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## CONTENTS

### EDITORIAL

SEVEN YEARS OF STRUGGLE . . . . . 1071

### FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ENGELS' DEATH

ENGELS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM . . . 1080

*By D. Z. MANUILSKY*

### MATERIALS OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE C.I.

THE BANKRUPTCY OF "PLANNED ECONOMY" IN THE U.S.A.  
AND THE NEW STAGE IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE . . . . . 1098

*By EARL BROWDER*

PROBLEMS OF THE UNITED FRONT . . . . . 1114

*By M. ERCOLI*

AT THE TURN . . . . . 1128

*By J. R. CAMPBELL*

THE IMPERIALIST CONTRADICTIONS AND THE DRIVE TO WAR . . 1142

*By R. PALME DUTT*

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## Seven Years of Struggle

**A**FTER six days of discussion on the report made by Comrade Pieck, a discussion in which 60 speakers from 46 countries took part, the Seventh Congress in its resolution unanimously endorsed the political line and practical activity of the E.C.C.I. The discussion showed the tremendous path of development traversed by the Communist International since the Sixth World Congress. *The discussion reflected the new incomparably higher level of the class battles, and the new and higher level of the work of the Communist Parties!*

The Communist Parties marched in step with the development of the revolutionary movement, for they are the inseparable leading section of this movement. The discussion on the first point on the agenda of the Seventh Congress showed this very clearly. The representatives of the Communist Parties reported of the big battles and movements in which huge masses took part, and in which the Communist Parties played a big, and very often a leading, role. On hearing these speeches, one could become convinced that the time had gone by when the Communist Parties in the big capitalist countries were propagandist groups. Each speech made showed that the Communist Parties now have a profound knowledge of the masses, and are better linked up with their lives, and that they have a better knowledge of the political problems of their own countries than at the time of the Sixth Congress. The discussion showed the ideological and political growth of the Communist Parties.

This is why the Congress, in the following words, pointed to the great responsibility which lies on the Communist Parties:

“The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International points out that the transformation of the maturing political crisis into a victorious proletarian revolution depends only on the strength and influence of the Communist Parties among the wide masses of the proletariat, and on the energy and the self sacrifice of the Communists.”

The main task of the present period, namely, that of establishing a united proletarian front and a people's anti-fascist front, so as to beat off the offensive of capital, and of fascism and the danger of war, stood in the center of the report and the discussion.

Both in the report and in the concluding remarks made by Comrade Pieck, and in the speeches made by the representatives of the Communist Parties, attention was drawn to the struggle carried on by the Parties after the Sixth Congress, against the Right opportunist danger. In the report and in the speeches made by the representatives of the Communist Parties at the Congress, the fire of criticism and self-

criticism was directed against sectarian mistakes. The final rooting out of the sectarian mistakes and traditions of the past is the necessary pre-condition for the successful bringing about of the proletarian and the people's fronts. In its resolution, the Congress, in addition to pointing to tremendous achievements, indicated serious defects in the work of a number of the Parties:

"Lateness in operating the united front tactics, inability to mobilize the masses around partial demands both of a political as well as of an economic character, failure to understand the necessity for the struggle to defend the remains of bourgeois democracy, failure to understand the need to establish the anti-imperialist people's front in the colonies and semi-colonial countries, disregard for work in the reformist and fascist trade unions and the mass organizations of the toilers established by the bourgeois parties, underestimation of work among the toiling women, an underestimation of the importance of work among the peasants and the petty-bourgeois masses of the towns . . . an underestimation by both the Young Communist Leagues and the Communist Parties of the importance of mass work among the youth."

In their speeches, all the comrades spoke of the great assistance they constantly receive from the Executive Committee of the Communist International. They related how this assistance helped them to consolidate and close their ranks, helped them to become still more closely linked up with the masses and to extend Communist influence in the ranks of the working class. At the same time, both in the report and in the concluding remarks made by Comrade Pieck, as well as in the discussion, attention was drawn to the fact that the Executive Committee was also late in rendering political help to the parties.

The discussion showed the ideological firmness, and organizationally, the monolithic character of the Communist Parties. Many Parties, we need but refer to the Parties in Poland and Czechoslovakia, were, during the Sixth Congress, composed of two factions engaged in mutual conflict. Now the Parties are solid around their leaders.

Everybody in the Hall of Columns in Moscow [where the Seventh Congress took place, Ed.] felt the breath of this gigantic combat which is now taking place on the banks of the Seine. The French proletariat, together with the huge masses of toilers in town and country, are carrying on a heavy struggle to preserve the rights and liberties won in the course of the four revolutions of the last century.

In a graphic and vivid speech, Comrade Cachin painted a picture of the two camps, engaged in conflict with one another. On the one hand, the camp of reaction and fascism, supplied in plenty by heavy industry, with funds and arms, and supported by influential circles of the army and the higher state officials. On the other hand, the camp of the working class, which is more and more uniting around itself the masses of toilers and all the sections of the population who desire freedom. This camp is being cemented by a sharp hatred against fascism, which

wants to deprive the masses of the people of France of their last liberties and rights, to reduce sharply their standard of living, and to transform France into a prison, and with Hitler Germany to drive the world into a new war conflagration.

The Communist Party of France is in the front line in the struggle against fascism.

France is faced with big class battles in which the fate of the Third Republic will be decided. Both camps are mobilizing their forces. The outcome of the struggle will be of extraordinary importance for the entire world working class movement, for the entire world situation.

French finance capital, like the finance capital of the other bourgeois democratic countries, are drawing the lessons from the events in Germany. In their fear of the proletarian revolution, the bourgeoisie are tearing the democratic mask from their faces and attempting to establish a fascist dictatorship. But the proletariat are also drawing their lessons from the German events. They know now what fascism has in store for them, they know that they must do everything to defeat the attacks of fascism. Our French Communist Party is rousing among the widest masses of the population the will to resist the fascist offensive, and is organizing these masses for the struggle.

In the period between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses, the Communist Party of China has become a tremendous force, has organized a Red Army, has organized big Soviet regions. Even in such a backward country as China, torn to pieces as it is by the imperialists, in spite of the civil war which is going on, Soviet power immediately brought considerable improvement in the conditions of the toilers in the Soviet regions. The speeches made by the Chinese comrades once again confirmed the correctness of the fact that only Soviet power will deliver humanity from hunger and slavery.

The Communist Party of Japan has also traveled a glorious path during the last years. The Communist Party of Japan, from the very first day of the offensive of Japan against China, took up an international, Leninist position. From the very first day of the occupation of Mukden, the Communist Party of Japan heroically and self-sacrificingly fought against the stream, against the wave of chauvinism and social-chauvinism.

The Japanese Communists are not afraid of the scaffold, they are carrying on an heroic struggle in the army, in the fleet and in the munition factories, against the robber war, and are struggling to transform this war into civil war. The Communist International can be proud of its Japanese section.

In spite of extraordinary terror, the Communist Party of Germany has not for a single day severed its connection with the factories and the working class quarters. This work is gradually bearing its fruits. The events of the last two months in Germany show this sufficiently clearly. We see the beginning of a revival of mass resistance in the factories in Germany.

The Communist Party of Germany is more and more mastering the methods of utilizing legal and illegal possibilities for work. After overcoming the sectarian line pursued by some of the Party leaders, the Party has taken the right road of organizing the united front with the Social-Democratic workers and of re-establishing the free trade unions.

The Communist Parties of Austria, Spain and Poland have achieved important successes. In his concluding remarks Comrade Pieck summed up these achievements and urged that there should be no resting on laurels, but that contacts with the working class should be further extended and the confidence of the millions of toilers should be won.

The first seven days of the work of the Congress showed that the Communist International has developed into a mighty international force. They showed the growth of the forces of the world revolution, the growth of the revolutionary movement. They showed that the Communist Parties are on the right road, and that if they carry on correct, skilful and persistent work, all the possibilities exist for them to secure influence over the majority of the working class and thus to ensure the conditions necessary for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

\* \* \*

The seven years that elapsed between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses constituted an historical check-up of two perspectives, of two lines of development. It was just at the time of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern that the Second Congress of the Second (Labor and Socialist) International took place in Brussels. The Brussels Congress outlined a perspective of the capitalist countries developing into Socialism by strengthening the State power which allegedly stood above classes, by industrial peace, and by participation in coalition governments. As regards the Soviet Union, the Brussels Congress, in its resolution, wrote that the dictatorship of the proletariat was allegedly holding up the development of the productive forces, and prophesied economic catastrophe. The perspective outlined by the Brussels Congress of the Second International had proved to be a false one, and the path it indicated to the working class, to be one of ruin. The perspectives of world development outlined by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, of the victorious construction of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., and the shattering of capitalist stabilization, have been borne out by the entire trend of the development of events.

The characteristic feature of the first stage of the development of the class struggle, after the Sixth Congress, was chiefly a huge *strike wave*. A few months after the Sixth Congress, a wave of economic strikes, unheard of for a long time, swept through all the countries of Europe. The strike wave also took hold of India and China, and confirmed the correctness of the perspectives outlined by the Sixth Congress as to the growth of a revolutionary upsurge.

What were the tactics of the Communist Parties at that time? These tactics were expressed in the slogan of "Class Against Class", the working class against the capitalist class.



Social-Democracy, whose line was that of the peaceful development of capitalism, strove to bring about an ever closer rapprochement with the capitalist State. In Germany, England and Denmark, the Social-Democrats entered the capitalist government. The weaving together of the Social-Democratic Parties with the bourgeois State and the trust magnates faced the working class with the task of organizing revolutionary leadership over their economic and political struggles.

The Communists in a number of countries were the main initiators and leaders in the strike struggles of that period, which were the main expressions of the growing revolutionary upsurge. At that time the Communist Parties, in spite of a number of sectarian mistakes committed, grew politically strong, while their ideological influence over the masses noticeably grew.

The second stage of the development of the class struggle in the years between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses of the Comintern was the years of the severest sharpening of the world economic crisis. In these years, advanced groups of toilers repeatedly undertook a political struggle against capital, showing the correct path to the millions of the masses. It is sufficient to point to the big unemployed demonstrations of March 6, 1930, in the U.S.A., the number of demonstrations in Germany in 1930-31, the powerful unemployed demonstration in Budapest on September 1, 1930, the farmers' strike in the U.S.A. in 1932, the tremendous War Veterans' March on Washington in 1932, the strike in the British navy at Inverhordon on September 14, 1931, the uprising in the navy in Chile in September, 1931, the peasant uprising in Western Ukraine in 1932, the uprising in the Dutch Fleet on board the cruiser *De Zeven Provinciën* in February, 1933. During all this period, the Chinese revolution achieved great historic successes.

Why did these stormy revolutionary movements of the toilers, apart from China, remain clear outbreaks, episodes, but brought no serious results for the liberation struggle? The reason is that those movements arose to a great extent spontaneously, without serious preparation, without organizationally covering all the forces, all the concrete objects of struggle. The Communist Parties attempted to give these movements concrete slogans, to extend them and to raise them to a higher level. But Social-Democracy and the reformist trade union leaders hindered this by all means in their power. The Communist Parties proved as yet to be insufficiently strong and influential to be able to organize the masses who had risen spontaneously to the political struggle, and to extend this struggle and to ensure it a firm leadership.

It is sufficient to point to the *unemployment movement, the most characteristic expression of the class struggle in these years*. In spite of the will of Social-Democracy, the Communists in a number of countries succeeded in raising the unemployed movement to a considerable height. However, in spite of the stubborn struggle carried on by the advanced sections of the unemployed, this movement was not transformed into a struggle of the widest masses of the toilers, and at the

beginning of 1932, this movement of the unemployed began to weaken.

This was caused by the criminal sabotage and the direct struggle against the unemployed movement by Social-Democracy, and this prevented the huge masses of unemployed feeling tangible improvements in their conditions, and gave rise to dissillusionment and passivity among them. The employed workers, as a result of the sabotage carried on by Social-Democracy and the trade union leaders, remained indifferent to the want and hunger of the unemployed. This was the main reason why the unemployed movement began to weaken after several years of struggle.

The working class, split by the reformist leaders and enfeebled by the reformist policy pursued by the Social-Democratic and the trade union officials, was unable to render the necessary resistance to the bourgeoisie in their efforts to place all the burdens of the crisis on the backs of the toilers. The proletariat, split and disarmed by the reformists, were unable to become a center of attraction for the petty bourgeois toilers of town and country, who, just as the workers, suffered under the blows of the economic crisis. This condition of affairs with the workers made it possible for the Germany bourgeoisie to deal the German working class a heavy blow. The defeat of the German proletariat and the establishment in Germany of a fascist dictatorship was the biggest event in the capitalist countries in the first three years of the economic crisis. The defeat of the proletariat in Germany strengthened the brazenness of international reaction and encouraged the bourgeoisie to establish a fascist regime in other countries.

