
THE WAR AND LABOR UNITY

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

LABOR DAY, 1942, is the most crucial ever faced by American organized labor in its more than a century of stormy history. Our nation is facing a desperate struggle for national survival. For the workers, therefore, this Labor Day is not one of joyful demonstrations in the streets and in the parks, but of hard work in the war industries and bitter fighting on the battlefields. The American people, together with the rest of the United Nations, are confronting the most powerful and ruthless military aggressors in the long annals of war. Defeat would mean to sink into the deepest national enslavement, but victory would carry with it the smashing of fascism and the opening up of a perspective of a bright new world.

The supreme military necessity confronting the American and British peoples is the immediate launching of a great Anglo-American second front in Western Europe in cooperation with the Red Army. Failure to organize such a front promptly could have disastrous effects upon the whole outcome of the war. Already the United Nations' cause is gravely imperiled by the long and needless delay in opening the Western front. The fate of our nation, of all civilization, is tied up

with the matter of delivering a crushing attack against Hitler from the west. *To help create this second front and to provide it with all the means necessary for its success is the central task of organized labor and of the whole American people on this historic Labor Day.*

The workers, who have the most to gain by the defeat of Hitler and who would be the greatest sufferers by an Axis victory, are wholeheartedly resolved to win this war. They know that it is a people's war of national liberation, and they are determined that its outcome will be a decisive victory for the constructive, democratic forces of the world. Consequently, they are ready to make any and every sacrifice necessary for victory over Nazi Germany and Japan. Through their trade unions they are now setting our whole people an example of patriotic support of the nation at war. The whole import of Labor Day this year is to bring about the completest possible mobilization of the workers, with the rest of the American people, for all-out struggle against the Nazis and all their allies.

The Importance of Labor Unity

In order for the American working class to throw its full, militant,

fighting force behind the war it is indispensable that there be the highest possible degree of trade union unity, both on a national and an international scale. The divisions between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O., between these two federations and the Railroad Brotherhoods, and between all of them and the independent unions (some under company influence) who are attempting to form a "federation" of their own, besides the separatist tendencies of the United Mine Workers—all constitute real handicaps to the most effective functioning of organized labor in this war crisis. And the same is true of the detached position of the American labor movement internationally. During recent months, as we shall discuss later, considerable progress has been made toward achieving unity of action in support of the nation's war program, especially for securing uninterrupted war production and around such issues as the second front, civilian defense, and the election of win-the-war Congressional candidates. But the situation is still highly unsatisfactory. It is most fitting, therefore, that trade union unity should be one of the central issues before organized labor on this Labor Day.

The achievement of a substantial degree of labor unity on a national scale will enormously increase the trade unions' war effort in all phases. It will greatly strengthen the position of the militant anti-fascist forces throughout the ranks of the trade union movement. As things now stand, the Hutcheson-Lewis defeatist, anti-Roosevelt ele-

ments are able to play a dangerous role. But with the establishment of closer cooperation between the C.I.O. and A. F. of L., not to speak of the achievement of complete organic unity, the loyal win-the-war forces would be consolidated and thus enabled to develop a more unified policy. This would surely express itself by a more determined demand of the entire trade union movement for the second front now. Trade union unity, in the measure that it is accomplished, will be a blow against the fifth columnists in labor's midst, who can best play their game of working-class demoralization and national paralysis in a labor movement torn by divisions, as ours is now.

A greater degree of labor unity would also facilitate the fight of the workers against the defeatists and the fifth column in general. In the crucial Congressional elections, for example, organized labor could then put up a far more effective struggle than it is now doing against the host of defeatists of the Ham Fish type who are insolently presenting themselves before the people for election. A united labor movement could and would also take up more energetically the fight against the copperhead press, the Hearst, Howard, McCormick, Patterson chains.

A labor movement, united organically or in closer cooperation on all war questions, could also do a far better job of stimulating production, for which it could readily adopt a uniform plan. It would also better prevent strikes than it is now doing, and it would give more real support to the President's seven-point anti-

inflation program. A united labor movement could also secure more adequate representation in the Government and on Government war boards.

