democratic traditions in the United States.

According to the official figures of the government, there are 11,900,000 Negroes, but actually there are closer to 14,000,000, or over 10 per cent of the total population of America. The majority of the Negro people occupy a special section in the U.S., the "Black Belt" in the South, where four-fifths of the Negro people live.

There are eight large cities in the U.S. with a large Negro population: New York City, 327,000; Chicago, 233,000; Philadelphia, 219,000; Baltimore, 142,000; Washington, D.C., 132,000; New Orleans, 129,000; Detroit, 120,000; Birmingham, 100,000. The Negro people in these large cities have developed a special life; they live a ghetto existence. In New York City we have the "Negro city of Harlem." Harlem is the political, cultural and social center of the Negro people of the U.S.A.; it exerts influence among Negroes throughout the world.

In the Southern states there is the basic concentration of the Negro people. Thus, for example, the State of Alabama

has 2,600,000 total population—with 944,000 Negroes. In some places in the State of Alabama, the Negroes are 80 per cent of the total population. South Carolina has 793,000 Negroes, just a little less than 50 per cent of the population. The State of Mississippi has 1,009,718 Negroes and 996,000 whites, the only state that has a majority of Negroes.

One-half of the Negro population in the U.S. is engaged in agriculture. Eighty per cent of the Negro farm population are farm laborers, sharecroppers and tenants; only 20 per cent of the Negro farm population are part or full owners. Thus farming is the basis of the economic life of the Negro people in the U.S.A.

There are about 2,000,000 Negro workers in industry, 14.3 per cent of the Negro population. They are found primarily in the following industries: steel, mining, packing, automobile, and railway. There are about 1,600,000 Negro women domestic workers or servants. In the mining industry about 250,000 are Negroes. In the steel industry out of 450,000 workers engaged in that industry, about 100,000 are Negroes. The Negro proletariat was drawn into industry particularly during and after the World War; in other words, it is relatively a new proletariat.

There are about 50,000 Negro school teachers, 6,800 physicians, lawyers and dentists. A considerable Negro "intelligentsia" has developed in the U.S. This is a tremendous cultural force aiding the advancement of the Negro People's Front.

There are about 20,000 retail store operators. Altogether there are about 70,000 Negro small business enterprises.

Since 1880 there have been developing Negro banks. In 1927 there were twenty-one and after the economic crisis they were reduced to about twelve. There are several Negro millionaires.

The economic and social status of the Negroes is characterized by Jim-Crowism. In industry the Negroes receive less pay for the same kind of work as the white workers and worse working conditions. The ruling class uses the cheap labor of the Negro workers against the white working class. This was one of the main causes on the basis of which the bourgeoisie has been able to develop antagonism between the Negro and white workers. The middle class is also affected by the Jim-Crow policies and practices of the American ruling class. The Negro teachers receive about half the pay of the corresponding white teachers and only in some of the rural sections they get as much as \$500 a year.

Illiteracy among the Negroes in 1930 was estimated by the government as 16.3 per cent, whereas for whites it was 4 per cent. In the State of Mississippi, whose population is more than 50 per cent Negroes, for each white child \$45 is spent per year, for the Negro \$5 per child for education.

In the U.S. more than 5,000,000 Negro people belong to churches.

A number of political inequalities hinder the Negroes from exercising their political rights guaranteed by the Constitution, such, for example, as the system of poll taxes as a requirement for voting; the poverty-stricken Negroes are unable to pay these poll taxes. A second hindrance for the Negroes is the requirement of certain educational qualifications, such as the ability to interpret the Constitution to the satisfaction of an election official. These election officials can disqualify a Negro voter for not knowing the meaning of a word. A third factor is the barring of Negroes from the Democratic primaries by resolutions

in the Democratic Party, for example, in the State of Texas.

Inter-marriage among whites and Negroes is forbidden in most of the states and in all the Southern states, and even in those states where there is no law against it, custom is against it.

Another factor in the life of the Negro people which is well-known throughout the world is lynching. There were officially reported 5,000 Negroes lynched since 1880.

These are the things that unite the Negroes in a struggle against their special forms of exploitation and oppression.

During the last year, particularly, our Party has in the field of its Negro work begun to realize on a mass scale the line of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, particularly during the election campaign. The Negroes have traditionally been tied up with the Republican Party. The Republican Party was in its time the party of emancipation. And for that reason up until the recent elections, the Negroes have held complete allegiance to this party. But in the recent elections there was a great turn of the Negroes from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party. One has to understand this traditional tie of the Negroes to the Republican Party in order to understand fully the significance of the swing of the Negroes to Roosevelt in the last election.

The Negroes hold important positions politically in a number of Northern key states, where they have a numerical voting strength of about 2,000,000—in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, New York, New Jersey. Because of the American voting methods and forms, they sometimes exercise a greater influence in the elections than their numbers would indicate. All of the parties make a special effort to win the Negroes in the elections. They make special appeals to them on the basis of race. But in the recent elections, despite the fact that the Republican Party made every effort to win the Negroes, there was a landslide for Roosevelt. In the New England states, 75 per cent of the Ne-

groes voted for Roosevelt, in New Jersey 65 per cent, in West Virginia 60 per cent, in Missouri 60 per cent, in New York (Harlem and Brooklyn) the Negroes voted 80 per cent for Roosevelt. And even in certain sections of the South, the Negroes voted for the Democratic Party. In Durham and Raleigh, North Carolina, 3,000 Negroes voted in each of these two cities for the Democratic Party and two Negro magistrates were elected on the Democratic ticket there.

Twenty-five Negroes were elected to the state legislatures of nine states on the Democratic Party ticket. One Negro was elected to the U.S. Congress. Our Party had a lot to do with this achievement of the Negro people, by its general program for the Negroes and also around the campaign of a Negro candidate for Vice-President [the author of this article] which was well received by the Negro people.

Of special importance was the unusually big election campaign in the South. Comrade Browder, our Presidential candidate, made an extensive tour of the South, particularly in Florida, Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia. The campaign made in these states had a great influence among the Negroes and whites and helped in popularizing our Party program.

As the vice-presidential candidate of the Communist Party, I was scheduled to speak in Durham, the first time since the Civil War that a Negro running for high office had ever spoken in the state to a mixed audience. We had engaged the County Court House in that city. Reactionaries had threatened to break up the meeting. I came to Durham on a Sunday afternoon. The situation was very tense. I was scheduled to deliver a radio broadcast before the meeting. It was because of the correctness of our approach generally and in particular in this radio speech that we were able to overcome the reactionary opposition and hold our meeting. I dealt with the democratic traditions of the people in the South. We showed that the interests of

the Negroes and whites in the South coincided at many points. In part I stated:

"It was the statesmen of this part of the country who, in the revolutionary period, ushered in the birth of the United States of America. It was they who gave us those fundamental principles of democracy that every American cherishes and ought to defend. No one can speak of these contributions without recalling the illustrious services to us and to all mankind of Thomas Jefferson, the writer of the Declaration of Independence. Nor can we speak of the Constitution of these United States without recalling that it was the influence of Thomas Jefferson that gave us the first ten amendments to the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights.

"No one can recall the highlights of our history without paying homage to a fighter against certain privileged elements of his day—Andrew Jackson of Tennessee. Likewise the whole world pays tribute to that great son of the South, Abraham Lincoln, of Kentucky.

"But when we recall these names and their achievements we must today pause to consider these sinister forces that have combined to destroy all that these men fought for. . . ."

Then I dealt with the relation of Negroes and whites. I stated:

"It is these Democratic leaders, that is, the reactionary Democratic leaders, who maintain Jim-Crow laws in plain violation of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States that guarantee rights to the Negroes. Segregation, Jim-Crowism, lynching, legal and otherwise, are some of the methods whereby the greedy ruling class of the South holds my people down. And by so doing they also enforce misery, poverty and degradation upon the poor white people of the South, keeping them as well as the Negroes in a condition of serfdom."

It is this approach in the South that made it possible for us to attract to us support of the more progressive elements of the whites.

The same can be said of the city of Richmond, Virginia, where the reactionaries of the city developed a campaign

against Communists speaking in the South and particularly Negro Communists. They were successful in getting the majority of the Board of Education to cancel the permit (the meeting was scheduled in a public school). But there developed a broad campaign among the more progressive sections of the white population, who demanded that the right of freedom of speech should be allowed even to a Negro Communist in the South.

As a result of our election campaign among the Negroes there is going to take place a political realignment among the Negroes, even in the South. A differentiation is taking place and will further develop in the Democratic Party generally and in particular in the South. The Negro people, although held back by political inequalities, are going to play a role in the progressive development in the Democratic Party in the South. This will depend, however, on how much the Communist Party develops the campaign against the political inequalities, for the right to vote, against the poll tax, etc.

There is only one party in the South, the Democratic Party, and the Negro people are taking a definite position on support of Negro candidates on the Democratic Party ticket. The reactionary Southern landlord class is fighting against the progressive section of the Democratic Party. The mass of the toilers, Negro and white, as well as the progressive sections of the liberal Southern whites, are going to be a force around which a progressive section in line with a Farmer-Labor Party movement will develop.

Historically there is a precedent for the progressive role of Negroes politically in the South, in the Reconstruction period. Following the Civil War, most of the states of the South were controlled by Negro legislators who, of course, were placed there by the Republican Party in order to consolidate its power over the defeated Southern ruling class. I want to give one example. In the state of South Carolina in 1869 there were

eighty-eight Negroes in the State Legislature and sixty-seven whites; in 1871, eighty-five Negroes and sixty-nine whites; in 1873, ninety-six Negroes and fifty-nine whites. There were seven Negro Congressmen elected to the U. S. Congress from that state. There were two Lieutenant Governors, there was one State Treasurer and one State Secretary. Today Negroes occupy no positions in local or state governments in the South. During the Reconstruction period, the Negroes who dominated the State Legislature instituted the present public school system in the South.

