
UNITY FOR SPAIN

CORRESPONDENCE

between the Communist
International and the
Labor and Socialist
International, June-July

1937

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Radiogram from Valencia to Georgi Dimitroff

Valencia, June 1, 1 A.M.

*Georgi Dimitroff, General Secretary,
Communist International,
Moscow.*

A NATIONAL-SOCIALIST naval squadron, fulfilling control functions in waters near Almeria, has just perpetrated on our town an act of base aggression which surpasses all the crimes committed by German and Italian fascism in its invasion of our country. Violating all rules of international law, trampling upon international treaties, German naval guns have bombarded the civil population of Almeria and inflicted the loss of life.

In face of this military action which is an outrageous expression of the war intentions of fascism, we workers and peasants of Spain, the masses of working people who are fighting in the front ranks of the struggle against national and international fascism and who are defending their freedom—and thereby also defending the proletariat of the world from the horrors of a monstrous war—appeal to you. We appeal to you, comrades of the Socialist and Labor International, the Communist International, the International Federation of Trade Unions, and the entire active proletariat in the ranks of the workers' parties and trade union organizations, and urge you to strengthen your solidarity with the Spanish people whose homes and unarmed children are once again subjected to criminal attack.

We call upon you to resist the fascist government which,

with unprecedented brutality, attacks our civil population, menacing the lives of the aged, of women and children. We once again appeal to you, the vanguard of the world proletariat, to the glorious standard bearers of the struggle of the proletariat, to take the most energetic joint action in order to mobilize proletarian solidarity of all peoples who are determined to frustrate the realization of the plans of fascism, the intention of which is to kindle the fires of world war.

Long live international solidarity of the proletariat in the struggle against fascism.

Forward, together with the people of Spain.

Forward for peace and freedom throughout the world.

On behalf of the Workers' Socialist Party of Spain,

RAMON LAMONEDA, *Secretary.*

On behalf of the Communist Party of Spain,

JOSE DIAZ, *General Secretary.*

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the General Confederation of Labor,

FELIPE PRETEL, *Acting General Secretary.*

Reply by Georgi Dimitroff

To Ramon Lamonedá, Secretary of the Workers' Socialist Party of Spain to Jose Diaz, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain; to Felipe Pretel, Acting General Secretary of the General Workers' Union of Spain:

In reply to your radiogram of June 1 we draw your attention to the fact that the Executive Committee of the Communist International fully supports your proposal as to the organization of joint action by the Labor and Socialist International, the Communist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions in defense of the Spanish people who have been subjected to an onslaught by German and Italian fascism.

Steadfastly pursuing the policy of establishing united action by the international proletariat in the struggle against fascism and war, standing unreservedly on the side of the Spanish people, engaged in a heroic struggle against the fascist rebels and interventionists, the Communist International has on several occasions proposed to the Labor and Socialist International the organization of joint action by the international workers' organizations as the most decisive means in the struggle against fascism, in the defense of democracy and peace. Unfortunately these proposals have not up till now produced any positive results by reason of the fact that they have been turned down by the leadership of the Labor and Socialist International.

Taking account of the seriousness of the position which has arisen after the bombardment of Almeria, and on the basis of your appeal, we are taking corresponding steps to

establish contact with the Labor and Socialist International.

Today we have dispatched the following telegram to De Brouckere, Chairman of the Labor and Socialist International. [Here follows the text of the telegram to De Brouckere. See below—*Ed.*]

We shall do everything we possibly can to ensure that the international proletariat finally achieves the unity so urgently required in respect to the defense of the Spanish people against the fascist barbarians and to maintain international peace.

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,

GEORGI DIMITROFF, *General Secretary.*

Dimitroff's Letter to Louis de Brouckere

*To M. de Brouckere, Chairman of the Executive Committee
of the Labor and Socialist International,
Brussels.*

We have received an appeal from Valencia, from the Socialist Party, Communist Party and the General Workers' Union of Spain suggesting joint action by international working class organizations in defense of the Spanish people who have been subjected to an onslaught by German and Italian fascism. We presume that you also have already received this appeal.