By the same token, American labor could lend much greater power to the world war effort of the United Nations if it were linked up closely with the British and Soviet trade unions. Such unity of action among these three labor movements and allies is basically necessary to strengthen the alliance and common fighting action of the United Nations; to increase production on an international scale; and to provide additional guarantees for ensuring friendly collaboration among the United Nations and peoples in the organization of a just and lasting peace in the post-war period.

In short, at its every step, nationally and internationally, organized labor is handicapped in its war work by the prevailing divisions in its ranks. Every advance toward labor unity, therefore, is a step toward strengthening labor's and the nation's war effort. The achievement of the greatest practicable labor unity of action, nationally and internationally, at the earliest possible moment is a war necessity of major importance. It would also give a tremendous push forward to labor in every respect.

Steps Toward National Labor Unity

The present powerful trend, in official and rank-and-file trade union circles, for labor unity began to get well under way in the months

just prior to Pearl Harbor, when, after Hitler's attack on the U.S.S.R., the American people began to realize that they could not avoid being plunged fully into the war. The trade unions, top and bottom, realized from the outset that labor unity was a fundamental necessity for our nation to meet the great war crisis facing it. This growing unity spirit was fed by a feeling among the rank and file of the A. F. of L. that life itself, by the success of the C.I.O., has settled the controversy that caused the original split, whether or not the industrial or craft type of union was able to organize the mass production industries.

The first real get-together step of the union leaders, following the failure of the unity negotiations of a few years before, was taken in December, just after the Japanese imperialists attacked us. The A. F. of L. and C.I.O. officials at that time came together, with the employers and the Government, agreed upon a no-strike policy for the duration of the war, formed the National War Labor Board with its tripartite representations and decided to submit all wage disputes to that body.

This, however, was only a first step. There remained the keenest need for all sections of the labor movement—A. F. of L., C.I.O., Railroad Brotherhoods, independent unions—to cooperate in support of the Government in carrying out the myriad tasks of our expanding war effort. Consequently, there swiftly developed one of the most remarkable rank-and-file union movements in the history of this country.

In dozens of important industrial cities and states cooperative movements sprang up between the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions (usually upon the initiative of the latter and its Councils) in support of one or more phases of the Government's war program. All these local movements surged with a spirit of unity, and many of them directed appeals to the headquarters of both the A. F. of L. and C.I.O., urging these bodies to call a general conference of all trade unions and to work out labor's general win-the-war program. Communists and progressive forces generally gave active support to this wide and significant mass unity movement.

The top leaderships of the labor movement, especially of the A. F. of L., were generally slow to respond to this urge from the bottom. They failed to take prompt action for closer war cooperation between the two federations. Whereupon the wily John L. Lewis, seeking to take advantage of the prevailing unity sentiment and to fish in troubled waters, made his proposal in May of this year that negotiations for organic unity be resumed between the standing committees of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. He completely ignored President Philip Murray of the C.I.O. in making this move. This attempt by Lewis to create bad blood and further division in the labor movement was not without results, as his dramatic proposal was followed by much confusion in labor's ranks. Only with the formation of the Combined Labor Victory Board soon thereafter, made up of three representatives each from the

A. F. of L. and C.I.O., and with President Roosevelt acting as chairman, was the disruptive maneuver of Lewis defeated.

The Victory Labor Board also, like the War Labor Board, is only a step in the right direction. It by no means satisfies labor's urgent need for unity in the war crisis. The board has many limitations. First, it meets more or less in secrecy, as a sort of advisory body to the President, and the rank and file of labor know little about its transactions; second, it has never developed a rounded-out win-the-war program nor undertaken broad activities to mobilize the great trade union rank and file for an all-out war effort; third, it has served as a sort of makeshift, and a very unsatisfactory one, for the representation that organized labor should have received in the President's Cabinet and on all Government war boards.