The Southern Negro Youth Congress is a very important part of the development of the whole Negro movement in the South. The important decisions taken by this Youth Congress on the right to vote, on the unity of Negroes and whites, the special problems of the Negroes in the South, sharecropping, supporting of trade union organization among Negro workers, was a historic step forward. This movement is important because it is the first open legal movement in the South. Hereafter, broad progressive movements of the Negro people in the South have been very narrow and not tolerated by the white ruling classes. This congress was important also because young Southern white workers spoke from the same platform, representing the interests of the Southern whites.

The proclamation of the Southern Negro Youth Congress said the following:

"We are proud of every inch of Southern soil, we and our fathers before us have given toil and sweat of their brow that the land of our birth might prosper. . . .

"We realize that the majority of the white Southerners are not responsible for the conditions under which we live. These conditions are caused not by the many but by the few, those who profit by placing white labor against black labor to the harm of both."

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The American Federation of Labor since its existence has followed a policy

of Jim-Crowism and isolation; a policy against Negroes joining the trade unions. But with the advent of the C.I.O. movement the Negro question is taking on a new trend that will have tremendous possibilities for organizing Negroes in trade unions, and will have also great significance for the whole Negro population of the U.S. The C.I.O. has taken steps to organize the Negro workers in the trade unions. The C.I.O. Negro organizers prepared a preliminary conference that took up the question of bringing Negroes into the steel union and on the basis of this preliminary conference went to the S.W.O.C. and got their cooperation in organizing another conference of Negroes at Pittsburgh on February 6, 1937. They got the full cooperation of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. They had 110 organizations represented at this conference by 165 delegates from 80,000 workers.

Phil Murray, one of the right-hand lieutenants of John L. Lewis, came to this conference and spoke. He made a very great impression upon the delegates, pledging the support of the union for the organization of the Negroes. This conference not only consisted of delegates of the Negro steel workers, but also of other sections of the Negro population, leaders of fraternal organizations, leaders of the various national organizations of the Negro people, preachers. This conference is significant not only for the further organization of Negroes in steel, but for the Negro movement as a whole. The Communist Party, particularly the Negro Communists, are throwing their full support to the further development of this campaign.

At the same time a struggle is being

carried on for equal rights for Negroes inside the A. F. of L. Recently, in a meeting in New York called by national Negro leaders, a program was worked out for breaking down the bars in the railroad unions and a committee was organized for this purpose.

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The National Negro Congress represented a cross-section of the Negro people from all parts of the country and was the first step toward creating a Negro People's Front in the U.S. Its program was a people's program, involving the varied special interests and demands of the Negro people.

The further broadening of the National Negro Congress depends on bringing in the outstanding Negro organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which has a long history in the struggles of the Negro people, and the Urban League. Some of the leaders of this organization participate in the Congress individually, but they do not do so in the name of their organizations. The Congress is still further broadening its approach to other sections of the Negro people such as the Negro petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia in order to become a broad organization of the Negro people.

The struggle for the creation of a broad Negro People's Front in the U.S.A. against race oppression, against fascism and war, is assuming an ever broader scope, involving the various strata of the Negro people of the U.S.A. The movement can become a powerful factor in the struggle for a general anti-fascist front in the U.S.A.

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# A Defensive Alliance Against Fascism in Scandinavia

BY R. MAGNUS

**I**N MARCH, Stauning, Social-Democratic Prime Minister of Denmark, gave a number of public lectures in Sweden and Norway. In the Swedish university city of Lund he lectured at the Students' Union; in Stockholm he spoke at the festival of the "Norden" Association; in Oslo, on the invitation of the Norwegian Labor Party. The audiences were of a varied character, but the subject was the same, namely, cooperation among the Northern countries. In effect, however, Stauning spoke *against* such cooperation.

The Prime Minister of Denmark carried on a real campaign. Against whom? Was it against Hitler fascism and its destructive work in the Scandinavian countries? No, it was against the idea that defense against German fascism is possible and necessary. He asked:

"Is it the task of Denmark to be the watchdog of the North or to carry out other sentry functions? A Northern defensive alliance is a utopia."

The problem of a Northern defensive alliance is a constant feature on the pages of all trends of the Scandinavian press. This alone is proof of the great interest taken by the masses of the people in this question. And there can be no doubt that public opinion in the Scandinavian countries, and especially among the working class, is inclined toward a positive solution of the problem. The head of the Danish government engages

in "prophylactics" against such sentiments. For instance, on the eve of the conference of Ministers of four Northern countries (including Iceland and Finland) which was convened on April 20, in Helsingfors, he let it be understood that the Danish government did not wish the question of the danger of fascist aggression to be raised at the conference.

German fascism welcomed Stauning's declaration. It did not miss the chance to give him some further advice about Danish foreign policy, and so as to make it more convincing, backed it up with threats.

Hitherto, Hitler Germany has had good grounds for being satisfied with the policy of the Danish government. When, in April, 1935, after the re-introduction of compulsory military service in Germany, the Council of the League of Nations unanimously condemned this act, the only member of the Council to refrain from voting was the Danish Foreign Minister Munch. After the occupation of the Rhineland, the *Voelkischer Beobachter* showered praises on the same Munch for having "defended Germany with extraordinary zeal in the League of Nations."

German fascism is able to "work" unhindered in Denmark itself. The country is covered with a network of National-Socialist organizations. German "correspondents" and "commercial representatives" unceremoniously engage in military and economic espionage, while the

government radio station broadcasts Hitler's speeches just as though Denmark were already a province of the "Third Empire." Hitler Germany forced a commercial agreement extremely profitable for itself on Denmark. According to this agreement, Denmark undertook to supply Germany with agricultural produce to the value of 88,000,000 kroner, and in return to take from Germany industrial goods which she could produce herself or buy cheaper in other countries. Denmark does not receive stable currency for her goods, while she herself is compelled to pay for part of the imports from Germany in non-German currency.

Naturally, in such conditions, German fascism has no need to be bashful as to its other claims. The "green frontier," the new post-war Danish-German frontier, is not infrequently referred to in Hitler's speeches as one of Germany's "bleeding wounds." The German newspaper *Militär-Wochenblatt* asserts that Germany's "air frontier lies to the north of the Belte." Thus it is not only a question of the narrow frontier strip, of Lower Jutland, populated throughout by Danes and transferred to Denmark as the result of a plebiscite. The point is that Hitler Germany needs bases for its air fleet, situated considerably further to the north, and requires wider gates for the German navy. This is why it does not want to leave the "key" to the Baltic in the hands of Denmark. Besides this, fascist Germany needs the rich food resources of Danish agriculture for the war it is preparing, as well as the technically highly developed branches of Denmark's industries of military importance. Thus the very situation of Denmark and its resources make of it, so to speak, an object of military attack by fascist Germany. Not very long ago, General With, chief of the Danish General Staff, described this situation as follows:

"The word 'invasion' is written in letters of fire on the walls of Denmark."

But the Danish Foreign Minister calm-

ly declares that he "sees no dangers abroad."

Hitler Germany has also had no special reason to be dissatisfied with the "Scandinavian collaboration" which has existed up to the present. The so-called Northern collaboration of the Scandinavian countries, based on an agreement with the reactionary government of Finland, virtually signified toleration of the machinations of Hitler fascism, which is trying to draw the Scandinavian countries into the anti-Soviet front of the warmongers.

The fascist paper *Volk und Reich* has called Sweden a "territory without people," thus giving it plainly to be understood that the "Third Empire" regards it as one of the spheres of colonization for its "people without territory." German capital is invested in Swedish armament works and in Norwegian chemical enterprises. German fascism is stretching out its tentacles to North Sweden and North Norway. Last autumn, Blomberg, German War Minister, made a regular tour of inspection in these regions. Without giving any previous warning, German warships anchored at Narvick, the Norwegian port where Swedish ore is loaded. Blomberg, accompanied by twenty specialists, traveled by rail from Narvick to the Swedish iron mines, and right up to the borders of Finland. With the aid of his bogies—"Red airplanes and aircraft carriers"—Goebbels is trying to create the myth of the danger menacing the North from the Soviet Union. This is the first result of a conference recently held in Berlin, at which it was decided to stake more on Scandinavia and carry on a propaganda campaign against the "Red danger in the North."

But to "stake" does not mean to win, and howls about the "Red menace" do not convince the sober-minded people of Scandinavia. The events of the last half year have eloquently shown them the real and very positive danger. The keynote of the Nuremberg congress of the German fascists was the organization of war against all the democratic countries of Europe. This is also known in Scandinavia. Hitler's brazen intervention in

Spain, the piratical attacks on Scandinavian merchant ships, are producing a definite impression on public opinion by no means favorable to the warmongers. Fascism was defeated in the general elections in all the Scandinavian countries. In Finland, the pro-German president Svinhufvud met with defeat. In the program declaration of the new Finnish government, it states that in the interests of a policy of peace it is necessary to

“ . . . draw nearer to the Scandinavian countries and improve relations with the Soviet Union.”

All of a sudden General Hierl, leader of the German “Labor Service,” abandoned his proposed visit to Finland.

The well-known Swedish military specialist Colonel Bratt recently published a book in which he showed that, due to various circumstances, noteworthy changes had taken place in the military and political situation of Sweden and Finland and also of Norway:

“The traditionally accepted danger from the East,” he wrote, “is evidently sinking into the background. The idea that the Soviet Union, in a war against Germany would choose a line of operations over Finland and Sweden, is too ‘airy’ in spite of the ‘ghost airplanes.’ We have to reckon with the possibility of the occupation of Southern and Western Sweden by Germany.”

Sandler, Swedish Foreign Minister, recently went to London and Paris to improve relations with those countries. Goering was forced to make a wry face and inform a delegation of Swedish reactionaries in Berlin that “trends had recently appeared” that were not favorable to the establishment of firm bonds between Germany and Sweden. In Norway, Ole Colbjörnson, one of the theoreticians of the Norwegian Labor Party, came to the conclusion that in case of war, which he considers possible and likely, the neutrality of Norway would be violated by Germany.