In this connection we draw the fact to your attention that we are in full agreement with the proposals of the Spanish comrades and entirely support their initiative. We on our part propose that a joint contact commission of all three internationals (Communist International, Labor and Socialist International, and the International Federation of Trade Unions) be established to bring about united action against the military intervention of Germany and Italy in Spain. We are prepared to discuss any proposals that either you or the International Federation of Trade Unions may make in respect to the defense of the Spanish people.

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

GEORGI DIMITROFF, *General Secretary.*

Reply of Louis de Brouckere

*Georgi Dimitroff,
Communist International,
Moscow.*

Have received similar appeal from Valencia. Fully realize necessity of energetic action and more determined than ever to carry it out. We informed our Spanish friends of our intentions even before receipt of their message. Our International will do its duty fully under its own responsibility. As you know, neither the chairman nor the secretary of our International has the necessary powers to participate on its behalf in the committee which you propose.

DE BROUCKERE.

Reply of Dimitroff to de Brouckere

Unfortunately your telegram does not give a clear answer to the concrete proposal made by us. Your reference to the fact that neither the chairman nor the secretary of the Labor and Socialist International has the power to decide a question of creating a contact committee does not seem convincing to us, if only because you could request such powers from the corresponding authorities of your International.

Nor can it be assumed that the absence of formal powers is decisive when it is a question of the life and independence of the Spanish people, subjected to an attack by German and Italian interventionists.

Nor can we share your opinion that the Labor and Socialist International is fully carrying out its duty, inasmuch as it continues to refuse to unite all forces of the international proletariat for the defense of the Spanish people.

The solidarity movement in favor of the Spanish people is still far from being adequate, chiefly because the actions of the international organizations are disunited. This movement would acquire a tenfold greater force if, in spite of all the difficulties, international unity of action could be established.

It is precisely with this object in view that we propose the creation of a contact committee of the three Internationals. If, however, for one reason or another, you consider the form of contact proposed by us to be unacceptable, the interests of the common cause of aiding the Spanish people

nevertheless demand that you, on your part, make other concrete proposals for the achievement of this aim.

The chief thing for us is not the form but the essence. The Communist International, which is doing all in its power to ensure the victory of the Spanish people over the fascist rebels and interventionists as speedily as possible, is ready, without delay, as we stated previously, to discuss any proposals you may make.

Together with the Spanish workers' organizations we have the right to expect your concrete proposals on this vitally important question. We should also consider it advisable, with a view to speeding up the realization of the necessary joint action, to have a preliminary exchange of opinions between representatives of the Communist International and the Labor and Socialist International.

In the event of your agreement, we await information from you as to the time and place of such a meeting.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,

GEORGI DIMITROFF, *General Secretary.*

Telegram from Georgi Dimitroff to Lamoneda, Diaz and Pretel

Alluding to the motives of a formal character—the absence of the required powers—the chairman of the Labor and Socialist International has evaded giving a straightforward reply to our proposal for establishing a contact committee for joint action of the three Internationals in defense of the Spanish people.

We continue to insist on concrete proposals on the part of the leadership of the Labor and Socialist International directed toward the establishment of international unity of action.

With this aim in view, we have also proposed a meeting of representatives of the Communist International and the Labor and Socialist International. Upon receipt of a reply we shall inform you.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,

GEORGI DIMITROFF, *General Secretary.*

Telegram from Louis de Brouckere to Georgi Dimitroff

*G. Dimitroff,
Communist International,
Moscow.*

We, too, think that what is important is the essence, and the essence is agreed action in favor of Spain. We are always ready to meet your representatives for information purposes and to exchange views on the best way of pursuing this action, by common agreement where possible, without useless friction. We can meet your delegates in any place you may select in Geneva or its environs. We ask you to give us 48 hours' notice. We shall come to an arrangement as to the time of the meeting.

DE BROUCKERE.