The unsatisfied demand for labor unity persisted among the masses. The next big move at the top came from the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., which, upon the initiative of the defeatist W. L. Hutcheson, a friend of Lewis and animated by a similar disruptive purpose, proposed on June 23 to the C.I.O. that negotiations be reopened between the two federations for the establishment of organic trade union unity. The C.I.O., always eager to advance the cause of labor unity, replied by proposing instead that the two bodies take the next practical steps toward eventual complete unity by developing a more intense collaboration on all war issues. It

suggested the calling of an all-inclusive labor trade union conference, the formation of a win-the-war program, and the establishment of a United Labor Council to include all branches of organized labor. This plan was intrinsically practical, since it would have led to a much closer and more effective war cooperation between all branches of labor, and would have tended generally to bring all sections of the labor movement nearer together. It was, however, rejected curtly by the A. F. of L. leaders, many of whom were still hoping for the day when they could carve up the powerful C.I.O. industrial unions.

The Present Unity Negotiations

Despite the above-indicated neglect, half-hearted measures and slippery maneuvers by the Lewis-Hutcheson-Woll clique, the question of trade union unity, which is so burningly necessary for the war effort, remained burning. On August 1, Philip Murray, on behalf of the C.I.O., in accord with the growing cooperation between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. organizations locally and in many states around most win-the-war issues, directed new unity proposals toward the A. F. of L. Press dispatches stated that President Roosevelt had also privately indicated previously to both William Green and Philip Murray that the Government considered labor unity to be absolutely necessary to the most effective prosecution of the war.

There are two general aspects to the new C.I.O. unity proposals. The

first of these is that they provide a means to increase the present cooperation of labor in support of the nation's war effort; the second is that they propose to explore the problem of establishing actual organic unity. This complicated unity process is to be advanced among three committees: (a) the Combined Victory Labor Committee, whose general work of uniting labor behind the war would be intensified; (b) a special A. F. of L.-C.I.O. committee, with an impartial arbitrator, would dispose of all jurisdictional disputes that might cause strikes; and (c) the existing negotiating committees would take up in detail all problems connected with organic trade union unity. It is significant that Mr. Murray, in a later statement, also raised as a condition for trade union unity the abolition of all discrimination against Negroes by A. F. of L. unions.

The C.I.O. unity proposals are sound ones, like the earlier ones made by that body. In line with them it is clear that, regardless of the outcome of the negotiations for organic trade union unity, the present war collaboration between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. must not be lessened, but intensified. This the C.I.O. proposed to accomplish through enlivening the Victory Labor Board. It is also obvious that C.I.O.-A. F. of L. jurisdictional disputes should be arbitrated and not be allowed to cause stoppages in war industries (as has been the case in several recent instances). In view of the fact that the War Labor Board has not assumed jurisdiction over such inter-union dis-

putes, a new committee, such as President Murray suggests, should be set up to handle them. Finally, the C.I.O.'s proposal is a practical one for the negotiations committees of three each from the two federations to examine concretely the complex problems attendant upon actually establishing organic unity.

As this article is being written, the A. F. of L. Executive Council is in session in Chicago and it has not yet made known its full answer to the C.I.O. unity proposals. President Green has stated, however, that the Council is ready to have its committee start negotiating with the C.I.O. for organic unity. He has expressed the hope and belief that, whatever the outcome of the attempt to establish organic unity now, the trend toward closer A. F. of L.-C.I.O. cooperation for winning the war should continue and be intensified. As for the matter of adjusting jurisdictional disputes between unions of the two federations, Mr. Green takes the wholly unsatisfactory position that these shall be handled directly by the A. F. of L. unions immediately concerned.

Whether or not the A. F. of L. Executive Council finally overrides the disruptive Hutcheson-Woll clique and accepts the present C.I.O. unity proposals, it is safe to assume that the progress toward trade union unity will continue, probably with faster tempo. The war situation demands it, the C.I.O. desires it, the Government is encouraging it, the rank and file of labor want it, and the more progressive A. F. of L. leaders are working for it.