At the end of this stage, the bourgeoisie succeeded in easing their situation at the expense of the workers, peasants and colonial peoples, and to create the conditions for the transition from the crisis to a depression of a special kind. *The bourgeoisie did not succeed, however, in weakening the world revolutionary front.* They did not succeed in smashing the Communist Party in Germany. In Spain, at this period, there was a mighty upsurge of the mass movement. The Chinese proletariat and peasants established the Chinese Soviet Republic. In all the capitalist and colonial countries, a new growth of a wave of strikes and peasant movements took place. The Soviet Union achieved a world historic victory by completing its First Five-Year Plan.

The basic defects in the work of a number of Communist Parties, both in the first and second stages of the development of the class struggle during the period between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses of the Comintern were the underestimation of the political maturity of the masses, the neglect in a number of cases to carry on the stubborn and difficult work of leading the struggle of the masses for their daily economic and political demands. The mistaken line of many Communists was shown primarily in the trade union question and in the development of the economic struggle. In spite of the ruinous policy pursued by the reformists, the masses regarded the trade unions as their own organizations. Among many Communists, however, the view

was widespread that the trade unions were not their organizations, while some even went so far as to talk of the trade unions being "schools of capitalism". Neglect of work in the reformist trade unions, and rejection of the united front with the trade union organizations, when economic struggles took place, led in some cases to the Communist Parties being isolated from the organized masses of the working class.

No less erroneous was the underestimation of the danger of fascism and the failure to understand the need to carry on a struggle in defense of the remnants of bourgeois democracy, which happened in a number of cases.

All this hindered the growth of the influence of the Communist Parties and especially prevented them winning the Social-Democratic workers for joint struggle.

The third stage in the development of the struggle between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses has been the period following the victory of fascism in Germany up to the present day. The victory of fascism in Germany did not lead, as Social-Democracy foretold, to a protracted period of reaction, to a counter-revolutionary situation. On the contrary, the actual facts of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, on the one hand, and the final and irrevocable victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. on the other hand, led to the bankruptcy of the Second International, and to a turn in the sentiments of wide masses of workers, and primarily of the Social-Democratic workers, and the workers organized in the reformist trade unions. The expression of this turn is the spontaneously developing movement for a broad united front, and the transition of the workers to active defense against the fascists in their own countries. The events in 1934 in France, Austria and Spain are proof of this. In Austria and Spain, a political crisis broke out.

United front agreements between the Communist and Social-Democratic workers were concluded at this time in France, Austria, Spain and Italy. In England, the U.S.A., Poland, Czechoslovakia and other countries, where the leaders of the Socialist Parties rejected the united front, mass working class action takes place on the united front basis.

What are the perspectives?

The general crisis of capitalism, on the basis of which the economic crisis is developing, has created a situation in which unfavorable conditions are preserved for the development of economy, and which hinder capitalist economy from raising itself to any serious degree, and which lead to its further decay. The economic situation, which characterizes the continued special kind of depression, dooms tens of millions of unemployed to hunger and hundreds of millions of toilers to a poverty-stricken existence. It is leading to a further deepening of the abyss between the small handful of finance capitalist monopolists and the main masses of the people.

The power of the bourgeoisie is becoming more and more precarious, and their reformist social buttress is becoming more and more shaky

and is vanishing. The bourgeoisie are seeking a way out in fascism and war. The proletariat are more and more seeking a way out in the proletarian revolution.

The toiling masses are faced with the clear question—fascism or Socialism—war or peace? The decision of the question one way or another depends on the power of the working class, on the work of their vanguard, on the Communists.

What are the immediate tasks? Comrade Pieck gave the following reply to this question in his concluding remarks:

“The road we are taking is the creation of a proletarian united front, the creation of trade-union unity, the creation of a people’s front of all the toilers, the creation of a united revolutionary party of the proletariat on the tried theoretical and organizational foundations of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

“We, the Communists, are the initiators and organizers of the broadest fighting front of the workers for peace, freedom and bread and against the front of the exploiters and oppressors.

“The creation of such a front is no easy task. We Communists must know how to make ourselves understood by the masses, to speak to them in their own language, to capture the masses and to lead them.

“We must learn to lead in a common fight millions of people holding different views, convictions and outlooks. We must therefore so adapt a style and method of our work as to achieve the maximum contact with the masses in the shortest possible time.

“We Communists must know how to utilize every change in the policy of the bourgeoisie in each country; every antagonism within the ruling classes, in order to repulse reaction, fascism, the war danger and the capitalist offensive.

“The workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, led by the Party of Lenin and Stalin, have shown the way to the workers of the whole world.

“The victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union endows us, the Communists, and the masses with the strength to follow this example.\*

The workers of all countries are following the work of the Congress. And the world bourgeoisie are attentively following the Congress, as may be seen from the references made to it in the leading bourgeois press throughout the world. The entire press in Europe and America is printing a tremendous amount of material about the Congress, and in connection with it.

Both the hysteria and the frenzy of the German fascist press, as well as the more sober commentaries of the influential papers of other countries, show how great an international force the Comintern is, and the mortal fear that holds fascism in face of the growing power of Communism, the grave-digger of fascism and capitalism throughout

\* Wilhelm Pieck, *The Revolutionary Upsurge and the United Front*, pp. 103-04. Workers Library Publishers, New York, 10c.

the world. The serious British press, which slanders the Comintern, has been compelled to openly recognize this power. Thus, the *New Chronicle* (it will be sufficient to quote this one of many newspapers) recognizes that the Communists have in recent years achieved definite successes, and states that:

“It is clear that this Congress has been transformed into an attacking force, into an open grandiose force directed against war and fascism, and especially against German fascism.”

The speeches made on the report of the E.C.C.I. show what a great force the world Party of Lenin and Stalin has become. Now the task is not to be content with the successes achieved. The resolution on the report states that:

“Now, when a political crisis is maturing in a number of countries, the most important and decisive task facing the Communists is not to be content with the successes achieved, but to march forward to new successes, to extend contacts with the working class, to win the confidence of millions of toilers, to transform the sections of the Communist International into mass parties, for the Communist Parties to secure influence over the majority of the working class, and thus to ensure the conditions necessary for the victory of the proletarian revolution.”

These are the most important directions given by the Seventh Congress of the Communist Parties, on the basis of the tremendous work done by the Congress in connection with the discussion of the report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

# Engels in the Struggle for Revolutionary Marxism \*

(Speech delivered at the Session of the Seventh Congress of the  
Communist International, August, 1935)

By D. Z. MANUILSKY

## I. ENGELS AND HIS ROLE IN ESTABLISHING SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

**F**ORTY years ago, Friedrich Engels, the closest comrade-in-arms of Marx, the supreme revolutionary thinker of mankind, organizer and leader of the international proletarian party, died. The names of Marx and Engels will always remain in the memory of the peoples as the names of two mighty geniuses—creators of scientific socialism and founders of the world Communist movement.

The revolutionary activity of Engels is dissolubly linked up with the life and activity of Marx.

“Ancient legends tell of various touching examples of friendship. The European proletariat may say that its science was created by two scholars and fighters whose relations surpass all the most touching tales of the ancients concerning human friendship.”\*\*

The anniversary of the death of Engels which we are commemorating today coincides with a turn in the world working class movement, with a turn, under the influence of the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the very profound crisis of capitalism, of very wide masses of Social-Democratic and non-party workers to Communism, and with the acceleration of the collapse of the Second International.

The victory of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R., and the growth of the Communist movement throughout the world, are the direct result of the fact that the Bolshevik Party, the International Party of Lenin and Stalin, remained true to the end to the teachings of Marx and Engels.

The collapse of the Second International, the defeat and bankruptcy of its parties, are the historically inevitable consequence of their secession from Marx and Engels, of their vulgarization and distortion of Marxism. Millions of toilers are now having to pay for this secession, in the clutches of want, hunger, unemployment, the gallows and the penal labor imposed by fascism, and in the trenches of the imperialist wars which are beginning to flare up.

\* Speech abridged.

\*\* Lenin, *Marx, Engels, Marxism*, p. 40. International Publishers, New York.

The "theoreticians" of the Second International, Bernstein, Kautsky, Vandervelde, and their like, accused Engels of all mortal sins, and counterposed Marx to Engels, in an attempt to "disprove" the one and the other, but actually to castrate the revolutionary spirit of Marxism. And it is no accident, but is perfectly regular and inevitable, that the revisionists in the Second International who rose up in arms at first mainly against Engels, on all the basic questions of theory and practice immediately adopted the line of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and gradually slid into the bog of reaction.

From the very beginning of his revolutionary activity, Engels, along with Marx, carried on a struggle for the foundation and development of scientific socialism in the sphere of economics and the social sciences, in philosophy and the natural sciences, a struggle for the inculcation of revolutionary Marxism on an ever wider scale into the minds of the proletarian masses.

[Comrade Manuilsky then dealt with the struggle of Engels against German "true" socialism, against Lassalleanism, Bakuninism, Proudhonism, and other pseudo-socialist and pseudo-revolutionary theories and showed how] Engels took the economic relations of bourgeois society as his starting point and proved the inevitability of the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the world-historic role of the proletariat as the grave-digger of capitalism and the creator of a new socialist system. Along with Marx, Engels proved that class struggle leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat as the State of the transition period from capitalism to Communism, and that the proletariat will not be victorious in this struggle if they are not led by their own independent political party.

For this reason Engels called on the workers to act in accordance with this revolutionary theory, and to fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This idea of the unity of proletarian theory and revolutionary action runs like a red thread through all the scientific works, all the polemical articles and the Party instructions given by Engels.

[Comrade Manuilsky then gave a characteristic of the basic points of the scientific and theoretical work of Engels in the sphere of political economy, and stressed the following:]

In the struggle for revolutionary Marxism, Engels very clearly elaborated the question of the interaction of economics and politics throughout the entire history of social development and on this basis the question of the essence of the State of the exploiting classes. Engels indicated the general outlines of the construction of socialism in a remarkable sketch.

In his struggle against both the Social-Democratic opportunists and against the anarchists, Engels advanced to the forefront the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in particular, the question of the fundamental distinction between the State of the exploiters and the proletarian State. The teachings of revolutionary Marxism regarding the State and revolution, and in particular Engels' splendid

sketches dealing with the question of proletarian democracy as against the democracy of the bourgeoisie, have been developed in the hands of geniuses, in the works of Lenin and Stalin.

How irrefutable now, in the conditions when reaction and fascism are on the offensive in the capitalist countries, is the confirmation of the teachings of Marxism and Leninism regarding the State as the organ of the exploiting classes to maintain the exploited class in submission! And how shamefully scattered to the winds are the lying artful designs of the Social-Democratic philistines about the State as "the expression of the general interests of the people", which allegedly reconciles the interests of antagonistic classes, and stands above them! And what a verification have Engels' words received today to the effect that the "State is the armed forces, the police, the army, the prisons and the law courts"! The fascist lackeys of finance capital, the Gestapo, Hitler's defense detachments, and Goering, the fascists' torture-chambers, concentration camps and scaffolds, all lay bare the very essence of the State of the exploiters, which casts aside the tinsel of bourgeois democracy, and crushes the last remnants of democratic rights and liberties, won by the toilers in a bloody struggle, carried on over many years. And in face of these inexorable facts what will those people say who vulgarized and destroyed Marxism and rejected the path of the proletarian revolution, and, with Noske and Severing, defended the bourgeois State against the onslaught of the revolutionary masses?

Marx and Engels counterposed the dictatorship of the proletariat to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and throughout their lives fought for the establishment of such a party as could lead the masses to the seizure of power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. After the Paris Commune, all Engels' advice on questions of the primary tasks of the proletariat in the socialist revolution aims at one point, namely, to utilize the experience of the Paris Commune which must lie at the foundation of the program of the new mass parties of the proletariat.

Not long before his death, on the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune, Engels wrote:

"Of late the Social-Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." \*

It was only the Bolshevik Party which, as far back as 1903, included the demand of the dictatorship of the proletariat in its program.

It was only the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, who set as the most immediate aim of the proletarian revolution, the establishment of a State of "the type of the Commune", adding the

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\* Engels "Introduction" to *The Civil War in France*, p. 19, International Publishers, New York.



rich experience of two Russian revolutions to the experience of the Commune, and succeeded in leading the millions of workers and poorest peasants to smash the bourgeois State and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets.

[Comrade Manuilsky then showed how, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, the Bolsheviks put into practice, and are continuing to do so, the remarkable instructions of Engels regarding the remaking of all production relations after the seizure of power by the proletariat, of the organization of production according to a well-thought-out plan, regarding productive labor, which from a means of enslavement will become a means of liberation, regarding the necessity to overcome the antithesis between town and country, and the all-round development of human beings under socialism.]

Engels said that the people who would have the task of utterly destroying the foundations of society based on exploitation and of building a classless socialist society would have an exceptional power of theoretical foresight and iron will. Engels' remarkable glance ahead, which penetrated the veil of the oncoming decades, saw our Party, the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin and Stalin. (*Stormy applause.*) What Engels spoke about was the millions who have built socialism in the land of the proletarian dictatorship.

Engels foresaw the entrance of these people on the arena of history, people who will fulfil the mighty aim outlined by Marx and Engels throughout the globe.

#### LEADER OF THE PROLETARIAT AND MASTER OF PROLETARIAN TACTICS

Engels was not only a supreme theoretician of the proletariat. Like Marx, he was a *revolutionary*, first and foremost. Like Marx, Engels was in his real element in struggle, in stubborn, consistent, passionate struggle for Communism.