Thus, ever wider circles in Scandinavia are beginning to understand whence the danger threatens, and to

realize that it threatens only from the side of German fascism. Even Stauning cannot completely deny the fascist peril that threatens the Scandinavian countries. During his stay in Lund, where he gave his first lecture, Stauning granted an interview in which he stated that “in my opinion, the international situation does not fill me with high spirits.” But if anyone expected him to draw corresponding conclusions for the Scandinavian countries he was bitterly mistaken, for he simply received the reply that Denmark must continue its former policy of isolation, *i.e.*, the policy of subordination to Berlin. In his speech at Lund Stauning said:

“Of course, outside Denmark, measures are being conducted by a certain party which do not increase our security.”

What, then, should be the attitude of the Danish people to this? The following, it would appear:

“But Danish public opinion does not even dream of interfering in the military and political measures of other countries, and it absolutely does not consider it necessary to present demands dealing with our security.”

Could any better encouragement for the German fascists be wished for! Gentlemen, you may threaten the independence of Denmark as much as you wish; you may interfere as much as you like in Danish affairs, the Danish government does not present any demands concerning the security of its country! Those who are so little concerned with the question of security feel no need for allies.

“In forty years of political life, it has never entered my head to interfere in the question of how Sweden or Norway organize their defense.”

But does not the new situation demand a closer approach to other democratic countries and especially the Scandinavian countries? To this Stauning replies:

“There is something else besides basing one’s calculations on the North, and

this 'something' is of importance in estimating the military and political line of Denmark."

Does this mean basing calculations on the South? On a bandit armed to the teeth, who is stretching out his hand to the North? This is even going beyond the excessively sage policy of "not irritating the savage beast," so pointedly characterized by Comrade Dimitroff. For it means to leap right into the jaws of the fascist beast. "Here you are, feast yourself, take another bite. We shall not defend ourselves anyway."

It is not at all surprising that after this, German fascism speaks with the greatest praise of the leader of such a policy.

The *Völkischer Beobachter* recommends the head of the Danish government to continue the same "policy of neutrality." *The Völkischer Beobachter* also finds it reasonable for Denmark not to arm, because "even if Denmark provided itself with comparatively gigantic armaments, even this would not be an unquestionable guarantee of security." How splendidly this harmonizes with Stauning's statement:

"To seriously take up the question of a Northern defensive alliance means to create a new danger zone."

There is someone else to whom Stauning's speech is as welcome as it is to Berlin. This is the Trotskyite Flyg in Sweden, one of the foulest of renegades. Since Stauning's views aroused protests, Flyg hurried to his aid, and declared that he was also against any form of armaments whatever (except Hitler's, of course), and he considered that what Stauning said about Denmark was also applicable to Sweden. Flyg was consistent in "demanding" that Sweden follow the example of Germany and Japan and resign from the League of Nations. What a specimen of corrupt fawning on German fascism! But this is merely a link in the whole chain of treachery. Flyg is an ardent defender of the Trotskyite gang of murderers, an individual

who helps the Spanish Trotskyites in their splitting and undermining work, and who slanders the People's Front in France.

The German fascists and their accomplices in Scandinavia have given indisputably clear proof by their comments on Stauning's speech that Stauning's policy does not correspond to the interests of the Scandinavian countries and does not serve the ends of the preservation of peace.

The Danish and Swedish conservatives opened up a particularly energetic campaign on the occasion of Stauning's speeches. The reactionaries would like to utilize the general situation to carry out their own reactionary plans of armaments, to strengthen their own positions, which would mean a threat to the democratic liberties won by the working people of the Scandinavian countries.

One thing is certain, the bourgeoisie of the Scandinavian countries—Sweden, Norway, Denmark—are raising the question of the line of war policy, and, taking into consideration the uneasiness of the masses of the people regarding the war danger which threatens from German fascism, they are carrying through various measures for strengthening the defenses of the country.

What should be the attitude of the working class to this?

"The proletariat," said Comrade Dimitroff, "cannot get on without their own policy in these questions. Without under any circumstances allowing itself to slip into the position of the bourgeoisie, the Party of the proletariat must actively intervene with its own platform, with its own demands, in foreign policy and in the sphere of the question of the defense of the country."

The position of the Scandinavian working class movement on the war question bears the historic imprint of pacifism. The question of defense against aggression has only become urgent in the Scandinavian countries since the advent of Hitler to power. The necessity for such defense was long denied by the Social-Democratic Party leadership. But

when the danger of a fascist attack could no longer be denied, a profound pessimism began to spread, a disbelief in the possibility of taking any steps to strengthen security, "What is the use?" is the reply to all proposals in this direction. "The strength of the Northern peoples lies not in arms but in community of culture," said Stauning, when in Oslo he once more rejected the "mirage" of a defensive alliance.

But the origin of the idea of such an alliance particularly at the present time has a very real foundation. It is for the Scandinavian working class to settle this question, to reply to it. The reactionary leaders of the Social-Democratic Party are trying to sidetrack the working class, trying to conceal from it the causes of their opposition to this idea. In practice, all the efforts of the Social-Democratic leaders, especially in Denmark, are directed toward smothering discussion on this question. The Copenhagen *Social-Demokraten* writes:

"In our opinion, this discussion does not reach its aim. It can only be harmful, because it is one-sided and helps to give rise to suspicions regarding the aggressive aims of a certain country bordering on Denmark. On the whole we consider that the open polemic on this subject, for the above-mentioned reasons of foreign policy, had better be closed."

But his view is evidently not shared by everyone in the Swedish Social-Democratic Party. In reply to Stauning's lecture in Lund, P. A. Hanson, the Social-Democratic Prime Minister of Sweden, stated very definitely:

"No government in the world will stop Sweden fighting on the side of Denmark if Denmark gets into a difficult position. . . . The idea of a defensive alliance among the countries of the North should be developed. For that which is a misfortune for Denmark, Norway and Finland means misfortunate for Sweden as well."

The Scandinavian workers, who have to settle this question independently, in the interests of maintaining peace, are

acting properly in not allowing themselves to be sidetracked either by the speeches of the conservatives or by the uproar raised by many of the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party. In the first place, the workers must not allow the discussion of this vitally important question to be suppressed, for otherwise only fascism would benefit.

The working class movement in the Scandinavian countries has fifty years' experience of working in collaboration. It is ahead of other capitalist countries in the degree to which it is organized. It is true that most of its reformist leaders belong to the Right wing of the Second International and the I.F.T.U.\* and are out-and-out opponents of the united front with the Communists. Their socialism is "socialism led by the King." But the working class movement here is continually developing, anti-fascist sentiments are increasing, while reaction has suffered repeated defeats at the elections in recent years. In Denmark, Sweden and Norway, Social-Democrats are at the head of the coalition governments, while in Finland as well, five Social-Democratic ministers have entered the new cabinet. The working class wants these Social-Democratic positions in the administration of the state to be utilized to bring even small benefits to the working masses.

The working people of the Scandinavian countries have much to defend and much to strive for in the struggle against capital and reaction. The right to strike is restricted by all kinds of laws and compulsory measures. The right of assembly has also been cut down in places. In Norway and Sweden, the authorities have used troops against workers' demonstrations, and in Sweden six people were killed. Sentences of many years of imprisonment have been meted out against revolutionary leaders of the working class movement. The Communist press is constantly in the prisoner's dock. In short, freedom of organization, assem-

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International Federation of Trade Unions—*Ed.*

bly and the press is interpreted to the advantage of the bourgeoisie.

In Denmark and Sweden there are Upper Chambers which can annul the decisions of the Lower Houses which have been elected by the votes of the whole people. The workers have to carry on a constant class struggle against the bourgeoisie for their social rights. In short, Scandinavian democracy is bourgeois capitalist democracy, through and through.

Nevertheless, the working people of the Scandinavian countries know that *it would be far worse under fascism*, that they would not be able to have the same food and clothes that they now have if German fascism succeeded in drawing the north of Europe under its yoke, that this would mean the end of all freedom and of life worthy of human beings. The democratic and social rights won have consequently to be defended. The national independence of the Scandinavian people and their comparatively high culture have to be defended against fascist barbarism.

The masses of the people in Scandinavia are therefore deeply interested in putting an end to a policy which is making their countries politically and economically dependent on fascist Germany. This applies particularly to Denmark. No one demands the stopping of the commercial relations between Danish agriculture and industry, and Germany. But the Danish people can rightly demand that the independence of the country and the people themselves should not be sold to Germany along with bacon, butter and eggs. The Danish population in Lower Jutland see themselves helpless before the danger of a fascist invasion. In Sweden, the southern border of Denmark is justly regarded as the border of the North in general. Only the Hitlerites and those who lick their boots are interested in depicting the situation as if it were impossible to secure themselves against attack. When a Communist question was put in the Danish Parliament as to whether Hitler had prohibited the fortification of the southern

border of Denmark, Stauning gave no reply.

Ever wider circles of people in Denmark and other Scandinavian countries are, for various reasons, demanding that the army be strengthened. Certain democratic circles are doing so, honestly desirous of defending the security and independence of the country against the fascist aggressor. The reactionaries, on the other hand, are doing so with the aim of strengthening their influence through the army, and their forces in the army, in the attempt to bring about a *fascist* line both in the home and foreign policy of the country.

The Communists demand that the army be purged of fascist elements. They declare that the mere strengthening of the army is no guarantee for the security of the country. At the same time, however, the Communists understand that a small nation, completely defenseless from a military point of view, may still more easily become the prey of the fascist bandits. But as there is no guarantee in the present circumstances that the bourgeoisie will not utilize the army against the working class and the working people in general, the Communists cannot undertake the responsibility for a war budget and a military apparatus controlled by the reactionaries. But they seek all the more to bring about the democratization of the army. The Scandinavian Communist Parties want to make "Spanish" surprises impossible. They energetically defend the demands of the lower ranks and non-commissioned officers. The Communists demand that funds be voted to organize the necessary defense of the population against the horrors of air and naval bombardment. In view of the situation in Lower Jutland, they stand for the fortification of the frontiers and for other defensive measures such as will make it difficult for the fascist aggressor to occupy the country.