In envisaging negotiations for na-

tional trade union unity, therefore, the champions of genuine labor unity should keep four things clearly in mind: First, they must be on guard not to let the deep differences over the problems of organic unity prevent an intensification of A. F. of L.-C.I.O. war cooperation; for the more such cooperation we have the faster we shall be traveling toward complete unity; the very committees that grow out of this war cooperation may well be the basis for the committees that will finally organically unite the whole labor movement; and it is quite probable that labor unity may be eventually achieved rather by this gradual coming-together process of the big groups of unions than by some general settlement of all jurisdictional problems in each industry and the amalgamation of all overlapping unions. Second, they must not let craft-minded A. F. of L. leaders split up the industrial unions of the C.I.O., for that would bring about not labor unity but chaos and a general weakening of the labor movement. Third, they should seek to involve the Railroad Brotherhoods and the bona fide independent unions in all plans of organic unity and especially of the unity of action to support the war. Fourth, they must see to it that the rank and file are given every encouragement to speak out on the trade union unity question, and to display the fullest initiative in developing war cooperation among all the groups of unions in the various localities and industries. If these four propositions are borne in mind, the movement for national

trade union unity will make real and rapid advances. Undoubtedly, important steps can be taken toward the welding together of the 12,000,000 members of the A. F. of L., C.I.O., Railroad Brotherhoods and independent unions into a unified force capable of exerting still greater and more gigantic power for winning the war.

The Question of International Labor Unity

One of the striking expressions of the people's character of this war is the strong movement for international trade union unity to which it has given birth. The workers realize the tremendous importance of labor solidarity, internationally as well as nationally, both for winning the war and winning the peace. An internationally united labor movement can be a strong backbone for the whole United Nations. To establish and carry through speedily the vitally necessary Western Front the question of promoting international trade union unity is especially urgent.

Almost immediately after the Nazis invaded the U.S.S.R., on June 22, 1941, the leaders of the British and Soviet trade unions began to negotiate for establishing closer working relations. This resulted in the formation of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee, the exchange of labor delegations between the two labor movements, and generally the development of better cooperative relations mutually beneficial to the British and Soviet peoples and the United Nations' cause.

The involvement of the United

States in the war in December, 1941, gave a strong impulse to the development of sentiment in this country for international trade union unity. A number of C.I.O. unions spoke out, demanding American affiliation to the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee, and a spirit friendly to the Soviet trade unions and in favor of united labor action internationally developed widespread throughout the American labor movement. At first neither the A. F. of L. nor most of the C.I.O. top leaders took definite action, however. The formal initiative was finally taken by the British Trade Union Congress, which, early this year, sent its General Secretary, Sir Walter Citrine, to the United States with a proposal for closer Anglo-Soviet-American trade union cooperation in the war.

Then followed many weeks of mysterious back-door conferences and comings and goings. Citrine did not make public exactly what his proposition was. The C.I.O., it turns out, was not included in his plan. The A. F. of L. Executive Council met in high secrecy on the matter, arrived at its decision, gave Citrine his answer, and he departed to England, without the great rank and file of the American labor movement being allowed to express its opinion in any way on the questions under discussion, or even to know what was being decided about them. From cryptic hints in the press and through other devious channels, however, the general impression was left that the A. F. of L. had given some sort of a negative answer to the British proposal.

The reason for all this surreptitious maneuvering and dark-of-the-moon stuff became apparent later when the substance of the A. F. of L.'s proposition on international solidarity was first made known, many weeks afterward, by the unheard-of method of an unsigned article in the *Journal* of the Teamsters Union. The project was not something that American labor could be proud of. In brief, the majority of the A. F. of L. Executive Council rejected the British proposal for American-British-Soviet trade union cooperation and proposed instead that the British and Americans should set up a committee among themselves and that, by some means of indirect "liaison," the decisions of this committee could be conveyed to the Soviet trade unions. The British Congress later accepted this grotesque and most undesirable proposal.