[Characterizing the main landmarks of the revolutionary activity of Engels, the '40's, the revolution of 1848, the '60's and the First International, the period after the Paris Commune of 1861, Comrade Manuilsky went on as follows]:

As far back as 1846, the 26-year-old Engels formulated the tasks of the Communists with remarkable preciseness in the following way:

“(1) to achieve the interests of the proletariat in opposition to those of the bourgeoisie; (2) to do this through the abolition of private property and its replacement by community of goods; (3) to recognize no means of carrying out these objects other than a democratic revolution by force.”\*

Many years after this Engels said that:

“We want the destruction of classes. What are the means of securing this? The political domination of the proletariat. . . .

\* *The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, p. 2, International Publishers, New York.

But the highest act of politics is revolution. Those who recognize this must strive towards such means and political actions as will prepare the revolution, such as educate the workers for revolution, and without which the workers will always be tricked by the Favres\* and Pyats\*\* the day after the battle. The policy which should be followed is a workers' policy. A party must be formed not as an appendage to some bourgeois parties, but as an independent party with its own aim, its own policy."\*\*\*

And the entire struggle carried on by Engels over the course of a half a century was devoted to serving these tasks.

What distinguishes Engels as a working class politician was clearly formulated by Lenin. It was his

"... most profound understanding of the fundamental revolutionary aims of the proletariat and an unusually flexible definition of a given problem of tactics, from the point of view of these revolutionary aims, and without the slightest concession to opportunism and revolutionary phraseology."

I wish now to deal in greater detail with Engels as a *master of proletarian tactics*. From among the rich treasures of the tactical lines elaborated and operated by Engels in his practical activity, I shall only touch on some problems which are directly related to the *central task of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International*, namely, that of the preparation and organization of the working class and of all the toilers for the decisive battles.

There were not a few people in Engels' day, and there are not a few nowadays who think about the proletarian revolution, *not in a dialectical, but a mechanical fashion*. In the one camp, it is their view, there are the class conscious, consistent, "pure" revolutionaries, and on the other hand, there is a complete reactionary mass; no alterations in the relations of class forces exist for these people, for all the classes have once and for all taken up the positions prepared for them in the revolutionary scheme; these people see no wavering elements, for everybody has been relegated in advance by them to the catalogue of reaction, for them there is no vanguard, and its reserves, for to them all these represent a solid revolutionary mass; they see no masses who are but approaching the revolution, for these have been included by them in the camp of the revolutionary vanguard; they see no stages in the development of the revolutionary struggle, since by some wonderful way the masses have been transformed by them to the highest class of the "last decisive struggle"; they do not see the need for daily work to be done by the revolutionary party in educating and preparing the masses for the struggle, for, according to them, the masses are only awaiting an excuse to rush into battle under the leadership of arch-revolutionary

\* Jules Favre, French bourgeois republican lawyer, became Minister after September 4, 1870; Thiers' right hand in suppressing the Paris Commune.

\*\* Felix Pyat, French petty bourgeois radical.

\*\*\* From Engels' speech at the London Conference of the First International,

leaders; they need no organizational preparations which speed up the maturing of the movement, for according to these people the elements of this movement work for us. It was this type of people that Engels had in view when he laughed to scorn the following scheme of the development of the revolution:

“All the official parties united in one lump *here*, all the Socialists in one column *there*—great decisive battle. Victory all along the line at one blow. In real life things do not happen so simply. In real life . . . the revolution begins the other way round, by the great majority of the people and also of the official parties massing themselves together *against* the government, which is thereby isolated, and overthrowing it; and it is only after those of the official parties whose existence is still possible have mutually and successfully accomplished one another’s destruction that the great division takes place and with it the prospect of our rule. If . . . we wanted to start straight off with the *final* act of the revolution, we should be in a miserably bad way.”\*

This splendid thesis advanced by Engels regarding the progress and development of the revolution was developed by Lenin more clearly and completely more than three decades later, in the following words:

“To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without the revolutionary outbursts of a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without the movement of non-class conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against the oppression of the landlords, the church, the monarchy, the foreign nations, etc.—to imagine that, means *repudiating social revolution*. Only those who imagine that in one place an army will line up and say, ‘we are for socialism’, and in another place another army will line up and say, ‘we are for imperialism’, and that this will be the social revolution. . . .

“Whoever expects a ‘pure’ social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip service to revolution without understanding what revolution is.”\*\*

And further:

“The socialist revolution in Europe *cannot be anything else* than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry of the oppressed and discontented elements. Sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will inevitably participate in it—without such participation, *mass struggle is impossible*, without it *no* revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will attack *capital*, and the class conscious van-

\* *The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, p. 401, International Publishers, New York.

\*\* *Lenin, Selected Works*, Vol. V, p. 303, International Publishers, New York.

guard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a heterogeneous and discordant, motley and outwardly incohesive mass struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, to capture power, to seize the banks, to expropriate the trusts (hated by all, though for different reasons) and introduce other dictatorial measures which in their totality will amount to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which, however, will by no means immediately 'purge' itself of petty-bourgeois slag."\*

In these splendidly profound words of Engels and Lenin there are contained the basic elements of the reply to the question as to how we are to fight successfully today against the capitalist offensive, fascism and the threat of war. Here also there is already included the necessity for a correct policy to be carried on by the Party of the proletariat in relation to the masses of their own class as well as in relation to their allies, and the task of establishing a broad peoples' fighting front, and the need for skilfully utilizing international contradictions in the interests of strengthening the position of the proletariat. Our entire experience has on more than one occasion confirmed the point that the party which makes its starting point, simplified, naive ideas of revolution, is *incapable* of acting as its organizer and leader. There is nothing more dangerous for a live and fighting party than a lifeless formula, for it covers all the living and motley variety of the conditions and forms of struggle.

It is incorrect to think that the revolution will develop in a straight line, like an arrow from the bow, and that in the ripening revolutionary process there will be no hesitations, intervals, and retreats so as the more powerfully thereafter to spring forward. It is incorrect to think that the tactics of a revolutionary party should be built not on the relation of forces which exists, but on that which we would like it to be. It is incorrect to think that it is enough for a proletarian party, both in the process of the preparation of the revolution and in the actual development of the revolution to base itself only on the forces of the vanguard, and not on the majority of the working class. It is incorrect to think that, by ignoring other class forces, and making no attempt to draw the wavering elements even temporarily to the side of the revolution, the proletarian party thereby creates a clear "class against class" situation. It is incorrect to think that it is possible to prepare a revolution and to bring it about without making use of the contradictions in the camp of the enemy, without partial temporary compromises with other revolutionary classes and groups, and their political organizations.

In 1889, in a letter to the Danish Socialist, Trier, Engels in the following words recommended the utilization of other parties in the interests of the working class:

"... other parties and measures should be temporarily

\* *Ibid.*, p. 304.

supported which are either of direct advantage to the proletariat, or which represent a step forward in the direction of economic development or of political liberty. . . .

"But," Engels adds, "I am in favor of this only if the *advantage accruing directly for us, or for the historical development of the country along the path of economic and political revolution, is unquestionable and is worthwhile striving after.* Another obligatory condition is that the proletarian class character of the Party shall not thereby be brought into question. That for me is the absolute limit."\* (Emphasis mine—D.Z.M.)

The criteria which Engels considered *obligatory* in solving the question of the permissibility of one or other compromises were: the strengthening of the class character of the party, the raising of the class consciousness of the proletariat and its fighting ability, the strengthening of its position, and the weakening of the position of the enemy.

But these tactics are profoundly hostile to the idea of class collaboration between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, as carried through by international Social-Democracy, for the policy of Social-Democracy deprived the party of its class character, strengthened the position of the bourgeoisie, and weakened and demoralized the proletariat. These revolutionary tactics have nothing in common with the policy of the "lesser evil", with the voting for Hindenburg, with the bloc with Bruening, for Social-Democracy handed over one position after another to the bourgeoisie by way of the policy of the "lesser evil", cleared the way for fascism, and prepared the defeat of the proletariat.

These ideas of Engels were further developed three decades later by Lenin on the basis of the experience of the three Russian revolutions, by teaching the young Communist Parties to make use of such flexible maneuvering tactics as would help them to overcome the infantile sickness of "Leftism", and to carry on the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie in a really Bolshevik fashion.

"... It is possible to conquer this most powerful enemy only by exerting our efforts to the utmost and by *necessarily, thoroughly, carefully, attentively and skilfully taking advantage of every 'fissure', however small, in the ranks of our enemies, of every antagonism of interests among the bourgeoisie or various countries, among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie in the various countries; by taking advantage of every opportunity, however small, of gaining an ally among the masses, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional. Those who do not understand this, do not understand even a grain of Marxism and of scientific modern socialism in general.*"\*\*

If you think over these words of Engels and Lenin, you will understand that these tactics, tested on the basis of the experience of the

\* *Bolshevik*, No. 21, 1932, p. 84.

\*\* Lenin, "*Left-Wing' Communism: An Infantile Disorder*", p. 52, International Publishers, New York.

entire working class movement over a period of many decades now open up before the Communist International, and all its Sections, tremendous possibilities for passing out of the agitational and propagandist period of our development and of becoming a most powerful factor in the entire political life in the various countries and throughout the world. (*Applause.*)

But it is precisely because we are now entering on the high road of the great *mass policy*, because we are preparing to count not in hundreds of thousands, but in millions, because we are beginning to draw under our influence those sections of the population who either were still in the ranks of Social-Democracy yesterday, or stood outside of politics altogether, that the Sections of the Comintern must develop special carefulness towards possible *Right and opportunist distortions of our mass policy*, distortions which will retard the growth of our influence over the masses, and the growth of the fighting powers of the proletariat, and thereby hinder the ripening of the conditions of the proletarian revolution. And here once again we must turn to our teacher, Engels, and remember the struggle he carried on against opportunism, a struggle which was merciless, indomitable, and which for half a century filled his life as a political fighter.

While defending revolutionary Marxism, Engels routed the German reformists, the French possibilists, the English Fabians, and the ultra-“Lefts”, and at the same time was exceptionally firm in his criticisms of the opportunist mistakes of the leaders of the proletariat, people of the type of Wilhelm Liebknecht, and Bebel, Lafargue and Guesdes.

This tireless struggle against the opportunists, and especially against those adopting a conciliatory attitude towards them, brought Engels the title of the “rudest fellow in Europe” from among some of the leaders attacked by him. We all of us need to learn from Engels this ability to be “rude” for the cause of the Party, for the cause of the revolution.

Nobody, as much as Engels, wanted the consolidation of the proletarian vanguard in the ranks of a single working class party. But he knew and saw that unification on an unprincipled basis weakens the working class. In France, in 1882, Engels greeted the split that took place in the working class movement with Nalon and Brusse who rejected the class struggle, and sacrificed the proletarian class character of the movement and made a split inevitable. “All the better,” said he, “unity is a fine thing, as long as it is possible, but there are things more important than unity.”

We consider it necessary to call to mind these words of Engels just now, when we here at this Congress are raising aloft the *banner of the political unity of the international working class*.

In the report made by Comrade *Dimitroff*, the Congress especially clearly stressed its will to struggle for a united working class party in each country, and for a united working class party, throughout the

world. But this party is only possible on the basis of *unity of principles*, and not on the basis of a rotten bloc of petty-bourgeois and proletarian elements after the fashion and type of the Second International. We draw the attention of thousands, and tens of hundreds of thousands of Social-Democratic workers who consider themselves followers and pupils of Marx and Engels that we would all be committing a crime to our class, if we recreated that sham "unity" which led to the catastrophe of August 4, to the bloc between a section of the working class and the bourgeoisie, and which in the last analysis, led to the victory of fascism. *The working class does not want unity of such a kind!* We want the unity for which Friedrich Engels fought throughout his life. We shall devote all our strength to achieve this unity, and we shall achieve it. (*Applause.*)

But it can only be achieved by a party which by its growing activity wins the confidence of the masses, a party which overcomes schematism and simplification in its approach to the mass movement. It was for *such* a party that Engels carried on the struggle. He mercilessly attacked *passivity and inactivity* as among the most harmful forms of opportunism. In his correspondence with the leaders of the working class he tirelessly repeated that the party must act under all circumstances, that it must participate in *all* the political life of the country, that it must use every fact of home and foreign policy as grounds for action, that it must be with the masses always and everywhere, at all times, and in good time advance the *true slogan of the struggle* which comes from the masses of themselves, and replace it by a new one as the movement develops.

Such was the basic tactical rule laid down by Engels for the proletarian party.

A party which lives in the narrow, confined circle of its adherents, which lives *outside* of the life of the people, which is unable to take hold of that which, at the given moment, is of vital interest to the masses, a party which is unable to generalize the grievances and aspirations of the masses into clear and easily accessible slogans, such a party is not able to place itself at the head of the mass movement.

Engels comes down with particular force upon those who, in the decisive moments of the struggle of the masses get all tangled up.