The Communists consider the most effective method of defending security to be a correct and active foreign policy, a policy of joint defense of the Scandinavian countries against the dangers

that threaten them from German fascism, and the coordination of this policy with the League of Nations. The Scandinavian Communists are guided by the directions given to the masses by Comrade Dimitroff on the question of the struggle for peace, when he said:

"It is by no means a matter of indifference to the working class and to all toilers what foreign policy the government carries on toward the fascist enemies of peace, whether this policy will help to strengthen collective security or hinder it; whether the government aids the agents of the fascist aggressor or takes effective steps against them. . . . In every concrete situation, the representatives of the working class will come out in support of such proposals and will seek to secure the carrying out of such measures as open up the greatest possibility for bringing the pressure of the masses of the people on the widest scale to bear upon the foreign policy of the government, and also provide for their effective control over the activity of the government in the questions of the defense of the country. They will also give their support to all those measures which hinder the capitulation of the bourgeois governments to the fascist aggressor and the betrayal of the independence and liberty of the people by these governments."

The conduct of the fascist aggressors makes it impossible for the Scandinavian countries to be able to remain neutral during the war that is looming ahead. Italian fascism attacked Ethiopia, German and Italian fascism have flung themselves on the Spanish Republic and in doing so are attacking Scandinavian merchant vessels. How much less will it be possible to maintain neutrality when fascism creates a theater of military operations that is not so distant from the Scandinavian countries as Ethiopia and Spain, or when the Northern coun-

tries themselves become the scene of action by fascism!

The Scandinavian countries as separate units cannot successfully defend themselves against an offensive by German fascism. But should they be ready for joint defense, the 16,000,000 population of Scandinavia and Finland will be a serious opponent to the fascist enemy, especially if this defensive alliance can reckon on the support of the mighty land of socialism in the East and the bourgeois democratic countries in the West in defense of the independence and inviolability of these countries.

The thinking workers of the Scandinavian countries therefore consider that their peoples are vitally interested in strengthening cultural, economic and political cooperation between the Scandinavian countries; in bringing about mutual support in the struggle against fascist espionage and disruptive work; in ensuring the inviolability of the borders of their countries; in the joint defense of the national independence of the Northern countries; and in mutual military aid, if this is required, for their defense against attack by German fascism.

Such a defensive alliance of the Scandinavian countries would undoubtedly help, within the bounds of the League of Nations, to give an impetus to the establishment of collective security and the protection of universal peace.

The point at issue is to bar to fascism the road to the North. Herein lies the real peace policy of the Scandinavian countries. It is clear that the most important prerequisite for this is the struggle of the working class further to strengthen democracy in the Scandinavian countries, and to bring about the united front of the proletariat and a wide Popular Front against bourgeois reaction and fascism.

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# The International Brigades Yesterday and Today

BY FRANCESCO LEONE

*(Commander of the Garibaldi Brigade)*

**O**NE of the most vivid forms in which the international solidarity of the anti-fascist workers with Republican Spain found expression was the formation of the International Brigades, which ever since the beginning of November last year have been fighting in the trenches of liberty shoulder to shoulder with the gallant Spanish warriors.

In the most difficult days of the desperate defense of Madrid, the 1st International Brigade (XI) was already at the gates of the heroic city, competing in intrepidity with the Republican troops.

The 2nd International Brigade (XII) received its baptism of fire on November 12 at the storming of the fort of Sierra de los Angeles. On November 19 it was sent to defend the left bank of the River Manzanares, at the Porta di Ferro, behind the buildings of University City. These buildings were in the hands of the fascists, who had penetrated them at the beginning of November over the French Bridge.

Meanwhile, other brigades were being formed in Albacete, and at the present time there are six International Brigades.

Who are the men in the International Brigades?

Anti-fascist workers and intellectuals who have come from all parts of the world to take part in the defense of liberty, progress and peace. They have come to show their Spanish brothers that the international solidarity of the working people is not an empty phrase.

It was at the moment when the Span-

ish democratic republic was deserted by the democratic countries of Europe which it had trusted so much, at the moment when the legitimate government of the Spanish people was denied the right of unhindered commerce with other countries, whereby it might have rapidly secured the necessary means for crushing the rebellion of the traitor generals in the pay of German and Italian fascism, that the whole weight of the entire significance of international solidarity could not help making itself felt.

But, unfortunately, even in the sphere of the international solidarity of the working people, there was not that unity of action which from the very outset of the Spanish rebellion could have decisively influenced the course of the struggle, which had now turned into a real robber war of international fascism against republican Spain. It is now definitely established who is responsible for this inadequate unity of action. And the international proletariat, but first and foremost the Spanish workers, will, we hope, be able to estimate this at its worth.

Only one government of a great power stood on the side of the Spanish Republic—the government of the Soviet Union. The gratitude, the thankfulness felt by the Spanish people toward the great Russian people can only be realized by those who have been in Spain of late.

Not to speak of Madrid, we call to mind that on the nineteenth anniversary of the October Revolution, half a million people in Barcelona took part in a huge demonstration, honoring the Soviet Union.

And here are other examples of the tremendous love felt by the Spanish people for the people of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet steamer which was anchored in the port of Barcelona, after the unloading of the foodstuffs sent as a mark of solidarity by the Soviet workers, was literally overwhelmed by a crowd of women who brought enormous bouquets of flowers. The steamer set out on the return journey smothered in flowers.

And the episode of the Soviet freight cargo steamer "Komsomol," sunk by the rebels? A wide campaign is going on all the time throughout the country for the collection of funds which, at the initiative of the United League of Socialist Youth, are being collected among the Spanish people to make up the loss to Soviet shipping by providing a vessel identical with the one that was sunk.

The Spanish people give the same touching and warm expression to their feelings of love and gratitude to the fighters in the International Brigades, not to mention official demonstrations in honor of our brigades. In Madrid, at the tensest moments of the defense of this heroic city, the name of the International Brigades was on the lips and in the hearts of all the people of Madrid. Our men were vociferously and enthusiastically greeted wherever they went, both by the people and by the members of the Republican Militia. I shall never forget an episode in Colmenar de la Veja. Our "Garibaldi" Battalion had halted in this village, and we were quartered in a huge monastery. On the same day, many refugees—women, old people, children—arrived from Madrid.

Out kitbags were opened generously for these unfortunate refugees. Many cans of food were distributed. The attention of the refugees was particularly attracted to the labels on the cans printed in some language they could not understand. They swallowed the contents of the cans with great appetite, but with still greater joy. The reason for this we understood later.

The gallant men of our "Garibaldi" Battalion did not limit themselves to this.

They organized a collection for the refugees. In half an hour they gathered over 1,500 pesetas and handed the money over to the local village committee of the People's Front. We distributed sweets to all the children. There were also many children with their mothers. Soon the time came for us to march on. The whole crowd rushed to embrace us.

One woman shouted: "Long live Russia." The cry was taken up by the others and was repeated in unison time after time.

"But we are Italians."

"No, we read it on tins that you gave us. . . ."

And in Fuencarral? The women washed our clothes and refused to take money for payment.

"What do you want to pay us for? Why, you are shedding your blood for us."

And in the hospitals of Madrid? The doctors and nurses cannot think of ways to express their gratitude and love. And when, touched by such anxious care, we said:

"Thank you, comrades."

"And we thank you!" they replied.

Representatives of the I.L.D. came, loaded with food and clothes, and said:

"Excuse us, comrades, that there is so little. We are organizing other workshops, and many women are already working there without pay!"

The doctors and nurses work twelve and fourteen hours a day, and none of them demands to be relieved.

One night a German comrade died in the bed next to mine. He died from loss of blood. He was brought to the hospital too late, so that the operation was already useless. He died without a complaint. Beside him sat a nurse.

"I am dying," he said in French in a weak voice. "Sit by me. My name is Heinrich. I am satisfied to die here. Let me hold your hand. . . ."

And he died, pressing the hand of the nurse, as though he were trying to express through her his feelings toward the whole Spanish people.

The feelings were mutual.

From the very first moments of contact, the warmest and most brotherly feelings were established between the Spanish fighters and the men of the International Brigades.

I remember a battalion of Carabineros which was acting in conjunction with the "Garibaldi" Battalion. Our staff proved to be without quarters, whereupon the commander of the Carabineros immediately offered us a room in a house they had occupied near the front line, almost completely concealed by trees. The commanders and officers of the two battalions immediately established the closest relations. This ensured friendly and fruitful cooperation.

The men became still more friendly, if that is at all possible. In addition to love, the Spanish fighters felt a sort of deep admiration for us.

The mere fact that we were "foreigners" raised us in their eyes, so much so that they even exaggerated our fighting qualities.

For them, we were all veteran soldiers, steeled in the battles of the World War. Of course, their opinion was exaggerated, but in any case it did no harm and only caused a noble-spirited competition.

And the value of our participation in the ranks of the Republican troops is from this point of view undoubted.

It would be a great mistake and unjust to assert that the presence of the International Brigades saved Madrid in the bloody days of November. But it must be recognized that all the battalions of various nationalities in the International Brigades competed with the Spanish units in gallantry and heroism. Much valuable blood was shed by all of us in these tragic days. By the end of November, the strength of our battalions had sunk to almost half.

It should be noted that we were not yet sufficiently prepared when we were thrown into the thick of battle. We suffered many losses because of insufficiently close cooperation among the infantry, artillery and aviation. But it should also be stated that at that time we had as little artillery as airplanes.

The unexampled courage of the defenders of the Spanish Republic, the defenders of Madrid, made up for this.

Facts? What about the fifty German comrades who were cut off in front line positions and, who, not receiving in time the order to retreat, preferred to be crushed by enemy tanks rather than retreat?

And what about the sixty Polish comrades who barricaded themselves in a house, where they fiercely beat off all the attacks of the enemy? Though surrounded they did not surrender to the fascists, who were forced to use tanks to destroy the house. Our heroes were without hand grenades and could not keep back the tanks which advanced inexorably upon them. Only two of these heroes escaped death, reaching our lines in the darkness of the night.

Eternal glory to these heroes, these valiant sons of the international proletariat!