Dimitroff's Reply to de Brouckere

*De Brouckere, Chairman,
Labor and Socialist International,
Brussels.*

In reply to your telegram we wish to inform you that the presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International has appointed the following delegation to negotiate with representatives of the Labor and Socialist International on the question of aid for the Spanish people: Maurice Thorez, Marcel Cachin, Jose Diaz, Franz Dahlem (members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International) and Luigi Gallo (member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy). Comrade Thorez has been commissioned to communicate with you directly regarding the place and date of meeting.

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,

GEORGI DIMITROFF, *General Secretary.*

Felipe Pretel's Radiogram to Georgi Dimitroff

*G. Dimitroff,
Communist International,
Moscow.*

We have received your message reporting measures you have undertaken in the interests of the Spanish people. Our Executive Committee expresses its thanks.

FELIPE PRETEL, *Acting General Secretary, General
Workers' Union of Spain.*

Dimitroff's New Proposals to the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions

During the meeting at Annemasse it was unanimously recognized that "it is now more necessary than ever before that action in defense of Spain be carried out in general agreement wherever possible, with every means and without unnecessary friction."

Both delegations also agreed on the necessity for a new meeting as quickly as possible to discuss concrete measures for rendering moral and material aid to the Spanish people.

The capture of Bilbao by the German and Italian interventionist armed forces and also the open threat of further aggressive action and provocation on the part of the fascists make it even more necessary to hasten the carrying out of joint actions by the international labor organizations.

The presence of different opinions within the leadership of the Labor and Socialist International, as well as the announcement of the resignation of its chairman and secretary, should not in any way hinder coordination at this moment when the question is one of the very existence of the Spanish people and of the maintenance of world peace. This is all the more so since the joint meeting of the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions on June 24 unconditionally accepted the proposals of the Spanish comrades.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International instructs its delegation to present to the joint meeting of the Labor and Socialist International and the International

Federation of Trade Unions, or to their delegation, when meeting it, the following concrete proposals for joint discussion:

(1) The international labor organizations jointly to address the parliaments and governments of all non-fascist states, primarily Great Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union, with the demand that they shall undertake urgent joint measures for the immediate recall of the Italian and German interventionist forces from Spain; for the lifting of the blockade of the Spanish Republic, and for the recognition of all the international rights of the constitutional Spanish government.

(2) The international labor organizations to address together the League of Nations with the demand for the application of the Covenant against the aggressors who have attacked Spain.

(3) Simultaneously to address jointly the working class of all countries and world opinion with the call to do everything in their power in order to realize these demands and also not to allow any new acts of aggression on the part of the interventionists and to bring about the quickest liquidation of the criminal war against the Spanish people.

The delegation of the Communist International is also instructed to discuss any proposal on the part of the Labor and Socialist International and International Federation of Trade Unions regarding joint or coordinated actions of the international labor organizations in defense of the Spanish people.

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.—GEORGI DIMITROFF.

Federation of Trade Unions or to their delegates, when
meeting at the following concrete proposals for joint dis-
cussion: (1) The international labor organizations jointly to
influence the parliament and governments of all non-fascist
states, primarily Great Britain, France, the United States
and the Soviet Union, with the demand that they should
initiate urgent joint measures for the immediate recall
of the Italian and German ambassadors from London, and
for the lifting of the blockade of the Channel, respectively, and
for the resumption of the international transport of com-
modities and goods; (2) The international labor organizations to address
together the masses of nations with the demand for the
resumption of the Comintern against the aggressors who have
attacked Spain; (3) The international labor organizations to address
all countries and world opinion with the call to do every-
thing in their power in order to realize these demands, and
also not to allow any respite of aggression on any part
of the internationalists and to bring about the quick
liquidation of the criminal war against the Spanish people.
The declaration of the Communist International also
demanded to demand any proposal on the part of the labor
and socialist international and international Federation of
Trade Unions regarding joint or coordinated actions of the
international labor organizations in defense of the Spanish
people.

In the name of the Executive Committee of the
Communist International.—German Internationalist