In short, the majority of the top A. F. of L. leaders, under the influence of Hutcheson and Woll, refused to sit in conference with the representatives of the Soviet trade unions, and insisted on dealing with them through intermediaries. To these individuals it matters not that the Red Army, supported in the factories and in the trenches by the Soviet trade unions, is worthily carrying on the defense of all civilization, as General MacArthur said; it also matters not that the American Government has an alliance with the Soviet Government and deals constantly with its representatives; in spite of all this the arch-defeatist W. L. Hutcheson, the fair-haired boy of the racketeering gang-

ster elements in the whole labor movement, ganged up his forces in the A. F. of L. Council and brazenly refused to allow American labor to confer with the heroic Soviet trade union representatives. The A. F. of L. Executive Council's decision is not only a disgrace to the American labor movement and a blow against our national war effort and against international labor solidarity, but it is also an insult to our war ally, the Soviet people.

Opposition to the A. F. of L. Decision

The roundabout and long-delayed announcement of the A. F. of L.'s decision against Anglo-American-Soviet trade union cooperation has evoked much opposition in the labor movement. The C.I.O., which, in accord with the position adopted at the last meeting of the National Council, evidently would have welcomed genuine American-British-Soviet trade union cooperation, took exception, through its president, Philip Murray, to the A. F. of L. proposal, primarily on the ground that the A. F. of L. thereby was attempting to speak in the name of the whole American labor movement and to prevent the C.I.O., Railroad Brotherhoods and other unions from securing representation. The National Maritime Union condemned the A. F. of L. proposal and indicated that it would make its own contacts with the Soviet union for seamen, and with the maritime unions of the United Nations. The convention of the United Automobile Workers, following

much the same line, called upon the C.I.O. to initiate a conference of the trade unions of the United Nations, and its president, R. J. Thomas, was instructed to extend his coming visit to England to take in the U.S.S.R. Other C.I.O. local, state and national bodies are expressing themselves in favor of the immediate establishment of American-Soviet-British trade union cooperation and affiliation. A. F. Whitney, president of the Railroad Trainmen, wired fraternal greetings to the railroad workers of the Soviet Union, expressing hope for an early Second Front.

In the A. F. of L., too, there is much opposition to the Executive Council's stupid and reactionary decision. In the Council itself there is a strong minority, led by William Green, for friendly collaboration with the Soviet trade unions. A few weeks before the decision became known, President Green roused the whole labor movement by his glowing praise of the Red Army and his stirring appeal to the American and Soviet workers to work and fight side by side. President Flore of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union has declared that "the workers of Russia, the United States and Great Britain and all their allies must stand and fight together." Also symptomatic of the position of the A. F. of L. membership and local leaders is the fact that 150 officials of the A. F. of L. unions in the New York area have formed the "Committee to Promote Unity of the Trade Union Movements of the United Nations" and are proposing a world

trade union conference to be held in the United States.

The question of international trade union unity will not be disposed of by the shameful decision of the A. F. of L. Executive Council. The need for labor solidarity in the war, particularly in the furtherance of the Second Front, is so urgent that the fight for it is bound to intensify on an international as well as a national scale. In the A. F. of L. there is a strong opposition that will be heard from more and more, and it is evident that the C.I.O. does not consider itself to be bound by the Executive Council's action. On this matter the *C.I.O. News*, official national organ of the C.I.O., says, August 10:

"The A. F. of L. leaders should be reminded that our country is one of the United Nations. . . . And labor's interests, as well as our country's interests, demand an all-inclusive unity for war of all labor in all the United Nations."

The millions of American trade unionists should militantly demand international trade union unity as a basic war necessity. Among the things they can do at this time toward this end is to insist, by resolutions and delegations, that the A. F. of L. decision be rescinded. Likewise, the proposal of many C.I.O. leaders should be encouraged, namely, that the C.I.O. promote direct connections with the Soviet and British trade unions, that individual American national trade unions get into direct touch with corresponding British and Soviet trade unions,

that an all-inclusive American labor delegation be sent to Great Britain and the U.S.S.R., and that a general win-the-war conference of the trade unions of the United Nations be called.