\* \* \*

The International Brigades entered the war in difficult conditions and helped to overcome many of the difficulties which arose out of the entire Spanish situation and owing to which the remarkable heroism of a whole people was for months not properly rewarded in the fight against Franco's hordes. The presence of our men, and their heroic struggle shoulder to shoulder with the Spanish comrades in the trenches of liberty, undoubtedly helped to raise their spirits and to strengthen their belief in victory.

Thanks to their contact with all their "foreign" brothers, our Spanish comrades felt more clearly that their struggle was the struggle of the entire international proletariat, for all progressive trends in every country against fascist barbarism, and that they were not alone in this struggle. From the purely military point of view, the effectiveness of our organized and disciplined units undoubtedly had its beneficial influence.

Now that the people's army can be counted a reality, the men of the International Brigades have the right to be proud of the fact that they participated in its

formation. In this army, which has to its credit such brilliant victories as Guadala-jara, the functions of our brigades cannot remain what they were formerly. In the process of assimilation which is taking place in the incessant joint fighting, the International Brigades have, so to speak, become "Spanified" and have merged into a single whole with the valiant people's army of Republican Spain.

We will mention one more pleasing fact. The soldiers of the Spanish army are now quite confident in themselves and no longer look on their "foreign" brothers with that naive admiration that we spoke of above, though they still maintain to the full a deep feeling of gratitude and thankfulness toward them. This is a mark of the strength and military skill achieved by the Spanish soldiers, as proved by the brilliant and outstanding successes that they have gained on the various fronts against the divisions sent by Mussolini and Hitler.

The men of the International Brigades, on the other hand, are joyfully merging with the units of the Spanish people's army which are on the road to extensive development and consolidation. When they set out for Spain, the volunteers of the International Brigades were inspired by one single desire—to assist in bringing about the victory of the Spanish people, which will be a victory for the anti-fascists in their own countries. They did not and do not demand special distinctions for themselves, as befits conscious fighters who are able simply to do their duty.

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The experience of the International Brigades is above all of tremendously positive significance on the wide field of the anti-fascist struggle in all countries. The International Brigades gathered into their units anti-fascist fighters of all trends—Communists and Socialists, Anarchists and Catholics, workers, peasants and intellectuals. In many respects, these brigades represent, as it were, a wide People's Front.

Characteristic in this respect is the composition of the "Garibaldi" Battalion.

The very name chosen by the battalion is a symbol which does not permit the exclusive predomination of any party. It has the character of asserting the noblest traditions of the Italian people, traditions of freedom and independence, which are resuscitated in the legendary figure of the most popular hero in the history of the Italian national democratic struggle for emancipation, and which fascism has not and never will be able to crush in our people.

The commander of the "Garibaldi" Battalion, Pacciardi, a lawyer by profession, is a Republican. The battalion has two political commissars—a Socialist and a Communist. The senior adjutant of the battalion is a Communist. In the companies of the battalion there are several Socialists and about forty Anarchists.

Among the company commanders are two Socialists, two Communists and one Anarchist. The overwhelming majority of the battalion are Communists and most friendly and comradely relations exist among all the men. The distribution of posts proves in turn that the "Garibaldi" Battalion is guided not by party considerations but exclusively by the desire to ensure that the battalion possesses the greatest possible fighting efficiency. It thus gives a splendid example of unity of action, *in action*.

The "Garibaldi" Battalion is a living and effective example, a living proof of the possibility of uniting all anti-fascist forces on the basis of the fight against the common enemy.

All the grounds exist for anticipating that the various parties represented in the battalion will be able to draw the proper lessons from this striking experience and transfer the experience to the sphere of the struggle against fascism in Italy itself.

The example of the International Brigades must be an important step toward the unification of all anti-fascist forces for a similar struggle in other countries.

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# The Pope's Encyclical in Regard to the Position of the Catholic Church

BY FRANZ KRAUS

ON MARCH 23, 1937, there appeared on the front page of *l'Osservatore Romano*, organ of the Vatican, the Pope's Encyclical, "In Regard to the Position of the Catholic Church in the German Reich." The Encyclical was printed in the German language, an unprecedented occurrence. It was dated March 14, but was published only nine days later, in contrast to the Encyclical against Communism, which was signed on March 19 and made public on the same day. The Encyclical was forwarded to Germany in the German language, apparently through illegal channels, was distributed to the parishes by special couriers on motorcycles, and on the next morning was read from the pulpits. In this way the Gestapo were frustrated; they came too late! The house searches which they undertook—among others at the home of Bishop Von Preysing—yielded no results.

This political move of the Vatican was preceded by protracted negotiations between the German ecclesiastical princes and the papal Nuncio in Berlin, on the one side, and the German government, on the other. For a time it was rumored that the notorious German ambassador, Von Papan, this cavalier and knight of the Catholic Church, who has frequently played a fateful role in German politics, would be appointed Minister of Religion. This was to lead to a speedy settlement of the church conflict, favorable to Hitler fascism.

The Encyclical was also preceded by serious mass struggle in the Saar, the middle Rhine and other Catholic regions.

It is only if one takes into consideration both of these factors—the readiness to negotiate on the part of the Catholic leaders, on the one hand, and the resistance of the Catholic masses to fascism, on the other—that one is able to give a correct estimation of the Vatican's Encyclical on the German Church question.

In the introductory section of the Encyclical the supreme head of the Catholic Church declares that he is following "with burning sorrow and growing consternation the path of suffering of the Church, the growing afflictions" of the Catholic masses, and promises to reveal "reality in all of its oppressiveness." When, in the summer of 1933, the German government proposed to the Vatican to begin negotiations for a Concordat, the Vatican, "in spite of many and grave misgivings," did not refuse its consent, in order to spare the Catholic masses in Germany "trials and tribulations insofar as it was humanly possible," in order to demonstrate by deeds that the supreme hierarchy of the Church does not refuse "to extend to anyone, if he himself does not spurn it, the peaceable hand."

The desired aim, however, was not achieved. "The tree of peace planted in German soil" did not bear the desired fruit, for which the Encyclical holds the rulers of Germany responsible, without mentioning them by name. The Vatican "did not become weary" of revealing "to the responsible leaders" of Germany the consequences of their actions against Catholicism, but in vain. From "the other side" there arose "as an ordinary rule,

distortion of facts, their evasion, their voiding and finally their more or less open violation."

But "even today" declares the Encyclical, "when the open fight against confessional schools protected by the Concordat and the suppression of liberty of choice for those who have a right to Catholic education reveal . . . the tragic seriousness of the situation and a condition of spiritual oppression such as never before has been witnessed," the Pope is anxious "not to leave out of consideration any prospect, however slight, of a return to the fidelity of contracts and to an understanding."

Without directly mentioning National-Socialism, the Encyclical reproaches it for elevating the race, the people, the state, the state form, and those who bear state power to the position of "supreme measure of all . . . values" and "deifying them with an idolatrous cult." The Pope reproaches the National-Socialists for the "teaching of the heretical doctrine . . . of a national God, of a national religion." Hinting at certain opinions expressed, the Encyclical declares:

"He . . . who . . . dares place beside Christ, or worse still, above Him, a simple mortal [*i.e.*, the "Fuehrer" Hitler—F. K.] even though the greatest of all time, let him know that he is a false prophet. . . ."

The Encyclical execrates "the mirage and evil suggestion of a German national church," the "whisperings regarding blood and race," the "precepts regarding heroic deeds and ideas," the attempts to establish a new, anti-Christian "moral code."

Appealing to the youth, it states:

"No one is thinking of placing obstacles in the way of the German youth that is to lead them to the realization of a genuine community of the people, to the cultivation of a noble love of freedom, to an inviolable loyalty to the fatherland."

At the same time, however, the Encyclical expresses itself against the education of the youth in an anti-Catholic

and anti-Christian spirit and demands that the organizations be cleansed of the spirit "hostile to the Church."

After expressing gratitude to those priests and members of Catholic religious orders who have suffered and still suffer "pain and persecution" for performing their religious duties—a gratitude which will reach "some in prison cells and concentration camps," the Encyclical further appeals to the "faithful among the laity," assuring them of the solidarity of the church. The Pope declares that "a free and secret ballot would be equal to an overwhelming vote in support of the confessional schools," wherefore, in the future he would not tire of ". . . proving to the responsible quarters the injustice of the compulsory measures now being practiced, and the bounden duty to permit a free expression of will."

The Encyclical is, in its way, an exposure of the arbitrariness of the totalitarian fascist Hitler dictatorship. Despite all diplomatic reservations, the Vatican is forced in its terminology to "express what exists," to stigmatize the injustices and terror of the Hitler regime, and to brand its insanity, its destruction of the rights of the people.

Apparently the German government got wind of the existence of the Encyclical before it was published, for the *Voelkischer Beobachter* of March 22 published an editorial, "Loyalty and the Concordat," in which the Vatican was given its first answer. The Hitlerite paper cynically declared:

"German loyalty does not mean loyalty to the letter of a treaty, to the point of self-destruction. . . ."

"Even a treaty with the Holy See is no sacrosanct, unassailable and eternal value in itself. . . ."

One can hardly express the point any more clearly that fascism has no desire to adhere to treaties, which will be broken just as soon as it is convenient to the fascist rulers.

Although the German press was not permitted to publish the Encyclical, it nevertheless became known in Germany and called forth a powerful ferment not only among the Catholic masses, but also

among the adherents of the Protestant faith opposed to the government. This is shown not only by the resistance in the Catholic Saar region to the compulsory voting for secular schools, but also by the circulation of illegal Protestant leaflets in Berlin, and the action of the former U-boat commander, Pastor Niembeller of Dahlem, who every Sunday reads out in church the names of the twenty-two Protestant clergymen now in concentration camps and offers up a prayer.

Internationally, also, the Encyclical met with sympathy and approval not only among Catholics, but also among Protestants.

The sharpness of the church conflict in Germany has thus increased considerably. Hitler fascism, which has to a certain extent been compelled to adopt a defensive position, answers with the staging of new "morality" trials, and a tremendous treason trial against priests for establishing a "united front between Catholics and Communists."