Passivity and inactivity, while masquerading under "Left" phrases, in practice, frequently hide behind a *play at conspiracy*, by self-isolation within the shell of the underground organization, and degenerate into Carbonarism, alien to the spirit of a workers' party. On the other hand, parliamentary cretinism, adaptation to bourgeois legality at any cost, denial of the significance of the illegal forms of organization, the fear of violence, in its turn, paralyze the fighting capacity of the working class.

Engels fights against *both* manifestations of passivity. He teaches the proletarian party to utilize bourgeois legality to the utmost in the interests of gathering the forces of the working class to prepare them

for the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, in this way transforming bourgeois legality into a weapon of struggle against the bourgeoisie. He exposes the Bakuninist-Blanquist secret plotting, used by the international police against the organizations of the workers, and recommends to the latter to be particularly watchful against spies and provocateurs penetrating into the workers' organizations. And, at the same time, he spares no blows directed at those Social-Democrats who, in seeking favor from the government, proclaim that the party of the workers is not a party of revolutionary violence.

"To attack violence," writes Engels indignantly, "as something in itself impermissible, at a time when we know that, in the final analysis, without violence we can achieve nothing."

Engels insists that the proletarian revolutionists should be able to utilize *all* forms of struggle against the class enemy. The Party of the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, transformed these directives of Engels into life during twenty-five years of experience in co-ordinating legal and illegal forms of activity. It is this experience, as is known, that formed the basis of the organizational decisions of the Second Congress of the Comintern.

Have these directives and experiences been utilized by our Sections to the fullest? *No, they have not been utilized.* Many comrades are convinced that there are no possibilities for "legal" forms of work, and for developing a broad mass struggle under the conditions of fascist terror. Fascism is compelled to create a mass base for itself, to build its mass organization, and to resort to social demagogy. From this follows the task of the Communists to penetrate into the mass organizations of the fascists, to turn the social demagogy of the fascists against the fascist dictatorship and, in such a way, undermine the mass base of fascism. One cannot reach the masses without systematic every-day work in the fascist mass organizations, without the co-ordination of both legal and illegal methods of work.

At the same time it is incorrect to think that in countries where the workers' movement is legal we have no use for illegal organizations. The employers' terror in all countries compels us to build our organizations in the enterprises, illegally. The intensified danger of fascism renders it obligatory for the "legal" Communist Parties to undertake all measures for the eventuality of the transition into illegality, in order not to repeat the errors of the Italian and German Communist Parties. It is necessary to remember that the united front movement indirectly "legalizes" the Communist Parties that are most hounded and persecuted, that the mass struggle will bring to the surface the most conspirative of organizations.

One of the varieties of schematism and simplification of our tactics against which Engels struggled is *the mechanical application of our basic tactics without taking account of the specific conditions in each separate country.*

We are the world party of the proletariat, a party built on the



basis of genuine political and organizational unity, a party summarizing and generalizing the entire experience of the world labor movement, a party possessing real *international* tactics based on the unity of the interests of the international proletariat. But the international tactics by no means ignore the differences, conditioned by the specific development of the various countries. The internationalization of the experiences of the world labor movement does not mean the working out of a *pattern* applicable equally to the labor movement of all countries. Anyone who thinks that it is enough to have a few ready formulæ in his pocket to be applied indiscriminately for the whole international labor movement does not internationalize the labor movement, but freezes it and hinders its development.

Engels was a classical figure of a genuine international leader, who mastered to perfection the secret of the correct co-ordination of the international character of our Communist movement while taking into account its national peculiarities. He was closely connected with the *German* labor movement. He had a splendid, detailed knowledge of the *French* labor movement as well. Since 1844 he was the most active participant in the struggles of the *English* proletariat. He studied the *American* labor movement deeply (and he himself crossed the ocean). He was an exceptional expert on the conditions and tasks of the proletarian struggle in *Italy* and the Pyrenean countries.\* He orientated himself splendidly in the affairs of the Socialist movements of the *West Slav* and the *South Slav* countries.

It is just this deep knowledge of the situation prevailing in the separate countries which enabled Engels correctly to lead the workers' parties in these countries, to be a genuine leader and organizer of the proletarian international.

Such are the most important tactical directives of Engels in the light of our present great epoch, in the light of the tasks which face our Congress.

Engels taught us in determining our tactics not to approach the live revolutionary processes in the lives of the people with planned-out schemes, and previously prepared scales, but to do so on the basis of a deep study of each separate country at each given moment, of the given relation of class forces, a study of the position of each separate class, of each one of its groups, a study of the totality of all class contradictions and the methods of utilizing these contradictions by the proletariat—always taking into account the international situation as a whole.

*Engels* taught us to be a militant party, a party of action—and to be able both during a rise of the wave of the movement as well as during its temporary ebb, to find that particular thing which is of the most vital importance to the masses, and which enables the party to broaden and strengthen its contact with the working class and toilers. He taught

\* Spain and Portugal—Ed.

us to merge ourselves in the movement not only at its inception but to also prepare it, to organize the movement and, by winning the confidence of the masses, to head the movement, to be able to respond to every event agitating the masses, to be able to unfold the greatest struggles up to the point of decisive battles and, in this way, transform the party into a force which impresses all toilers and raises within them the confidence in their own power.

Engels taught us not to get swell-headed at the moments of victory, not to lose our heads at the moments of temporary defeat. He taught us not to be afraid to start all over again in the event of defeat, but to begin with a firm conviction that the second time we must achieve victory.

Engels taught us to carry out a *policy* which corresponds to the most vital interests of the very broadest masses of the toilers, and which facilitates the consolidation of the farming masses and toilers of the city around the proletariat. Under the present circumstance, this means, first of all, the setting up of a people's front against fascism within capitalist countries and, on the international arena, a front of the people against war. (*Applause.*)

Engels taught us to estimate the situation soberly, not to run in advance until the broadest masses are drawn into the movement—but neither to trail at the tail end of this mass, not to adapt our tactics to the most backward section of the masses. He taught us to be able, by decisive and speedy action, to draw the masses forward to consolidate every success of the movement, and make it the starting point for new successes.

Engels taught us to struggle for every inch of the gains of the working class, and to utilize every contradiction in the camp of the enemy, never sacrificing the class character of the party and the interests of the proletariat. He taught us to be in those organizations wherever the working masses are, to apply illegal and legal forms of struggle which, under the present conditions, means strengthening of the illegal organization by extending its legal influence among the masses, and to extend this influence by strengthening the illegal organization.

We are living and struggling under incomparably more complex conditions than those which prevailed in the time of Engels. But the very richest tactical heritage of Engels preserves its significance for us even under these new conditions. For a long time to come Communists will draw from this heritage and will, in a *Bolshevik manner*, put the directives of Engels into life. Does it mean that these directives are *sufficient* in determining our tactics? Of course not. Engels, as Marx, because of the historic conditions prevailing at that time *was not as yet in a position* to create and *did not create* a complete science of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary proletariat. The splendid ideas on strategy and tactics which the great founders of Communism

developed and transformed into life so far as was in their power are at the basis of the science created by the genius of Lenin and Stalin.

### III. WE ARE CONTINUING THE WORK OF ENGELS

We, Communists, continue the work of Engels.

The great irresistible force of the revolutionary teaching created by Engels and Marx consists in the fact that it *lives and develops* together with the fighting proletariat, is enriched by new experiences, and sharpened in the struggle with its enemies.

The leaders of the Second International did *not* take the teachings of Marx and Engels as a guide to revolutionary action of the proletariat, as teaching the necessity for preparing the masses for the forceful overthrow of the domination of the bourgeoisie, and for the destruction of classes in general. Some of the leaders of the Second International revised Marxism, "supplemented" it by declaring that the development of capitalism is accompanied, not by a sharpening of class antagonisms but, on the contrary, by a mitigation of these antagonisms. Others, while recognizing, in words, the correctness of the basic tenets of Marxism, transformed these into a dogma which would justify the reconciliation with capitalist reality, which justified the support of reformist practices. These people called themselves Marxists but they disfigured Marxism, vulgarized it, destroyed its revolutionary essence.

Engels departed from us in the middle of the 90's. But it is just in these years that Lenin, whose name became a guiding star for the entire revolutionary proletariat, began his revolutionary work.

Marx and Engels lived, worked and struggled in the epoch of monopolist capitalism when the development of bourgeois society proceeded, on the whole, on an ascending plane, the epoch of national wars and the completion of bourgeois revolutions in Western Europe. This epoch gave Marx and Engels all the necessary elements to enable them to arm the proletariat with *the mighty weapon of revolutionary theory*.

But Marx and Engels never pretended to anticipate the exact course of the proletarian revolution so as to assign to it exact tactical rules, to provide answers to such questions that, under the conditions of that epoch, were insoluble.

Engels, who devoted brilliant pages to transforming Socialism, from a Utopian into a science, time and time again hurled a tirade of ridicule at those who left the ground of science, and who "philosophized" about the "architecture of the future society". On a number of occasions he wrote that he is not worried about the "people of the future society who, at any rate, will not be any stupider than we are". In regard to the Marxist criticism of capitalism, Engels wrote that "the results of this criticism contain also in embryo form the so-called solutions, to the extent that the latter are in general possible at the present time". This is, of course, also applicable in its entirety to the works of Engels himself.

The great Bolsheviks, Lenin and Stalin, further developed the outline of these ideas and transformed them further into an orderly science.

For Lenin, Marxism was not a dogma but a guide to revolutionary action. At the end of the past century Lenin wrote the following, in connection with the struggles around the Party program: "We do not at all regard the theory of Marx as something completed and inviolate. On the contrary, we are convinced that it only laid the corner stone of that science which the Socialists *must promote* further in all directions if they do not wish to lag behind life."

Monopolistic, decaying capitalism, the unprecedented sharpening of all contradictions, and the general crisis of capitalism—the starting point of which was the World War of 1914-1918 and the victory of the October Revolution, have opened up a new epoch in the history of mankind. Socialist construction and the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.—this is the *new* phenomenon which Engels did *not know and could not know*, this is the *new* phenomenon which Marxists had to generalize theoretically and thus arm the revolutionary proletariat for its further struggles.

In his interview with the American workers' delegation, Comrade Stalin gives a concise characteristic of the contribution which Lenin made to the treasury of Marxism. These few brief pages must be read and reread—they are worth many volumes. Here Stalin makes a resume of the content of the *Leninist stage in the development of Marxism*; the analysis of imperialism as the last stage of capitalism, the further working out of what is most important in Marxism—namely, the teachings regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat; the working out of the questions of the forms and methods of Socialist construction in the period of the proletarian dictatorship; the creation of a harmonious system of the hegemony of the proletariat; the working out of the national-colonial question as a question of the reserves of the proletarian revolution; and the creation of the teachings regarding the Party.

To Lenin belongs the merit of determining the position of the Communists in imperialist wars, the positions which he fixed in the slogan—*transform imperialist war into civil war*. And this must be particularly underlined since there are efforts to place the matter in such a light, as though the initiator of this slogan was Engels. This is incorrect, comrades. Engels has too many merits before the world working class for us to attribute to him that which he did not say. Engels did not live in the epoch of imperialism; he had to indicate the positions of international Socialism chiefly in relation to national wars. Had the Bolsheviks approached the works of Engels in the 90's dogmatically, then they would not have been able to develop the Marxian position on the question of imperialist wars as was done by Lenin. Lenin gave the principally new and the only correct line both on the question of the character of imperialist war as well as on the question of the position of the proletarian party in relation to it. And it is just because we honor the memory of our great teacher Engels that we are against transform-

ing him into an idol, against keeping silent about or embellishing the historic truth.

The cause of Lenin, who raised Marxism to a new stage, was continued along all lines by Stalin. In his works, his speeches, in his entire activity Stalin and the international Party of Bolsheviks led by him, live, develop and enrich the Marxist-Leninist theory of which Engels was one of the founders.

Stalin developed Marxism along one of the basic questions of our epoch—the question of the *building of socialism in one country*. The Bolsheviks did not cling to the old formulæ of Engels which were adaptable to a different age—long left behind. Under the leadership of Stalin they smashed the Trotskyites and Zinovievites who attempted to utilize these formulæ against the proletarian revolution. Lenin proved that the victory of socialism in one country is possible under the uneven development of capitalism under the conditions of imperialism. *Stalin developed, defended and put into life* this theory. “That which Engels considered unreliable and impossible for one country in the 40’s of the past century, under the conditions of pre-monopolistic capitalism became real and possible in our country under the conditions of imperialism. Of course, if Engels were alive,” stated Stalin at the Fifteenth Conference of the All-Union Communist Party, “he would not cling on to the old formulæ but, on the contrary, he would greet our revolution in every way possible, stating: ‘To the devil with the old formulas—long live the victorious revolution in the U.S.S.R.’”

*The concrete questions of the first stage of Communism*, which were raised by Stalin and which he solved with the greatest courage and depth were not raised either in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* nor in the works of Engels, nor in Lenin’s *State and Revolution*.