The Lewis-Hutcheson Anti-Unity Axis

The profound importance of national and international unity to our nation's war effort is well demonstrated by the character of the opposition in the unions to such unity. This opposition is led chiefly by W. L. Hutcheson, president of the powerful Carpenters' Union, and John L. Lewis, president of the still more powerful Miners' Union. These men, obstructionist Republicans, unreconstructed America Firsters, and defeatists in their whole line of policy, are the strongest and most dangerous opponents of American trade union unity. Enemies of the Roosevelt Administration and of the nation's war effort, these two, erstwhile bitter foes but now cheek-by-jowl collaborators, are directing their efforts toward trying to keep American labor divided against itself and disconnected from the labor movements of the rest of the United Nations. Nothing is more destructive of the national war effort than such sowing of disunion in the ranks of union labor.

Lewis and Hutcheson, of course, camouflage their anti-war and anti-United Nations policies behind lip service in support of the war, while at the same time endlessly sniping at the government. They are likewise also demagogic champions of

"labor unity." In the A. F. of L. Executive Council Hutcheson hides his disruptive course behind pleas for "organic unity," a formulation by which he hopes to throw the trade union movement into endless jurisdictional quarrels, or, if luck is with him, to slash the C.I.O. unions to pieces. Lewis, who is far cleverer than Hutcheson, has a more complicated "unity" (for splitting purposes) campaign. He has lately become not only a great stickler for "organic unity" of the Hutcheson type but his "unity" menu contains also such items as: Splitting the C.I.O. by withdrawing the Miners' Union from it; confusing the labor movement by bringing farmers directly into its ranks; carrying through wholesale membership raids against A. F. of L. unions; building up the hodgepodge District 50, U.M.W.A.; disrupting the Miners' Union by removing Philip Murray and other win-the-war leaders from office, and conducting violent Red-baiting campaigns against them. Regarding unity with the Soviet trade unions, both Lewis and Hutcheson, avowed enemies of the U.S.S.R., feel less need to obscure their aims—they are against such unity outright.

The danger from Lewis and Hutcheson to the movement for labor unity, for the Second Front now, and for the national war effort in general is intensified because of the powerful positions they hold in the labor movement. Lewis, with a gigantic union treasury under his control, rules the Miners' Union like a despot, 75 per cent of the union membership living under

“provisional government” and “protective custody” without the right to elect their district officers, all of whom are appointed by Lewis. Hutcheson, who, with the help of Matthew Woll, is dictating to the A. F. of L. Executive Council its policies on the questions of national and international labor unity, also dominates his organization like a tyrant, having suppressed union democracy no less completely than Lewis. These two domineering labor leaders are the darlings of the Coughlins, Hearsts and other defeatist elements, who hope through them to cripple labor’s mighty role in the war.

Lewis and Hutcheson must be resolutely unmasked and fought, if national and international labor unity is to be achieved and labor enabled to play its full role in the country’s war effort. They must be combated in the labor movement at large, and especially in their own unions. Hutcheson, deeply entrenched in the conservative building trades, is difficult to reach through rank-and-file pressure but Lewis is more vulnerable. The coal miners have a long record of struggle against reactionary and corrupt union officials. Despite his demagogic playing with the economic grievances of the workers and his lavish use of union funds to pay hand-picked organizers, Lewis can be dealt a real blow at the coming U.M.W.A. convention, particularly upon the burning inner-union question of district autonomy and upon the central question of active and all-out support for the win-the-war program and policies

of the Government as well as of the C.I.O.