In answer to the Encyclical, Germany delivered a note to the Vatican in the first half of April (the text of which has not been published up to the present), in which, according to press reports, it is pointed out that "National-Socialism has safeguarded Germany from Bolshevism and thereby saved the Church from destruction." Barbarous fascism, the scourge of humanity, is anxious once again to extort concessions, by attempting to put itself forward as the "savior of European culture and faith."

The "reconciliation" achieved between Hitler and Ludendorff has also disturbed and alarmed Catholic circles. They fear an official proclamation of a German religion of the Ludendorff type, and an intensification of the persecution of Christians.

It would be false, however, to assume that all the boats have been burnt between the Vatican, the church hierarchy and the Hitler government. For all sides it is being asserted that the German government has no intention of breaking the Concordat or of breaking off diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The

heads of the Church, on their part, hate the Communists and the Soviet Union most of all, and are always ready to collaborate with all the dark, aggressive forces fighting against this "main enemy."

The official *Gazeta Polska* has grounds for stressing the point that whereas the anti-Communist Encyclical was addressed to the entire world, the Encyclical "With Burning Sorrow" is addressed only to German bishops and priests.

"This situation," writes the *Gazeta Polska*, "is to be explained by the universal character of the Communist danger, while the German anti-Catholic doctrines are only of local significance."

It is very characteristic that the organ of the Vatican quotes this opinion without any comment or raising any objections. None the less, we must not leave out of consideration, the fact that, in view of the present obviously difficult position of Hitler fascism and especially in view of the mass movement of the believers, the Encyclical is of importance for further rousing the religious masses suffering under fascist oppression.

Irrespective of the conciliatory intentions of the Vatican and the hierarchy in Germany, the Encyclical can serve as a strong impetus to strengthen the mass struggles of the Catholic working people and to bring about unity between them and all determined opponents of Hitler.

Whether the authors of the Encyclical wish it or not, it passes judgement upon Hitler fascism. On the basis of the statements of the Vatican, even thoroughly backward sections of the people can understand how Hitler fascism really suppresses all liberty.

The Encyclical may be a diplomatic document for the Vatican, but for the Catholic masses it is something more. The anti-fascists need to see to it that the broad masses become more and more clear in understanding the provocations of Hitler fascism, that they see through all of its brutality and that, in common with all real democrats and friends of peace, they take up the struggle against the yoke of fascism.

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# Australia and the Fight for Peace

BY S. MASON

THE British government took early steps to prepare and mobilize the Australian federal government (a coalition of the bourgeois United Australian Party and the United Country Party—the big squatters) for support in its reactionary foreign policy. Characteristic of this policy are huge armaments accompanied by a deviation from the principles of collective security directed against the fascist instigators of war.

Immediately on their return from London in the latter part of last year, both the Federal Attorney General and the Premier of the government of New South Wales (the political counterpart of the federal government) commenced expatiating in the most demagogic manner on the need for a “strong Empire to defend peace and democracy; democracy as the whole Empire’s heritage and it being the privilege and duty of all to defend it.” Simultaneously, Menzies also indicated the future policy of looking for a common language with, and capitulation and retreat before, the aggressors, which has been followed up till now by both the British and Australian governments, when he said in Parliament:

“The government feels that non-member states, in particular the United States, Germany and Japan, shall be fully consulted. If unanimity on the proposal to hold such a consultation can be secured, we believe there will be a reasonable chance of obtaining a covenant of a kind which would bring about universal membership, without which the League cannot fulfil its functions.”

Following this, the federal parliament

endorsed a “defense” budget of £8,876,000, an increase over the previous year of approximately £2,000,000, and as against £3,200,000 in 1932.

In furtherance of its policy, the coronation of the new King, George VI, is being utilized by the Australian government to the utmost. Boosting the departure from Melbourne (with a population of 1,000,000) of part of the Australian contingent on February 17, the *Sidney Morning Herald*, in true jingo style, reported:

“Remarkable scenes of enthusiasm, reminiscent of troopship sailings during the war, marked the departure for London by the Oronsey today of the Australian Services contingent for the coronation.

“A crowd estimated at 10,000 was on the pier, and, to the accompaniment of the Royal Australian Air Force Band, hundreds joined with the troops in singing ‘Rule Britannia,’ ‘Keep the Home Fires Burning’ and ‘Auld Lang Syne.’”

In order to give the Australian federal government a helping hand to carry through its program, every British government representative visiting Australia, immediately on arrival, commences making speeches in the same demagogic strain mentioned above. The recent visit of the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, K. M. Lindsay, M. P., was no exception.

But, when faced with the effective defense of peace and democracy, the Australian reactionaries endeavor to outdo their tutors in London.

Immediately the fascist revolt broke out in Spain the Australian people re-

sponded in support of the Spanish government. Despite the great distance and expense, in a very short time nurses, supplied with medical equipment, were on their way, money was being collected by the Spanish Relief Committee and the Australian Council of Trade Unions launched a financial appeal. To counter this, the Prime Minister, M. J. Lyons, political counterpart of Ramsay MacDonald in the antipodes, made a public appeal against the contribution of funds for Spanish relief, while the government has been fanatical in its support of "neutrality." In boosting and distorting the work of the Non-Intervention Committee, the reactionary *Sidney Morning Herald* carried daily articles which are summed up in such a false headline as "Intervention in Spain to Cease," appearing in its issue of February 17, 1937.

Similarly with volunteers who declared their readiness to go to Spain to fight against fascism. After the departure of two such volunteers, the government's reaction was to make it known that it would take all possible measures to prevent further volunteers from leaving the country.

Supporting the government and expressing the pro-fascist and anti-collective security tendencies of dominant ruling circles, the *Sidney Morning Herald* flirts with the aggressors. Thus, for instance, in connection with the Japanese brigandage in China, it says:

"In the long run, the Western nations, since they have imposed severe restrictions upon Japanese goods in their own lands and colonies, must recognize the necessity of this close and natural market to Japanese industry."

Such statements of the paper in defense of Japan and also Germany and Italy accompanied by attacks on the U.S. S.R., aim at laying the basis for embroiling Australia and the "defense" forces of the government in a counter-revolutionary military bloc against the Soviet Union, if common language be arrived at with the fascist and militarist incendiaries of war.

However, there is a differentiation

within the ranks of Australian ruling circles, not all of whom are in agreement with pro-fascist policy. For instance the popular *Smith's Weekly*, controlled by the very wealthy Sir Joynton Smith, recently carried a special article written for it by Viscount Churchill in which the German and Italian intervention in Spain was condemned as threatening the interests of the British Empire, including Australia and New Zealand; and, in reference to the Australian delegation to the forthcoming Imperial Conference, concluded as follows:

"They should go armed with powers to ask the British Foreign Office, frankly and bluntly, what its foreign policy really is, and to insist on getting an unequivocal answer. If they could succeed in introducing light and clarity into the dark recesses of the Foreign Office, they would be rendering a service not only to Australia, but to this country as well."

Among middle class and other liberal people there is also wide support for collective security and a strong League of Nations, two of their most prominent representatives being the wife of Sir Justice Street and Mr. Raymond Watt, secretary of the League of Nations Union and delegate to the Brussels Peace Congress.

Within the Labor movement, militant unity and opposition to the warmongers are highest. A number of trade union leaders and trade unions take up a consistent position against the war danger in speeches and resolutions, while even among the Labor parliamentarians, who in the main reflect the same confused attitude as the middle classes, there are one or two voices raised (notably Maurice Blackburn of Melbourne) in sharpest opposition to the warmongers.

In January, the New South Wales trade union center, after an address by Ralph Gibson, delegate to the Brussels Peace Congress, carried a resolution expressing gratification at the achievements of the congress and endorsing the program it had laid down. This was a step forward, for, under the influence of

Labor Party leaders, and the slogan of "absolute neutrality and splendid isolation," this important trade union organization had refused to endorse the application of sanctions against Italy during the invasion of Ethiopia.

The leadership of the growing Communist Party (33 per cent increase in 1936), as events develop, is striving to give a more clearly defined character to the mass sentiment for peace and to direct it toward active struggle. As elsewhere, the struggle in defense of Spanish democracy in Australia has aroused, in a manner formerly unknown, both a hatred and understanding of the cancer that is fascism. Side by side with this is the growing recognition of the danger of the robber designs of Japan in the Pacific.

For a long time the Japanese rape of China was not connected with Australia by the peace movement, but the economic expansion of Japan Southward and the numerous declarations of its politicians and especially the influential militarists as to Japanese plans for political expansion, including the seizure and invasion of Australia, are becoming widely known to the people of Australia. The *Labor Daily* recognized in a much clearer manner the threat to Australia and the peace of the Pacific, and among other things said: "Japan is just as active and, through the recently formed South Seas Development Company, is preparing for Southward expansion."

"Germany is apparently reconciled to Japan's retention of Micronesia and other mandatory possessions, so any clauses affecting the Pacific must of necessity deal with British or Australian mandates. But once the peace of the world is broken, armed nations do not think solely in terms of recovering lost territory."

The significance of this statement is that the *Labor Daily* is the mouthpiece of the official leadership of the New South Wales branch of the Labor Party, whose policy is "absolute neutrality and splendid isolation."

With the Australian government and ruling circles participating in the policy of attempting to find a common language with the aggressor in face of the threat by Japan to Australia and its connection with the fascist threat to peace in Europe, opposition from the democratic and peace-loving Australian people to this policy will grow, and more insistent will arise the demand for honest cooperation of the British Empire with the mighty, impregnable Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, France and other peaceful states for consistent and determined collective security against the instigators of war in defense of peace. The Australian people will not agree to allow the class interests of the reactionary government to interfere with national interests.

But despite the growing unity and clarity in the struggle for peace there are still serious weaknesses existing which hinder it.

First, the failure of large sections of the population to understand the character of the foreign policy of the Baldwin government. The demagogy by means of which it is carried through deceives many who, though supporting collective security, imagine the armaments program is to strengthen same. They do not see that if the British Empire were to participate decisively and consistently in collective security, to unite its forces with the existing strength of the friends of peace, there would be forces enough without the furious armaments to cause the aggressors to cease their war instigation. They do not see that certain financial interests and political and military circles in Great Britain openly back Hitler against democracy, nor do they see the British government is anxious to find a common language with the enemies of peace.