Stalin, in further developing the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, creatively transforming them into living reality, was the *first* to work out concretely the only and deeply thought-out plan of socialist offensive in our country. He worked out the problems of socialist industrialization and the conditions necessary for the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R.; the question of collective farming as the basis of the socialist reorganization of agriculture under the leadership of the proletariat; the question of the stages and means of destroying the capitalist elements (from the policy of limiting these elements to the policy of liquidating the kulaks as a class), the question of the organization of labor under socialist conditions and the struggle against petty-bourgeois equalitarianism; the question of the conditions and the methods of destroying the remnants of capitalism in the consciousness of the people and the question of the construction of a new, socialist culture. Stalin showed that the construction of socialism meant, first of all, the strengthening of the proletarian dictatorship, and that the strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the success of socialist construction carries with it the flourishing of proletarian democracy. All these theoretical propositions have been turned into

flesh and blood by Stalin, and by the Bolsheviks under his leadership.

Such written works and speeches of Stalin as his reports at Party Congresses, his speeches at the conference of the agrarian Marxists, his famous Six Conditions, the changes to the constitution which he proposed, his talk on the new man, on the mastering of technique—speaking briefly, every article or speech by Stalin is not only a milestone on the road of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., it is at the same time also a landmark in the enrichment and deepening of Marxian theory. The advanced workers of all countries study and will continue to study on the basis of these works.

Stalin worked out the policy of the proletarian State, which is building the classless socialist society surrounded by capitalism. Stalin worked out the basis of the policy of the world proletarian party—the Communist International—under the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism and of the struggle of two systems—capitalism and socialism. On the basis of the experiences of the Chinese revolution, Stalin worked out the question of the concrete way in which the national revolutionary movements grow over into the Soviet revolution. *Stalin raised the teaching of Marx-Engels-Lenin on the transition period from capitalism to socialism, to a new level. (Applause.)*

Lenin and Stalin did not limit themselves to the separate outlines made by Marx and Engels on the question of *strategy and tactics*. In his book *Foundations of Leninism*—the handbook of the proletarian revolutionists of the entire world—Stalin wrote that only “in the period of direct action by the proletariat, in the period of the proletarian revolution, when the question of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie became a question of immediate practice, when the question of the reserves of the proletariat (strategy) became one of the most burning questions, when all forms of struggle and of organization, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary (tactics), assumed definite shape—only in this period could a complete strategy and detailed tactics for the struggle of the proletariat be elaborated”. To Lenin and Stalin belongs the merit that they, not limiting themselves to the restoration of the separate tactical theses of Marx and Engels, developed these further and created the strategy and tactics of Leninism—a complete science on the leadership of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.



Forty years have passed since the death of Friedrich Engels. What a gigantic path has been traveled by the world labor movement, and by the whole of mankind during these years. In place of the old tsarist despotism—a great country is building socialism. The age-long Chinese Wall is crashing down; four hundred million Chinese people are set into motion; the banner of the Soviet revolution waves over six provinces of China, where up to a hundred million people live. In the entire capitalist world, under the influence of the success of socialism in the U.S.S.R., a mighty movement towards socialism is growing and

extending among the toilers. The bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries are devastating lands and cities, resurrecting the torture chambers of the dark ages for the enslaved peoples, and sowing a storm of hatred and indignation among all the oppressed. The First International of Marx and Engels is no more. And the Second International is falling to pieces as a rotting texture; but the toiling people are rallying ever closer around the Third (Communist) International, the International of Marx and Engels—Lenin and Stalin—the International of the victorious socialism in the U.S.S.R., the International of the proletarian revolution in the entire world. (*Applause.*)

“I think [wrote Engels in 1874] that the next International—after Marx’s writings have had some years of influence—will be *directly Communist and will openly proclaim our principles.*”\* (Emphasis mine—*D.Z.M.*)

This Communist International is represented in this hall. It embraces over seventy countries, and it has millions of adherents who are under the influence of the Communist Parties of all nations and races, in all corners of the world. The teachings of Marx and Engels rule completely over one-sixth of the world, backed up by a mighty State, by a socialist economy with uncountable riches, and backed up by a population of 170,000,000.

The teachings are destroying the chain of slavery in all countries in order to take possession of the entire world.

Armed by these teachings the Communists, in spite of terror, torture and persecution are organizing, consolidating, and rousing to struggle and leading to victory the proletarians, toilers, and the colonial slaves. The Communist International is a guiding star and an anchor to save humanity from need, fascism and war.

Long live the Communist International—the great, invincible Party of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin! (*Stormy applause, an ovation lasting several minutes. The entire hall rises to its feet. Cheers from all delegations. Singing of the “International” and “Carmagnole.”*)

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\* *The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, p. 330, International Publishers, New York.

# The Bankruptcy of "Planned Economy" in the U.S.A. and the New Stage in the Class Struggle

By EARL BROWDER

"A fundamental question with which the world as a whole is confronted at present is whether the capitalistic system of wealth production has perhaps permanently broken down."

THE above pessimistic words express the uncertainty and hesitation that characterizes bourgeois circles in the United States, as the grandiose structure of the "New Deal" collapses, one section after another. The question is from a pamphlet by the *Brookings Institution* of Washington, announcing its new book on "The Formation of Capital". This is the same body which, before the Supreme Court administered the *coup de grace* to the dying Blue Eagle, declared as the conclusion of its exhaustive study of the N.R.A., that it had "on the whole retarded recovery". The bankruptcy of Roosevelt's "planned economy" was already registered in the Congressional majority of Roosevelt's own party, in the demand by decisive circles of the ruling class that an end be made to it, by the growing revolt among the small bourgeoisie, and the rising strike wave among the workers. Now the confusion in the ruling class is worse confounded; the rival groups and tendencies agree only upon one point—a renewed attack upon the living standards of the masses. Upon all other questions the differences sharpen up, party lines disappear, the threat of a "crisis of the constitution" rises, new parties and new alignments are in the making. Above all looms that question, most dreaded by the bourgeoisie—"whether the capitalistic system has perhaps not permanently broken down".

## I. SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE SPECIAL KIND OF DEPRESSION

The waverings and uncertainty in capitalist circles reflect similar movements of the various economic indices. On the one hand, economy has not fallen to the low point of March, 1933, when Roosevelt took office; this gives rise to the hope that "recovery" is really under way. On the other hand, the index figures, with all their spasmodic ups and downs, do not again rise to the height of the first Roosevelt inflation boom in July, 1933; this raises again the black specter of doubt and pessimism over Wall Street and Washington.

The main outline of the course of the depression in the United States can be charted from the Federal Reserve Board Index of Industrial Pro-



duction. The following figures register the high and low points (the average of 1923-25).

March, 1933 .. 60	May, 1934 .....	86	January, 1935. 90
July .....	100		
November .... 73	September .....	71	May .....
			84

A chart of these figures resembles that of a malarial fever, with the latest decline since January still proceeding.

This production index, in the words of Colonel Ayres, economist of the Cleveland Trust Co., "manifests much action but no net progress as far as volume of output is concerned". He goes on to say that "American industry . . . has made almost the worst record in the world in so far as recovery is concerned".

Production has remained on a higher level, however, as compared with the low point of the crisis, for more than two years.

What sector of economy contributed most to this modest rise in production, and what forces stimulated it?

We could expect that increased production would arise from one or more of four factors: (1) increased demand for consumption; (2) increased capital investments; (3) speculative accumulation of stocks; (4) foreign trade increases. Let us, then, check up on the actual course of these factors during the depression period.

The results are surprising! As to consumption, the best indicator is the volume of retail trade; on this the U. S. Department of Commerce reports show that, from \$49,000,000,000 in 1929, a decline took place to \$31,000,000,000 in 1932, the lowest year of the crisis. In 1933, when production increased by almost 20 per cent, the volume of retail trade declined a further 20 per cent, instead of increasing. In 1934, while dollar volume went up slightly to \$28,000,000,000, this was still 10 per cent below 1932, and marked a further decline in physical volume by the increase in prices. It is clear that consumption, as measured by retail trade, does not furnish a basis for any degree of recovery, however small, but rather the opposite.

How about new capital investments, then? Here again the results are negative. New corporate financing, the most important indicator of capital investment, had fallen \$8,000,000,000 in 1929, to \$325,000,000 in 1932. In 1933, instead of advancing, it dropped 50 per cent down to \$160,000,000, and in 1934 advanced only to \$178,000,000. Thus on the second point also there is found no basis for any degree of recovery but rather to the contrary.

Nor is the situation explained when we approach the third factor, that is, the accumulation of stocks of raw materials and manufactured goods. During 1933 and 1934 accumulated stocks remained practically stationary on the whole for all groups. It is clear that the increased production that took place has not been for stock.

Finally we look at the figures for foreign trade. But this also did not increase during 1933 but instead registered a sharp drop in dollar

volume which covered an even sharper decline in physical volume by rising prices. In 1934 there was a further, though smaller, decline in foreign trade.

Here we seem at first glance to be faced with an insoluble contradiction. It is an unquestionable fact that production increased but where did this increase go to? Not to consumption, no to capital investment, not to accumulated stock, not to foreign trade. When we turn to analyze what sections of industry registered the largest increase, we get a clue to the solution of our problem. We find the greatest increases in machine tools, automobiles, the war industries, and the industry that serves all of these—steel. The index of new machine tools, from a base of 1926 as 100, had fallen in 1932 to 19.6; in 1933 it rose to 27.1, in 1934 to 46.2, and in April, 1935, it stood at 65.6. This is an increase of considerably more than 300 per cent. Automobile production rose from 1,371,000 in 1932 to 1,920,000 in 1933 and then to 2,800,000 in 1934; this increase of more than 100 per cent is further continuing in 1935. We have no index figures for the war industries, munitions, ship building, etc., but they are known to be working close to capacity in 1935. As for steel its production rose sharply from 13,500,000 tons in 1932 to 22,500,000 tons in 1933, and to 25,250,000 tons in 1934; here is an almost 100 per cent increase in the two years.

It is clear, even though new capital investment had declined by half in the depression years, that the increased production went on mainly at the expense of equipment and generally in so-called "capital goods". There was not, however, any accompanying construction of new plants. The vast sums spent by the government in the field of construction in 1933 were more than offset by the decline in private building, while even in 1934 the net increase of construction over 1932 was less than 15 per cent.

The answer to our problem becomes clear in light of the above facts. The increase in production that took place was chiefly for replacement of amortized capital goods. Throughout the course of the crisis all the big corporations and most of the small ones had postponed all possible replacement of worn out or obsolete machinery. The reserves accumulated for this amortization were carried over from year to year in mounting volume, but were registered in the general balance sheet of economy only as a shift of assets from fixed to circulating, from machinery to cash reserves. The postponement tendency from 1929 to the beginning of 1933 was enforced and emphasized by the continuous fall in prices. With the sharp inflation boom, however, in the first half of 1933 and the constant tendency thereafter for prices to rise, a sudden and compelling stimulus was given to fulfil these postponed demands and to transform the accumulated amortization funds into goods. This was further encouraged by a certain recovery of profits that accompanied the rise of production and the devaluation of the dollar. The chief factor in increased production was clearly that of replacements. Only in second place must be added the factor of increased production of war materials.

When we understand this narrow basis for the production increase in the United States then its shifting and unstable character becomes the obvious and inevitable consequence. It is true that, as Comrade Stalin pointed out, this recovery proceeds chiefly from the inner economic forces of capitalism, and enabled the capitalists to pass over from the depths of the crisis, to the period of depression. Because there was not and could not be a serious increased demand from consumption or new capital investments this depression took on its special characteristic, described by Stalin, as a protracted one which holds out no hope of a return to "prosperity". These features of the depression of a special kind, as shown in the United States, are not necessarily applicable to other countries. They are, however, the specific characteristic features of the depression in the United States.

## II. WHAT HAPPENED TO THE AMERICAN STANDARD OF LIVING

The catastrophic collapse of the greatest boast of the United States' bourgeoisie, the world famed "American standard of living", its fall to European levels, took place under the Hoover regime from 1929 to 1932. The foundation of the standard of living (this is especially true of the United States) is the total annual wage paid to the industrial workers, in relation to prices. The United States Department of Commerce figures show that industrial wages in 1929, for the main and decisive section, was \$15,000,000,000. In 1932 this amount had dropped to \$6,000,000,000 or a loss of 60 per cent. To some extent this loss in money wage was offset by the drop in prices, but even bourgeois authorities admit that the loss in wage-earners' purchasing power was about 40 per cent.

The Roosevelt New Deal promised to remedy this. The remedies it proposed were: increase in wage totals as well as rates, lifting the lower paid to a legal minimum, the shortening of hours and consequent wider distribution of jobs, and the creation of more jobs through public works. In addition, the unemployed were to be cared for by the Federal government. Let us examine the outcome of each of these projected measures.

A report of the Planning and Research Division of the N.R.A. shows that weekly wages declined during the first 18 months' operation of the National Industry Recovery Act. The following table is taken without change from that report:

<i>Industry</i>	WEEKLY WAGE PER WORKER	
	In June, 1933 (Beginning of N.I.R.A.)	In November 1934
Automobiles .....	\$23.05	\$22.80
Boots and shoes .....	15.68	14.51
Chewing and smoking tobacco and snuff .....	13.43	12.84
Iron and steel .....	18.33	17.43
Petroleum and refining .....	27.57	26.08

Rubber goods .....	18.26	17.57
Rubber tires and tubes .....	24.28	22.67
Woolen textiles .....	16.85	16.25
Textile machinery and parts ....	20.95	19.33

As against the actual decline in weekly earnings per worker, revealed in the above figures, there was an increase in number of workers employed which increased the total money wages of the working class as a whole. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, this increase in number employed, proceeded from an index of 64.1 in 1932, to 69.0 in 1933, and 78.8 in 1934 (compared with the base of 1923-25 average as 100).