Unfortunately, the Lewisites, Trotskyites and other defeatist elements are all too often enabled to derive fuel for their disruptive tactics by the fact that prompt and energetic action is not always taken by the War Labor Board in settling the pressing grievances of the workers, which are frequently allowed to accumulate to provoking proportions before the government agencies act. Sometimes this is due to delaying action by the War Labor Board or its field representatives; at others, to inadequate machinery. On top of this, some of the decisions of the War Labor Board have been inadequate, indicating failure to take a strong stand against certain employers who seek to take unfair advantage of organized labor’s no-strike pledge. These flagrant shortcomings, including the inadequacy of apparatus, of the War Labor Board and its field representatives must be corrected promptly, with proper steps taken by the Government to guarantee fair and quick adjustment of the workers’ grievances.

As the war deepens, as the national peril of our country grows more obvious, as the need for an Anglo-American front in Western Europe becomes more acute, the question of national and international labor unity and cooperation assumes an ever greater importance. Labor’s unity of action is necessary in order to win the war. The great rank and file of union labor, as well as the loyal, win-the-war officialdom, realize this. Nor can all the

Lewis, Hutchesons and their paid henchmen prevent labor unity from being achieved.

The Communists and Labor Unity

In this situation, today as in the past, the Communists are bending every effort to achieve united labor action and the complete unity of labor. The position of the Communist Party on labor unity was concisely set forth in the notable editorial in *The Worker* of August 9, 1942, from which I quote here in conclusion:

"The Communists have always fought for the unity of labor. For a long time the main objective in furthering this goal was the campaign to organize the great mass of the unorganized, the workers in the basic industries. The Communists pursued this goal and supported all those who undertook its realization whether this meant with and through the A. F. of L. or outside the Federation. When it became inevitable and necessary that the C.I.O. be formed outside of the A. F. of L. the Communists supported the C.I.O. campaigns to organize the unorganized. At the same time they gave full support to those unions in the A. F. of L. which had established organizations among the workers in their industry and helped those A. F. of L. unions which undertook campaigns to organize the unorganized.

"Under the then existing conditions this policy was truly a policy of promoting labor unity. It helped overcome the biggest split of all, the split between a handful of organized workers and the great millions of the unorganized. Today a higher form of unity is possible. Today it

is possible to bring together the more than eleven millions of organized workers into one great organization around the basic principles of the C.I.O.—those principles which have made possible the organization of the unorganized, the advances of the labor movement in recent years.

"Such a united labor movement would be able to attract the millions still outside the trade union movement and would block and defeat the new attempts of certain open shop interests to revive the company union drive under the guise of a new so-called 'independent labor federation.' It would defeat the new attacks against labor now under way on the part of certain employers and their reactionary stooges in Congress. Above all such a unity of the trade union movement would be the greatest impetus to the full mobilization of the nation for the war effort. It would give new strength in pushing the necessary offensive to smash the Axis and to defeat the appeasers and defeatists at home. Such a united labor movement will become one of the greatest factors in helping our country, together with the other United Nations and the trade union movements of the world, to win the war and to win a real people's peace.

"Already in September, 1939, the great anti-fascist and General Secretary of the Communist Party, Earl Browder, declared:

"We believe that unity of labor, unity of the working class, unity of the trade union movement, must be the backbone of any really effective unity of the people. Workers of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O., who agree in the great majority on all the most

crucial issues of the day, must find the way to act together as they already think together, to defeat all the enemies of unity, and make labor a great power in the life of our country, above all, in these days of danger and emergency.'

"Today, with the danger to our country so great, with the tasks confronting us demanding the maximum national unity and the unity of labor, the Communists are by their very beliefs and principles prepared to do all in their power to help bring about organic unity of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. on the

basis of those principles and organizational forms that will be acceptable to the millions of the trade unionists in both organizations. The Communists will do their part toward this end, whether they are in the A. F. of L. or C.I.O. organizations, working as loyal members of their union and under its discipline. They will advance this unity on the basis of those principles which have made possible the growth of the labor movement and that are indispensable to genuine unity and the further growth of the role and influence of the trade union movement."