Second, the fact that the majority of Labor Party leaders allow themselves to be drawn along at the tail of the government instead of developing a vigorous, constructive policy for collective security.

Third, the differences among the State

Labor Parties of the six states which make up the Commonwealth of Australia. In West Australia, Queensland and Tasmania, where there are Labor governments, the tendency is to be aligned with the policy of "collective security"—as interpreted by the British government. But there is another tendency, as shown by the leadership in New South Wales (the most important state), of "absolute neutrality and splendid isolation." This slogan has never found enthusiastic support and is becoming more discredited from day to day. Nevertheless, due to Australia's geographical isolation, it causes confusion, weakens the labor movement, and its result is to help the reactionary ruling circles to sabotage the struggle against war and for collective security.

However, the growing mass movement for peace makes the elimination of these weaknesses possible and the conditions for the election of a Labor government on December 6 favorable.

The people are demanding a share of the "prosperity" of the increased profits enjoyed by the rich, while wage cuts remain and rents and prices of basic foodstuffs increase. The people are not content to bear the burden of millions for armaments.

The unity and militant opposition to the limitations of democratic rights are increasing. The banning of an anti-fas-

cist play at the instigation of the German Consul, corrupt police practices and bureaucratic use of the immigration laws and the literature censorship are recent events which have aroused very broad sections of the population, causing considerable embarrassment to the government.

In the Tasmanian elections of February last, the State Labor Government won five additional electorates and now has a majority of twenty seats as against the Conservatives' ten, while in a federal referendum held early in March, in which the federal government asked for increased powers to control marketing and aviation, on both issues the people refused to give increased powers to this reactionary government.

Finally, the growing unity and activity of the trade union movement in which the Communists play a leading role, together with the growth of the Communist Party and the increase of its influence in developing the labor movement, enhance the possibilities of returning a Labor government.

Such is the position, and with the democratic peace movement expanding in Britain and throughout the British Empire, the Australian people can play an important part in adding their weight to swing the scales in favor of an Empire foreign policy of collective security and peace.

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# Hitlerism in South Africa and the Struggle Against It

BY A. WOODWARD

**T**HE uplift in the economy of South Africa, the considerable expansion in trade and industry derive mainly from the boom in gold mining, the basis of South African economy.

The abandonment of the gold standard in 1932 had the effect of raising the value of gold produced in 1935 from its nominal value of £45,765,005 to the realized value of £76,532,830. It resulted in a reopening of several old low-grade mines and the investment of large sums in opening up new mines, etc., and, together with the general improvement in world trade, in a boom period in the building industry, especially on the Rand, increased revenue from railways and harbors, a considerable expansion of secondary industries and an increase in the trade balance for the year.

But who are to benefit from these higher profits and increased revenues? Certainly not the diggers of gold, neither European or Native. The latter constituted in 1936 approximately nine-tenths of the workers employed in the large mines and thus wages are approximately two shillings per day for more than 300,000 of them. Nor has benefit come to the poor whites, numbering 400,000 of the European population, driven from the land by imperialist exploitation and the agrarian crisis that still continues, a crisis which is reflected in a landed indebtedness of £100,000,000. Many of these poor whites are employed on government relief works at from three shillings sixpence to five shillings sixpence

per day, or given employment in industry, in many cases at wages very little above the Native level.

With labor disunited and badly organized the employers are not slow to take full advantage of this so as to prevent the workers obtaining higher wages and better conditions. However, in spite of this disadvantage, with a willingness to struggle, the workers have made slight advances in several sections of industry, *i.e.*, transport, textiles, railways, etc. But in the gold mines the workers failed to obtain their 10 per cent increase in wages for Europeans; the owners only conceding an annual holiday with pay and a yearly grant to the Provident Fund (out of which only a fraction of the miners can ever hope to benefit). With the failure of the leadership to lead an open struggle, the owners managed to deprive the miners of any but the smallest advance to meet the rising prices and increased rents.

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The growing fascist movement constitutes the main danger in South Africa. The Nazis have not been slow to realize the strategic importance of South Africa in their war plans and their demand for colonies. Therefore, every support is given by them to the Greyshirt fascists—the “National Workers Party of S.A.”—who no doubt are receiving direct material aid and personal guidance from Nazi agents and spies, who have become very numerous. The Greyshirts

are reinforced by the Nazi organization in South West Africa, the former German colony. Here the Reichbund, under the guidance of the Nazi Consul at Windhook, carry on systematic terrorism against former German citizens who refuse to give support to the plans of Hitler carried through in S.W.A. This became so great that the South African Government Commission appointed to investigate the political situation was forced to admit that this terror included even assassination.

A blow has been dealt at the activities of the Nazis in South West Africa by the proclamation published on April 2 curtailing the political activities in S.W.A. of non-British subjects and in particular aiming to prevent Nazi activities in S.W.A. and the recruitment of British or Union subjects for the German army or volunteer bodies.

The Greyshirt movement was started about three years ago, mainly among the poor Afrianders and farmers. Now they feel strong enough, with a weekly paper to support them, to come out openly in the large towns and have even commenced to break up meetings. They not only attack anti-fascist meetings, but have also attempted to break up meetings of the United Party, when prominent members of the government spoke. Evidently the Nazi officials in Berlin are planning a further advance. This is shown by the departure of Admiral Foerster, who sailed recently for Tanganyika to "investigate the conditions of German citizens" after which he will also visit South West Africa ostensibly for the same purpose. This indicates direct interference in South African affairs, since the Mandate of S.W.A. is held by the S.A. government.

The Blackshirt fascists differ in no wise from Greyshirts. They have the same demagogic approach to the poor-white population and the intensity of their anti-Semitic propaganda is the same. They, while pretending to differ, relying more upon support from the British Blackshirts, have raised the question of the Afrianders being of

"pure Aryan" stock. Therefore, in a critical situation these two fascist organizations will be united unless defeated beforehand by the forces of peace and democracy. Already the Blackshirts have entered electoral fights in the last provincial elections, polling over 3,500 votes in five small constituencies. But this does not end the fascist danger.

The base for fascist development has been widened by the adoption of an anti-Semitic program by the Nationalist Party Conference under the leadership of Dr. Malan. The adoption of this potentially fascist program by the party which constitutes the largest of the opposition parties in Parliament is a new departure.

A series of mass meetings followed the Woodstock Conference to popularize this new platform as one of opposition to the government's new Immigration Bill. Malan demanded that the bill include prohibition of Jewish immigration and the withdrawal of the Jewish language as a recognized European language for emigration purposes. He introduced a motion in Parliament demanding the Jewish persons be excluded from certain trades and professions, making it an offense to change their names, or to receive employment in any industry when other Europeans were available for work, etc. Thus the Nationalist Party creates favorable ground for the extension of the influence of the fascists. This is a most dangerous development for the working class movement, and indeed also for British imperialism when related to fascist aggression in North Africa and the Mediterranean. It is worthy of note that the Cabinet Minister, Pirow, in charge of the defense forces, and the railways and harbor services together with two other Ministers, Grobler and Fourie, have made distinctly fascist utterances, the former being in favor of the "return of Germany to Africa."

As the Communist Party of South Africa pointed out long ago, there are two roads open before the Nationalist Party: either the rank and file, who constitute a large section of the poor whites

and poor farmers, put an end to Malan's demagogy which exploits their anti-imperialist and republican sentiments, their poverty and misery, force the leadership to bring forward an organized national demand for higher wages, relief for the unemployed at trade union rates of wages, land for the landless rural population and relief for the poor farmers, etc., unite with all other organizations prepared to defend peace, democracy and freedom as the only way to develop the republican movement or the Nationalist Party will go the inevitable road to fascism already indicated by Malan's anti-Semitic line.

The government, taking advantage of the economic uplift to claim all the "good things" to be a result of its own policy, is subsidizing agriculture and exports, thereby winning large sections of the richer farmers away from the Nationalists and influencing backward sections of population with its demagogy and false promises, etc.

\* \* \*

This whole situation confronts the Communist Party of South Africa and the forces of labor and democracy with the urgent task of uniting and strengthening the disunited and rather weak labor movement.

Out of 750,000 industrial proletarians, Native, colored, Asiatic and European, not more than 100,000 are organized. Therefore a tremendous field is open to developing trade unionism among the workers, especially among the Natives employed in industry.

Every effort must be made, as a first step to this task, to get an understanding between the South African Trades and Labor Council—with between 50,000 and 60,000 members—and the Cape Federation of Labor—with approximately 15,000. The aim must be to establish one national trade union center, and one union for each industry. Having regard to the fact that every attempt is now being made by the government and the Chamber of Mines to split existing organizations—organizing withdrawal of

Afrikaan-speaking members from the trade unions and creating their own unions, creating new movements among Native and colored peoples, etc.—the immediate issue becomes the need for unity within every trade union.

A magnificent contribution to the possibility of developing the mass movement was made by the organization of the All-African Convention. This body is very representative of the Native people. Fifty-two organizations attended the Bloemfontein Conference which created the A.A.C. as a permanent organization. The representation amounted to 206 delegates from Native trade unions, the African National Congress, farmers and religious societies, sports organizations, Native Advisory Boards and communities, women, teachers and progressive bodies as well as the Communist Party—all Native delegates representing African people.

This national movement can be given a wide mass basis by engaging the leadership of all its constituent parts in developing the national liberation movement of the Native people. This can be done around the slogan: Work and Bread, Land and Liberty! Concretely carried out this means to develop the fight against the oppressive anti-Native laws and taxes, using the right to elect representatives to Advisory Boards and the Representation Council in a positive way, electing only those prepared to work for raising the miserable living standards of the Natives and for their democratic and equal rights as citizens. In every location, township and reserve, local A.A.C. committees elected from the people must carry through the daily work of defending the Natives and must actively engage in organizing Natives into trade unions, and create for the A.A.C. a proletarian reinforcement.