Against this small increase in total wages must be put the increase in prices which reduced the value of money. The Department of Labor index of retail food prices, the largest single item in the workers' cost of living, advanced from 90 in April, 1933, to 124 in April, 1935 (base, 1913—100), or approximately 38 per cent. The price of clothing and house furnishings advanced 20 per cent in the same period (Fairchild's index). The cost of living index of the National Industrial Conference Board advanced from 71.5 in April, 1933, to 82.9 in May, 1935, or 16 per cent. There are obvious discrepancies between the separate indices of the component parts of the cost of living and the index of their composite, indicating that efforts are made to hide the real extent of the rise in the cost of living. But even the most conservative figures are sufficient to establish the main feature, namely, that the total purchasing power of the wage-earners registered a net decline under the New Deal. This conclusion is what we would also expect upon the basis of the decline of retail trade even in dollar totals, which, in view of the sharp rise in prices, conceals a much greater decline in physical volume of trade.

As to the claim of the N.R.A. that it lifted up the lower paid categories to a certain minimum, the following conclusions must be made: (1) that there was no improvement in wage levels of lower paid industries, taken as a whole; (2) that if there were any degree of improvement for lower paid categories within separate industries, this was more than offset by reductions for the general body of workers. The minimum wage provisions of the codes operated mainly as a standard very much below the average, toward which the average was driven as much as possible.

The project for shortening the working week to provide more jobs has been a dismal failure. The average hours per week worked in factories in the two months before and after Roosevelt took office, were: January 1933, 34.9 hours per week; Feb., 35.2; March, 32.2; April, 33.8. In the same months of 1935, the corresponding figures were: 36.4, 37.1, 36.6 and 36.7. The average length of the working week was increased under the New Deal.

The Public Works program, far from being a factor to improve the conditions of the workers, has revealed itself as being the weapon of the

sharpest attack against the standard of living. Roosevelt's announcement of the wage-scales for public works, ranging from \$19 per month for unskilled labor in the South, up to a peak of \$94 per month for engineers and technicians in the biggest cities, is squarely based upon relief rates; in fact, it is doubtful if these wages will provide as much as relief, since when at work the worker has many extra expenses and requires more and better food to maintain the same standard of existence. Even the entire American Federation of Labor bureaucracy, in closest league with Roosevelt, were forced by the indignation of their members to protest against this wage scale, and to denounce it as undermining the entire American standard of living, already destroyed by 40 to 50 per cent before this latest attack.

As to the Federal Government participation in financing and distributing relief, this has not brought any improvement in living standards in general. The most that can be claimed for it is that it stepped in at a moment when there was danger of a complete collapse of the relief system; that it abolished the multiplicity of local standards to some degree and "regimented" relief rates. But with 1935, the Roosevelt program has again shifted towards throwing the relief problem again entirely upon local authorities and financial resources, with Federal participation, entirely in the form of Public Works.

The final conclusion is inescapable that the Roosevelt program, far from improving the living conditions of the toiling masses even to the small degree that production was increased, has further undermined and deteriorated these conditions. As a matter of fact even the claims of the Roosevelt administration for achievements in the economic field are chiefly on the side of the capitalists, the realm of restoring and maintaining the rate and volume of profits.

### III. HOW PROFITS WERE RESTORED

The bourgeois press has been flooded with stories about the transformation of losses into profits, and the multiplication of existing profits up to as high as several thousand per cent have accompanied the carrying through of Roosevelt's policies in 1933 and 1934. We must, therefore, examine the degree to which this is true and the relation of increased profits to the total balance sheet of the national economy.

The most comprehensive statistics on profits as a whole are those compiled by the National City Bank for 1933. This report shows that the 1,925 big corporations showed a profit for the year of \$1,045,000,000, an advance of many hundred per cent over 1932. This looks very impressive until it is compared with the total showing of all American corporations, 475,000 in number, which registered a net loss for the year of \$2,359,000,000. Thus even the first examination of the year of greatest advance in profits immediately reveals that when we take the whole balance sheet of corporate economy this profit is swallowed up and reveals a net loss of more than twice as much. What was gained by the big capitalists was

thus lost by the smaller capitalists, there took place a redistribution of profits.

Even among those corporations which registered substantial gains there is a further sharply graduated differentiation. Thus, according to the same authority, in 1932 the 1,435 most important commercial and industrial corporations showed a net deficit for the year of \$97,000,000. In 1933 this was already transformed into a profit of \$640,000,000; while in 1934 the amount further expanded to \$1,051,000,000. These figures must now be further compared with a report for a selected group of only 418 of the largest corporations compiled by the Federal Reserve Board for the same years. This group of less than one-tenth of one per cent of all corporations were able to grab almost 90 per cent of the increased profits, advancing from \$49,000,000 in 1932 to \$605,000,000 in 1933 and \$911,000,000 in 1934. These figures reveal how overwhelmingly the increased profits were diverted to the coffers of monopoly capital.

What was the source of these increased profits and what was the mechanism whereby they were distributed?

Some small but very inadequate explanation may be found in the increase of production and in the decline of real wages, of living standards generally. A further and more important factor is the intensified speed-up and rationalization. But it is clear that we must probe even deeper for the full explanation of the source of profits.

The figures given above already indicate that one of the chief features of the spectacular rise of the profits of monopoly capital is the expropriation of the small capitalist by the larger ones, and the general expropriation of a large part of the savings of the petty bourgeoisie. Monopoly prices operating under the conditions of the devaluation of the dollar supplemented by the general policy of governmental finance is the mechanism whereby this large scale expropriation was carried through.

Devaluation of the dollar resulted not only in a rise in prices (in the first place and to the greatest extent the prices of those commodities in the hands of the big monopolies), but was a simultaneous marking down of the largest part of fixed charges, especially debt services, of the whole capital structure. The net result for the national economy as a whole was a transformation of previously capitalized profits into the form of current profits; this was at the same time, within the national economy, a transfer from the hands of smaller capitalists to those of the larger capitalists.

The whole question of the effect of dollar devaluation upon the capital structure has received very inadequate study and attention. We therefore know very little as yet of the details of this process. Investigation of the details is further rendered more difficult by the fact that big advances on the stock exchange, representing mainly the share capital of the large corporations which were devouring small capital masked the whole process and created the widespread illusions of a general advance of capital as a whole.

The role of governmental financing is of secondary though still great importance. The central figure of this factor is found in the increase of

the national debt by \$13,000,000,000 during the crisis, the largest part being in the two years of the Roosevelt administration. These stupendous budget deficits, financed by borrowing, represent sums of money thrown upon the market through a multitude of channels. The largest single channel, however, represented directly contributions by the government to those same capitalist interests from which the government had borrowed the money and to which interest thereon was being paid. Further, as we have already seen, the final destination of all these vast sums was not the mass of the toiling population; what part does not finally represent losses from the crisis that were assumed by the government has gone on into the channels of profits. It is significant to note, in passing, that the increase in the national debt is approximately the same in amount as the decrease in the gold value of the total debt that resulted from devaluation.

A further feature of governmental financing, more important for its effect in immediately sharpening the class struggle than for its purely economic results, has been the shift of the burden of taxation from off the shoulders of the rich over to those of the toiling masses. Taxation of incomes dropped from \$2,200,000,000 in 1929 down to \$900,000,000 in 1934; while taxation paid directly or indirectly by the masses rose from \$1,500,000,000 to \$2,700,000,000.

To sum up, the spectacular recovery of profits in the United States in the last two years was on the whole confined to monopoly capital and was offset threefold by the losses of corporate capital as a whole; in the main it was accomplished by monopoly prices operating in the circumstances of devaluation of the dollar. This was supplemented by intensified exploitation of the masses and the increased burdens of taxation upon them. It is clear that the results are temporary and unstable. They do not represent such a stimulus to production that could promise even a slow and protracted emergence from the depression; at best (from the capitalists' standpoint) it provides a postponement of the sharpest crisis of profits, at the cost of further strengthening the underlying crisis factors.

#### IV. THE "CRISIS OF PARTIES" OF THE BOURGEOISIE

The sharpened struggle within the bourgeoisie over the distribution of the enormously reduced volume of surplus value is bringing about regroupings and a struggle of tendencies in policy which already assumes the proportion of a "crisis of parties". This even begins to take on the form of a "crisis of the constitution", as the effects of the Supreme Court decision on the N.R.A. become clear, for a slamming of the door of constitutional law against the whole field of social legislation and government intervention in economic questions upon new lines. The confusion and vacillation among the bourgeoisie is gradually crystallizing into a struggle between two tendencies in policy, two political camps, representing in a general though still confused form a certain polarization of antagonistic capitalistic interests. While the bourgeois camp is thus

torn, growing million masses are severing their old political ties, are moving restlessly, looking for a new road out of their difficulties, more and more consciously becoming anti-capitalist in their moods and demands.

From the point of view of general direction of economic policy the two bourgeois camps may be designated as inflationist and deflationist. The militant and extremist inflationist school is the dominating influence in Congress; in upper capitalist circles it is represented by the Committee for the Nation; among the masses its outstanding champion is the half-fascist demagogue, Father Coughlin, the "radio-priest", and his Union for Social Justice for which he claims five million members; the influence of this tendency reaches even into the leadership of the Socialist Party as exemplified by Norman Thomas who championed inflation during the presidential election of 1932. The militant and extreme deflationist school is represented by the Hoover Republicans, the Liberty League (a bi-partisan coalition of Al Smith Democrats and Hoover Republicans), the United States Chamber of Commerce, and so on.

One of the chief characteristics of the measures of Roosevelt's administration in its first period was their inflationary character. Roosevelt has from the beginning, however, attempted to combine and reconcile these conflicting interests by carrying through a "controlled inflation". In this he has followed the directives of the most decisive section of monopoly capital which has not hesitated to take the inflationary course as in 1933 when it gave unstinted support to Roosevelt, but which has sharply called a halt whenever the inflationary tendency tended to go beyond the interests of monopoly capital and carry its disintegrating effects even into the heart of Wall Street's apparatus of power.

The shift of policy on the part of monopoly capital, together with the attempt by Roosevelt to reconcile the conflicting capitalist interests, embodies in the two irreconcilable tendencies of policy, furnishing the basic explanation for the zig-zags, sharp turns, hesitations, theoretical fogginess, and mutually liquidating separate policies of the Roosevelt administration. This maze of contradictions hastened the recent inglorious death of the N.I.R.A. and its blue eagle.

Roosevelt entered office with an unprecedented concentration of forces in his support. Opposition from the bourgeoisie was non-existent or at least silent. Among the toiling masses was widespread the most glowing illusion as to what good things Roosevelt would bring them. For almost two years the only articulate opposition came from the Communist Party. But now all that is gone. The mirage of a united nation marching determinedly toward prosperity behind their great leader faded and disappeared almost over night. National unity has dissolved into a chaos of conflicting groups, interests and classes. The clear course forward has dissolved into a swamp of confusion. The only definite policy that emerges from the ruling class is a determined attack against the living standards of the masses.



The crisis brought all classes into active political life. The workers and all toiling strata of the population are more and more abandoning the traditional indifference and even hostility toward participation in politics, and more and more place their demands before the government. As disillusionment with Roosevelt and all bourgeois parties and factions grows there are developing all the signs of a mass break-away from the bourgeois parties and the emergence of a broad mass party on the political arena of the United States.

The various interests, groups and leaders within the bourgeoisie are by no means passive in relation to this stirring among the masses. Each one tries with its own particular demagogy to enlist the masses behind it, in its struggle for the particular special interests that it represents. They are all united in the common aim to prevent this rising mass movement from taking the path of active struggle against the capitalist state; they further have in common the tendency only in its beginning but growing rapidly and more pronounced to bring forward in their demagogy and in their practical policies the characteristic features of fascism.

#### V. THE MENACE OF FASCISM IN THE UNITED STATES

All of the preconditions for a rapid rise of fascism are present in the United States. This immanent and growing danger is generally underestimated, even by the Communists, because of its specific American features whereby it not only strives to differentiate itself from European fascism but even raises the anti-fascist banner in the form of the slogan "Against foreign importations of fascism and Communism". The mutual recriminations of rival bourgeois groups which expose the fascist character of one another in their rivalry for the support of the vaguely anti-fascist masses are too often discounted and disregarded as the usual hypocritical exaggeration of day to day political struggle. But it is of really enormous political significance that the Hoover Republicans denounce the Roosevelt regime for its fascist tendencies; that Roosevelt's spokesmen denounce Huey Long and Father Coughlin as demagogues on the road to fascism; that all other groups recognize in the Liberty League coalition of Right-wing Republicans and Democrats the strongest influence towards fascist development in America. There is a large and growing amount of truth in these mutual recriminations of the capitalist politicians.

The camp of social reformism is sharply divided in its reaction toward the fascist danger. One tendency declares that fascism is impossible in the United States, that the American democratic tradition and the exceptional character of the country, its history and institutions, make it impossible that fascism could come to power. The other tendency, on the contrary, looks forward to the victory of fascism as pre-determined, as inevitable, as something that it is useless and impossible to struggle against. A third tendency typified by Norman Thomas jumps back and forth from one view to the other. All of these agree with the

main thesis put forward by William Randolph Hearst, propagandist-in-chief for fascism in America, that the rise of Communist activity and organization is responsible for the menace of fascism.

The fascist demagoguery of the bourgeoisie has a multitude of potential victims among the masses. Its main asset in this respect is the political illiteracy of the main mass of the toiling population, the lack of traditions of political struggle against capitalism, the naivete which makes the backward masses the gullible victims of almost every glib-tongued demagogue, its lack of independent organizations. When against this historical background, a great population is suddenly thrown into the most desperate misery, the door is opened not only to the rise of a mass struggle against capitalism because of these miseries, but also to a mass mobilization in the interests of the most reactionary, the most predatory sections of the capitalist class, on the path of fascism. To underestimate this danger in America today is to commit a crime against the workers and toiling masses generally. What is taking place in the United States is a race between fascism and Communism for the leadership of the oppressed, desperate masses of the toiling population.

#### VI. THE UNITED FRONT AGAINST HUNGER, FASCISM AND WAR

The Communist Party of the United States is more and more becoming conscious of this main problem with which it is faced and of the tasks that arise in consequence. Our Party has in the past two years begun to emerge from its previous sectarian isolation from the political life of the country and to take its place as the organizer and leader of a movement towards united struggle against the growing hunger, political reaction and fascism, and preparation for imperialist war. As a consequence of the beginnings of successful work on this line the Communist Party has become a recognized political factor in the national life with which all parties and groups must reckon.

The most basic feature of this struggle for the united front is in the field of economic struggles, trade unions and the unemployed. The strike movement in the United States after a decline in the first years of the crisis advanced sharply in 1933 and 1934, while in the first four months of 1935 it maintained the average for the previous year and is now moving upward again. The scale of the strike movement can be judged by a few figures taken from official government statistics (incomplete but sufficient to demonstrate the trend and for all comparative purposes). From the low point of the strike movement in 1930 when there were 653 strikes involving 158,114 with 2,730,368 man-days lost, the movement rose in 1933 to 1,562 strikes involving 812,137 workers with 14,818,847 man-days lost; in 1934 there was a further increase to 1,742 strikes involving 1,353,912 workers with 19,347,192 man-days lost; while in the first four months of 1935 there were 991 strikes involving 418,427 workers with 4,085,050 man-days lost.

The most significant characteristic of this rising strike movement has

been the tendency towards political objectives, especially the rising importance of strikes for union recognition, the growth of solidarity movements, towards local general strikes, industrial general strikes, and the passing over of economic struggles to head-on collisions with the State power. The highest expression of this movement was the San Francisco general strike of a year ago in support of the three-months' battle of the marine workers, a strike which was denounced as an attempted revolution by the whole bourgeoisie but which, in spite of the national concentration of forces against it, emerged with the victories of established trade unions on the whole Pacific coast and with considerable concessions to its economic demands. At this moment, typical of the whole tendency we are describing, the dispatches inform us of a general strike in and around the small industrial city of Terre Haute, Indiana, in which 60,000 workers are battling to force recognition of the right of trade union organization for 600 enamel workers who have been engaged in struggle for three months. Here as in almost all important strike struggles in the recent period martial law has been declared and the city has been occupied by 2,000 State Troops.

In some of the most important strike struggles, in the first place the San Francisco general strike, the Communist Party has been the most decisive and leading influence.

During the rise of the strike wave, masses of workers were streaming into the trade unions, in the first place into the reformist unions of the American Federation of Labor. This brought about a transformation of those conditions which, since 1928, has made it necessary for the revolutionary workers to build independent unions, even though in some cases small ones, in a number of industries. It now became possible to raise the slogan of "trade union unification" in the most practical way, actually to carry through the fusion of the independent unions with the larger reformist organizations in a whole series of industries, in spite of the determined and energetic resistance of the higher officials of the American Federation of Labor. So successfully has the appeal for unity aroused the masses, that in less than a year unification has been carried through in almost all the important industries.

The result is that the Communists have a growing mass influence in the American Federation of Labor, radiating from a series of organizational strongholds. Though it cannot be said that these positions, so recently occupied, have been as yet consolidated, they still express a tenfold increase in our trade union strength. Our experiences prove the enormous power of the slogan of united front when carried practically into life.

Around the fight for unemployment and social insurance, also a great united front movement has been built. The Bill drafted by the Communists has been introduced into Congress, and is popularized throughout the country under its number in the legislative program, H.R. 2827. This Bill has received the endorsement of the majority of the organized workers. The highest point in this movement occurred when,

parallel with the opening of the United States Congress in Washington in January, there gathered the Workers' Congress for Unemployment Insurance with over 2,500 delegates from all over the country, representing all kinds of workers' and allied organizations. In spite of the great diversity of origin and political trends, this Congress was welded into complete unanimity with the outstanding participation of the Communists.

In the field of mass organizations of the unemployed, which for a while was almost a monopoly of the Communists, there is now the most intense competition, and a bewildering variety of organizations have sprung up under all sorts of leadership. The fight for the fusion of all these competing organizations thus becomes a central issue among the unemployed. The National Unemployment Councils, the chief organization, founded in 1930, is mainly led by Communists and sympathizers; the next most important is the Workers' Alliance, a federation of local organizations, with predominantly Socialist Party leadership. The Socialist leaders fight against unification; but when they held their national convention last spring, the sentiment for unity of their members was so great that they were forced to withdraw a prepared resolution rejecting the united front, and adopt a unity resolution prepared in collaboration with the Communists. Still this unification is not accomplished, as the Socialist leaders resist its carrying out with all the power at their command. The fight for unification of the unemployed mass organizations becomes a central problem of the class struggle in the United States.

The struggle for united front with the Socialist Party has entered a new phase in the last period. Where previously the Socialist Party maneuvered as a unit, in its resistance to the united front, it is now sharply divided into three tendencies. The Right-wing, self-styled "Old Guard", openly fights against the united front and even against any concession in words to the united front. A growing Left-wing, still without adequate leadership, comes out clearly for the united front. The center, the so-called "militant" group, headed by Norman Thomas, pays lip service to the united front but opposes it in practice. The center group, which gained hegemony in the Socialist Party a year ago on the basis of the Leftward move of the membership, is already losing this position and disintegrating before the determined assaults of the Old Guard, precisely because it gave no clear lead for the united front.

The most active united front movement, and the broadest in its all-inclusive character, is the American Youth Congress, which has arisen within the past year. In this movement our Young Communists are rapidly throwing off the last remnants of their former sectarianism. Its recent Congress in Detroit, July 4, 5, and 6, was composed of 1,282 delegates from 846 mass organizations, representing 1,350,000 members; in addition to which were another thousand delegates sent to the Congress to observe and report back to their organizations. This Youth Congress movement was organized in active struggle against the fascist elements,

who initiated it but who were defeated and isolated by the anti-fascist united front.

The anti-fascist and revolutionary influence are penetrating deeply among the middle classes and intellectuals. A few signs of this are: the American League Against War and Fascism, at its Congress nine months ago, had a representation of a million and a half affiliated membership, combining trade unions and other workers' organizations with a multitude of middle-class organizations, churches, etc. The American Writers' Congress held recently, under the slogan of the fight against fascism and cultural reaction, and against war, with a clear declaration of alliance with all toilers under working class leadership, brought together the most significant literary talent in America, exerting a great influence among the masses as well as in literary circles. The weekly journal, the *New Masses*, published especially for middle-class elements, and speaking openly as an interpreter of Communism, has won an established place with a constantly widening influence.

Among the 13,000,000 Negro people in the United States, our Party has made significant advances. A growing cadre of Negro Communists are winning wide mass influence among their own people, as well as generally in the revolutionary movement. The center of this work has been the fight to save the nine Scottsboro boys, and Angelo Herndon, and the mass struggle for Negro rights that has arisen around these cases. The Communist Party and the International Labor Defense occupy a strong position in the respect and affection of millions of Negroes. This is now resulting in a broad unification movement, around the project for a National Negro Congress, in which the Communists openly participate together with almost all other elements with even a claim to some progressive character.

Even in the weakest field of our Party's work, among the farmers, there are some small successes, showing here also a ripening field for a broad united front movement.

The objective conditions exist fully, and the subjective conditions are rapidly maturing, for a broad, all-inclusive united front of the oppressed masses of the United States against hunger, fascism, and war, and for economic relief at the expense of the rich, for democratic rights, and for peace—a movement that can quickly involve millions, and that can and must arise if fascism in the United States is to be repulsed.

#### VII. FOR THE BROADEST PEOPLE'S ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT

Since January, 1935, the C.P.U.S.A. has carried on a mass agitation campaign for the united front, to be carried on to the field of parliamentary struggle in the form of a federative Labor Party, around which should also be rallied the farmers and other toilers. This movement has taken hold among the masses, and organizational steps are under way on a local and regional scale, to realize it in life.

The time has come, however, already to broaden and deepen this

whole conception of the Labor Party. The January resolution must be amended, in as far as it was built upon the conception of the Labor Party as a one-class party. To properly make such a united-front party the vehicle of the broadest anti-fascist united front, as it is necessary, it must be understood from the beginning as a special form of *coalition between workers, farmers, and impoverished city middle classes*, for an agreed-upon program of struggle for the most burning immediate interests of each group. An immediate practical indication of what this broader conception means may be seen in the necessary conclusion that we must abandon our opposition to the name of Farmer-Labor Party as applied to such a movement, in so far as such opposition was based on a principled conception of the new party as basically a one-class organization. We may even find it expedient to become the champions for the name "Farmer-Labor" or something similar.

The program for such a party must quickly go further than we have previously envisioned in our proposals and agitation. Such a party must bring forth such demands as: governmental confiscation of factories and enterprises which close down, and their operation by the State; the capital levy to obtain funds for insurance, relief, etc.; the curbing of the power of the Supreme Court to void legislation; the democratization of the Senate; the equalization of representation in Congress on the basis of proportional representation of territories and parties, etc.

Such a mass Labor or Farmer-Labor Party must make a serious fight to win all possible elective posts in local, State, and Federal governments. It must openly proclaim its goal to win a majority of the posts, and its readiness to take over the government when it has such a majority, really to carry through and enforce its program. The Communists declare their support in advance of such a government which really carries out the will of the masses and satisfies their most immediate needs and demands; under certain conditions it may even become possible or necessary for the Communists to participate in such a government. In raising the slogan of such a "workers' and farmers' government", the Communists will make it clear that this is quite different from our former use of this slogan as a synonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat; we will explain that such a government is not capable of realizing a socialist society, of clearing away capitalism and the capitalists, which can be accomplished by a Soviet Power; that the historical task of such a government could be only to serve as a rallying-point for the broadest masses who want to defend themselves against hunger, reaction, and war, who are more and more consciously anti-fascist, but who in their large majority have still not convinced themselves upon a single understanding of the way out, of the road to a radical reconstruction of the whole society. Such a government could be a more or less temporary bulwark against the tides of reaction and fascism for the period when the broadest masses were coming to a united determination of their long-time program—which, in our opinion, will necessarily, from the logic of history, be the program of socialism through soviets.

If our analysis of the far-reaching character of the crisis and special kind of depression, is a correct one, and if our understanding of the tempo of development as ever-quickening, fully corresponds to the reality—then it is clear that we are not placing these questions on the order of the day any too soon. It is a great and historic task, to repulse the fascist menace in America. Upon its success or failure may depend the immediate fate of a large part of the world.

Are there broad masses ready for such a program? Especially are there important sections of the middle classes so ready? As an indication of how broad and deep this idea has already penetrated, we can cite the words of a well-known Right-liberal economist, Dr. David Saposs, who has even been associated with the Roosevelt administration. Dr. Saposs, speaking on July 5, before the Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia, is quote by the *New York Times* as saying:

“Nothing short of an enduring, far-sighted and courageous alliance of the liberal middle-class, the Socialists and Communists, can keep the middle class and workers from abdicating to fascism, and the world from being precipitated into another war.

“Can the liberal middle class, Socialists and Communists unite on such a program? If they can, the future of the world is indeed rosy. If they cannot, then darkness and catastrophe stare us in the face.”

We answer this question, posed by Dr. Saposs, on behalf of the Communists of the United States. We declare that it is possible, and that it is necessary, to organize such an “enduring, far-sighted and courageous alliance”. We declare that our Party will work and fight with all its power to clothe this idea in flesh and blood, to infuse into it the mass determination, will-power and heroism of a people fighting to maintain and extend its liberties, of a people fighting against a relapse into barbarism and for progress towards a better society. We Communists take up this historic task in the spirit of the traditions of 1776, when our country was born in the pangs of revolution; of 1861-65, when our people scorched with fire and sword the menace of being dragged backward by the slave-power of the South. The crisis of today is more deep and sharp than even those two previous turning points in our history. The Communists meet this crisis as it was met in 1776 by Tom Paine and Patrick Henry, in the crisis of the slavery question by John Brown and the Abolitionists, that is, with a practical program of action for the broadest masses, a program of unity for the masses of the nation, together with a far-sighted and deep-going program of a way out, for a solution of the crisis, for a step forward in historical progress—which can only be decisively embarked upon when the millions of the oppressed learn its necessity in the fires of the immediate struggles.