The most tragic feature of the labor movement is the anti-Native prejudices existing in its ranks. This assists employers to engage Native labor at starvation rates of wages, and reacts upon living standards in general. Demagogically the government raises the question

of a "white civilized labor policy," when the whole economy of S.A. is based upon Native exploitation, there being nine Natives to one European employed in gold mines, with approximately 400,000 engaged. Thus the so-called government's white labor policy is merely an attempt to overcome the political difficulties arising from the poor-white problem, an attempt to disarm its political opponents, who constantly use this problem to attack the government politically.

Anyone who does not see this will surely fall into the trap laid for them by Generals Hertzog and Smuts. The continued employment of poor whites, who are constantly drifting into the cities at rates of pay so low as to leave only a small margin between them and the Natives, will inevitably prevent the higher-paid workers from taking full advantage of a very favorable situation, and will finally bring down wages. This can be prevented by the Miners Union organizing the Natives, whom they have hitherto refused to organize, and by the South African Trades and Labor Council, as well as its affiliated unions, engaging in the task of organizing Natives in every industry.

Such an effort, supported by the All-African Convention, will result in raising the living standards of the Natives and deprive the government and the employers of the possibility of dragging down the wage levels of the white workers.

By uniting the organized Natives with the Trades and Labor Council and the A.A.C. the gulf separating the Native and European workers can be bridged. The creation of fraternal relationships between these two bodies and common action upon all questions of direct interest will make it possible to smash down these prejudices and enable a real united movement to emerge.

\* \* \*

All the necessary conditions exist for the establishment of the People's Front on a mass basis. The rising fascist danger is growing, supported by the Trotskyite gangsters, who recently united in an

effort of the Greyshirts to smash up a Communist meeting in Johannesburg. The movement must be organized of all who are desirous of peace, of preserving and extending democratic liberties and satisfying the urgent needs of the poor people and landless farmers, the movement against fascism and the warmongers.

The perspective for such a united movement must be to obtain a government really representative of the people, one which will make a complete break with a policy of harboring Nazi agents on South African soil. Such a movement would commence by demanding that the government take immediate action to put a ban on all fascist organizations and their activity, demanding that Nazi diplomats cease their propaganda in South Africa and terrorism in South West Africa.

Supporting such demands the Communist Party of South Africa must raise the fight for the repeal of all anti-working class and anti-Native laws, restoring the right to strike, unhampered by the Industrial Conciliation Act, giving freedom of movement and democratic rights to Native people now, unhampered by the Urban Areas Act and other laws; abolishing the slave conditions of Natives under the Master and Servants Act and the Pass Laws, etc.

But naturally these proposals cannot be carried through without recognizing that first and foremost there must be driven out of the government all such supporters of fascism as Pirow, Grobler, and Fourie, coupled with a demand to clean the police and armed forces of all fascists and their supporters.

Although the Labor Party Conference went on record not to affiliate to the People's Front movement, the supporters of the united and People's Front are not allowing things to rest at that and are anxious to come to an agreement upon even a limited platform, without giving up the right to criticize and expose the harm resulting from the unreserved support given by the Laborites to the government's foreign policy, which is hooked

up to the policy of the British National Government, as well as their segregationist Native policy.

The best representatives of the peoples of South Africa are rallying their forces to secure from the government a change in its external policy, a change to a policy of collective security, mutual assistance and the indivisibility of peace, the abandonment of the non-intervention farce, the restoration of the full right of the Spanish government to defend the interests of its people, and the lifting of the blockade against the Spanish Republic.

The best representatives of the South African people are bringing pressure to bear on the members of the government to ensure that they demand of the Baldwin Government that it change its policy of support for fascist states.

Can the Cabinet, which is pursuing its present reactionary policy, be given the possibility of increasing armaments? Can increased military power be placed in the hands of Pirow, who has openly declared fascist sympathies? Where are the guarantees that they will really be used to defend the South African people? Under the present policy of Hertzog-Smuts they can be used and most likely will be used on the side of fascism and against the workers. This is why people are saying in South Africa that there can be no support for the armaments' policy of the government.

The Communists explain to the South African people, particularly the Labor Party members and the rank and file of the Malan Party, that collective security, under a mutual assistance pact embracing all democratic peoples, based on the League Covenant, constitute the best guarantee for South African defense.

A united People's Front built upon such a platform can rally large masses of the people, and obtain a government that will really defend democracy, peace and freedom, a step in the direction of bread and work for all working people. Such a government would make the rich pay by

taking away their swollen profits with which they will supply the needs of the poor farmers, etc. Such a government would end fascist activity and restore democratic liberties, and would have the support of the entire people, who would also defend South Africa against fascist aggression.

Such an approach would produce a platform around which a formidable bloc could unite, that would definitely challenge the existing reactionary government at the next general election.

To secure the carrying through of such a program what is demanded is a complete cleansing of the labor movement of all Trotskyite agents of fascism in the first place and of all those provocateurs, adventurists and other enemies who are now doing all possible to prevent the movement from attaining the maximum unity both industrially and politically. However, great care must be exercised in dealing with each individual case so as to differentiate between avowed enemies of the working class and those who are merely influenced by them.

All traitors, those who seek to disrupt the labor movement, and all Trotskyites must be definitely exposed upon the basis of their concrete anti-working class deeds committed in South Africa. It is not sufficient to point out they constituted a "fifth column" of fascism within the Soviet Union, as brought out clearly at the Moscow trial of the anti-Soviet "Trotskyite Parallel Center," and as they do in Spain, France, etc. The workers will sooner understand their acts of treachery and treason in South Africa if they are shown examples of the connections between the Trotskyites and fascism.

Thus, that part of the labor movement sincerely prepared to fight for unity will be able to take full advantage of this very favorable situation and confront fascism with the forces of the working class gathered together in a powerful united front—the basis for the creation of a strong anti-fascist People's Front.

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## Two Posthumous Works of Ralph Fox

BY T. D.

**R**ALPH FOX, who recently fell in battle in Spain where he fought in the ranks of the International Brigade, was not only an outstanding Party worker, but also a well known author and literary critic.

In his book *The Novel and the People*\* Ralph Fox set himself the task of showing what have been the causes gradually serving to bring about the crisis of the bourgeois novel and showing that there is a way out, the way of socialist realism.

The book, which is written in an easy style, would be of independent interest as a popularization of the utterances of Marx and Engels on questions of literature and art. The main theme of the book is the history of the novel, its rise, decay and rebirth.

Regarding the novel as the highest artistic product of the capitalist epoch, Fox shows how the novel writers gradually retreat from the realism of the founders of the modern novel.

This retreat from realism in England during the nineteenth century was conditioned by the fact that although the great realists of the "Victorian epoch"—Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte Bronte and Mrs. Gaskell—were able to castigate the bourgeoisie, and to expose their vices, their attitude to the working people was one of a certain aloofness and wariness. And so refuge was taken in sentimentalizing reality.

In France, where the class struggle

developed much more fiercely, men like Flaubert who, though filled with bitter hatred for the bourgeoisie yet regarded the working class as a purely destructive force, sought refuge in "pure formalism" divorced from the sum total of life.

The development of capitalism into imperialism, the intensification of class conflicts to an hitherto unheard-of degree, the war and its accompanying destruction and then the horror of fascism—all this increased the movement away from reality.

And so the bourgeois novel loses its inner force. Obscurantism and pessimism begin to prevail.

What is the way out? In the new realism which "must show man in action to change his conditions, to master life, man in harmony with the course of history and able to become the lord of his own destiny" (p. 101). Such is the hopeful, fighting message of Fox, who calls on the writers to link themselves with the proletariat, to imbibe their revolutionary ideology, to see in them the advanced heroic class struggling to liberate mankind. And it is in this regard that Fox spends almost an entire chapter of his book giving an outline of the epic story that could be written about the worker-printer Comrade Dimitroff and his world-shaking victory over the fascist barbarians.

Fox shows how manysided such a story could be, how full of possibilities for showing the development of the titanic figure of Dimitroff both in relation to his fellow prisoners and in relation to the whole gang of fascist degen-

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\* *The Novel and the People*, by Ralph Fox. International Publishers, New York. \$1.50. *Portugal Now*, by Ralph Fox. Lawrence & Wishart, London. 1 shilling.

erates whom he overwhelmed by the greatness of his spirit. Such a story, worthy of our epoch, a story whose treatment calls for the best that the literary art can give, stands waiting to be written by an author whose own fighting spirit and technique render him worthy of his subject.

Fox made his appeal to others to write about Comrade Dimitroff, but he himself was obviously very much attracted by this theme, as is shown by the fact that he again returns to it in the chapter following.

Fox's book is no more theoretical tract, but a call to action, a call to writers, bourgeois and proletarian.

"In the battle of ideas in the world today," he wrote, "the majority of the best writers of the bourgeoisie have begun to move sharply to the Left and . . . this movement has brought them into contact with declared revolutionary writers. From this contact we may be justified in hoping that there will come the fertilization of genius which we are seeking . . ." (p. 112).

\* \* \*

*Portugal Now* is a brightly written little booklet, brimful with wit and humor, and also adding to the picture of Fox the Communist, the fearless revolutionist.

For in the early days of the interven-

tion in Spain when it was necessary to discover and give publicity to the part being played in the intervention in Portugal, he set off for this country clear in the knowledge "that if any one suspected for a moment that I was a more than an innocent tourist and began to inquire into my history, a speedy exit from Portugal was the best I could hope for" (p. 28). And so to achieve this he spent part of his time rubbing shoulders with Nazi airmen, Spanish emigrés and other such bearers of "civilization."

The booklet, "random notes" as he calls it, deals with all this, gives interesting material regarding Portugal and its silent dictator Salazar, and shows how closely the fate of Portugal is linked up with that of France.

To make clear what Britain could do in relation to Portugal's intervention in the war in Spain, he shows to what an extent Portugal is dependent economically on Great Britain.

The honor of Britain has had to be saved by the likes of Fox who wrote:

"So long as men will still fight and die for the cause of human freedom, there is not much to be pessimistic about in the state of Europe" (p. 36).

For he fought and died on the fields of Spain, defending Spanish and world democracy against the onslaught of fascism and reaction.

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