# Problems of the United Front

By M. ERCOLI

**T**HE aim of the present article is to indicate some of the main problems arising out of our present united front policy and the prospects facing it.

We must take the following as our starting point:

Prior to 1933, despite the insistent efforts made by the E.C.C.I. and the Communist Parties of the various countries, it was only in exceptional cases that we succeeded in establishing the united working class fighting front against their class enemies on the basis of agreements concluded between various organizations of the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties. As a rule, the Social-Democratic Parties on a national and local scale refused to conclude agreements with us for the preparations of and leadership of joint action both in the economic and political spheres. They preferred collaboration and united front with the bourgeoisie to unity of action with the Communists. Unity of action with us was only brought about when groups of Social-Democratic workers, urged on by their class consciousness, went so far as to act against the instructions and formal discipline of their party.

From the beginning of 1933 the situation changed. Not a single Social-Democratic Party as such, and not a single reformist trade union took part in the anti-fascist congress held in the Pleyel Hall in Paris, organized on the initiative of Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse, who tried to arrange the congress on as wide a basis as possible. However, in spite of the prohibitions of their leaders, a great number of local Social-Democratic organizations took part in this congress, and numerous groups of Social-Democratic workers, and in addition several small parties (for example, the I.L.P. and the Italian Maximalists). But the most important point is that following on the Pleyel Congress, a movement began, which while not connected with any particular party, has created, at least, in one country, namely in France, the basis on which the workers and lower officials of the Social-Democratic Parties and of the reformist trade unions began to draw closer to the Communist Parties and the leading Communist Party workers. In the process of the joint struggle, the rank-and-file Social-Democrats have begun to convince themselves of the lying character of the assertions made by the reformist leaders to the effect that the Communists are "splitters", with whom it is impossible to carry on any kind of joint work. They have begun to become convinced of the fact that the Communists are people, it is true, who never retreat from their principles, but at the same time are the firmest fighters for united working class action in their struggle against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war, and



who, for the sake of bringing about this unity, are prepared to make the necessary political and organizational concessions. The experience accumulated by the Social-Democratic workers in the movement, which arose in connection with the Congress of Pleyel and the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress, was one of the factors which has contributed to the success of the united front.

Beginning with the second half of 1933 and especially in 1934, we enter on a new period in the development of the united front. Certain Parties succeeded in bringing about a formal united front agreement with the Social-Democratic Parties as such. This fact gave a tremendous spurt to the struggle of the working class against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war, and opened up entirely new perspectives for the near future before the revolutionary working class movement and the policy of the Communist Parties.

Why has such a change come about?

This is the first question requiring an answer. What are the causes which made it not only possible, but also necessary and inevitable?

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Basically, the cause is the following one, namely, the defeat suffered by reformism in the ranks of the working class movement in the recent years.

We have often spoken of the defeat of reformism in the working class movement, about the crisis and collapse of the Second International, and we must confess that in many cases we overestimated the importance of particular successes of one kind or another, achieved by our movement in the capitalist countries, and made speedy conclusions that the enemy whom we wished to defeat in the ranks of the working class was already finally defeated, whereas his power and influence still remained considerable.

In the same way we have on several occasions been mistaken in our estimate of the forces of fascism and the possibility of its victory in various countries, and this mistake in our estimate of fascism was linked up with the previous one. In reality, the position was that in the period of the relative stabilization of capitalism, reformism in some countries succeeded in finding objective possibilities for preserving and sometimes for even strengthening its positions. During the recent years, these possibilities have been, if not entirely smashed in all countries, than at least these have been very much narrowed down by the consequences of the world crisis. Even the transition of the crisis to the special kind of depression (which in its turn is taking place unevenly) did not introduce any considerable alterations into this sphere, since it coincided everywhere with the sharpening of the offensive of the bourgeoisie against the working class. The consciousness of huge masses of workers is faced by the indubitable fact that the reformist policy of Social-Democracy has collapsed, whereas the revolutionary policy of the Communists has achieved and continued to achieve victories of the most tremendous historic importance in the U.S.S.R. Take a

glance at the entire press and the Social-Democratic literature over the post-war period up to 1933, and read what the Hilferdings, Blums and Nennis wrote! Not one of the historic and political theses advanced by them has been confirmed. The policy of Social-Democracy has led the working class to a series of heavy defeats.

The heaviest defeat was that suffered by the German proletariat in 1933, a defeat which coincided with the victory of the First Five-Year Plan in the U.S.S.R. In January, 1933, the speech made by Comrade Stalin, regarding the result of the fulfilment of the five-year plan in four years resounded victoriously in Moscow, the capital of the world proletarian revolution. Practically at the same time the leaders of German Social-Democracy, who by their entire policy of betraying the interests of the working class cleared the way for fascism to power, once more shamefully capitulated. On the other hand, up to the last moment, they stubbornly refused to say a single word which might open up the way for the unification of the forces of the proletariat in its mortal struggle against fascism.

The victory of fascism in Germany intensified the dissatisfaction of the workers, a dissatisfaction which had matured and accumulated over many years of experience and disillusionment. If the victory of fascism in Germany implied the weakening of the international working class movement, on the other hand, it laid the foundation for the beginning of the departure of wide sections of workers from the policy of reformism. This departure was expressed in the turn made by the Social-Democratic workers, who until yesterday were under the influence of reformism and who still continue to be so, as well as of non-Party workers, towards bringing about united action to defeat the offensive of the bourgeoisie, fascism and war. After the victory of fascism in Germany, the example of the U.S.S.R., where Socialist society is being built, began in a new way to influence masses of Social-Democratic workers. It is now stimulating ever greater numbers of these workers to seek other paths, non-reformist in character, and this implies that they are primarily seeking contact with and are striving to undertake joint action with the revolutionary vanguard, which in all countries is organized in the Communist Party, and which, throughout the world, follows the path outlined by Lenin and Stalin, the path which leads to the defeat of the bourgeoisie and ensures the victory of Socialism.

Thus, the starting point beginning with 1933 of the turn of the working class in the main capitalist countries, to the united front, was primarily the defensive reaction of the toilers against the danger of fascism directly threatening them. The starting point for united action is the policy of class defense. But at the same time it is also the beginning of the rejection, not only by individual Social-Democratic workers, but also by wide masses of the Social-Democratic and non-Party workers of the policy of the reformists. Thus, unity of action contains within itself elements of a new revolutionary offensive by the working class against the bourgeoisie, and of the growth of a new

upsurge of the struggle, which will develop on the revolutionary road, *i.e.*, will grow into the struggle for power. Herein lies the new feature in the situation, and hence new problems and difficulties arise. But the former will not be solved and the latter will not be overcome, if all the questions which refer to our united front policy are not regarded in the future from a wider point of view than they have been regarded until recently in the practical work of almost all the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries.

Let us say perfectly openly that in the past the tendency very often prevailed of regarding every united front action from a very narrow point of view, and that the united front policy of the Comintern was often understood and operated in a sectarian fashion and exceptionally formally. The consequences of the policy of class collaboration and the influence of reformism in the ranks of the working class were such that they objectively fed the sectarian sentiments among our comrades. But we were also to blame, since we did not always succeed in opportunely finding the necessary forms of action and the corresponding slogans to enable us to come closer to the masses of Social-Democratic workers and to unite with them in the struggle. We made concessions to sectarianism; we did not fight against it as we should have done, we often satisfied ourselves in our activity with results and successes which were of undoubted importance, but which were not decisive, since they did not radically alter the relation to forces between the reformists and Communists in the ranks of the working class. Over a number of years the majority of united front actions, which we succeeded in organizing, in spite of the resistance of the reformist leaders, was in practically all countries of a limited character and of short duration, and covered a small number of Social-Democratic workers. In addition, a tendency prevailed among our comrades quickly to finish recruiting a definite number of these workers into our Party. This mistaken line, which substituted the simple recruitment of individual Social-Democratic workers for the united front policy, continued for a long time to exist in the work of the Communist Parties in many countries, and caused not a little harm. In some cases (I will quote the example of Belgium, where our comrades were unable, even over a definite period to keep those workers in their ranks whom they had recruited), this mistake hindered the Communist Parties from becoming an important political factor. But experience has shown us that in those places where the Communist Party is not an important political factor, even the most favorable conditions for the development of the working class struggle against the bourgeoisie cannot lead to the victory of the proletariat. Especially when and where fascism is on the offensive and begins the struggle for power, and the majority of the working class are still under the influence of reformism, decisive importance is assumed by the turn of the basic masses of the Social-Democratic workers to open anti-fascist struggles alongside the Communist workers. The example of Germany has shown that if such a turn does not take place, if it

is prevented by the policy pursued by the reformist leaders, then mere successes by the Communist Party in recruiting, and in the election campaigns, however considerable they may be, are still insufficient to alter the progress of events; these successes could not prevent the speedy concentration of the reactionary forces which took place in Germany between 1931 and 1933, and determined the defeat of the German proletariat.

I think that the following point is new and important, *viz.*, by united front agreements with the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties certain Communist Parties have succeeded in establishing regular contact, not with small groups of Social-Democratic workers, but with the entire mass of toilers who belong to the Social-Democratic Party, or who are under its influence. And since a lack of faith in the policy of reformism and a striving towards a consistent revolutionary policy are being more and more displayed among all these masses, we are faced with a more considerable, complicated and difficult task than simply recruiting several tens or several hundreds of new Communists. The Communist Party of France, for instance, is now beginning to understand the meaning of calculating, not in tens and hundreds, but in tens and hundreds of thousands. We are faced with the task of not only recruiting hundreds and thousands of new members, but mainly of setting in motion, influencing, and leading great masses of Social-Democratic workers and an ever-growing mass of non-Party workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie, and finally to withdraw these masses from the old reformist path and march with them and at the head of them along the path to the revolution. It is not always possible to take the path directly as along a boulevard path. It is frequently a long and winding path, and sometimes makes it possible to approach the objective by a series of speedy jumps. It is evident that in this new situation we should have and now must make some alterations in our united front tactics. It is clear that we made an alteration in our tactics when we made the proposal to the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties regarding the united front. This alteration was dictated by the necessity of doing everything possible to head the turn towards the united front which has begun among wide masses of the toilers. But this first alteration, which enabled us in some countries to establish wide and new contacts with the Social-Democratic masses, demands of us that we make further steps forward, if we propose to fulfil our role as consistent revolutionary leader of the masses.

Thus it is clear that to the degree that events develop, thanks to the conclusion of united front agreements, we shall inevitably and continually be faced with new political problems, which go far beyond the bounds of the recruitment of new Communists into our ranks and the good organization of our propaganda campaigns (questions which are invariably important and the importance of which I am in no way inclined to underestimate). It is clear that in such a situation, alterations must be made in the forms in which we conduct our polemics, for the

main task is to extend and consolidate the cases where Social-Democratic and non-Party workers are won to the revolutionary united front policy and to establish close contact with them when carrying out joint action. By working and carrying on the struggle to solve this problem we will assist in solving all other problems connected with the development of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries.

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We must immediately make the reservation that if reformism has suffered defeat, it is still far from being finally wiped out. The character of the development of the working class struggle and of the development of the united front in various capitalist countries shows us how strong its hold still is.

Let us examine two of the biggest mass movements that arose in Europe after the victory of Hitler, namely the armed struggle of the Austrian proletariat and the uprising of the toilers in Spain. In Austria, in February, 1933, among the elements which took to arms the influence of Social-Democratic ideology was still very powerful. This prevented them from making and developing the struggle as a real armed struggle for power. In the October days in Spain, where really wide masses of workers and peasants fought to conquer power, the influence of reformism was still to be felt in the entire leadership preparation and leaderships of the movement, and this doomed it to failure.

Let us examine how united action has developed in the last two years.

Formally the united front agreement between the Communist and Socialist Parties exists in only a few of the main countries (France, Austria, Italy). In other countries (Germany, Poland) where the operation of united action between the Communists and Socialists is an urgent necessity for the development of the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie and fascism, it has not been possible to overcome the opposition of the Social-Democratic leadership to the united front policy in spite of all the efforts made by the Communists and the ever-growing desire of the masses for it. In Spain, in spite of the fact that in October, 1934, the Socialists, Communists and Anarchists jointly declared a general strike so as to bar the road to fascism, and in some places fought with arms in their hands on the barricades—none the less, up to the present time, there is no real agreement between the Communist Party and the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party. Let us be still more exact. In Italy, in spite of the fact that the conclusion of an agreement between the Socialist Party and our own Party was of tremendous importance, as it put an end to the bloc which hitherto existed between the Socialist Party and the democratic petty bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the latter, and turned the entire anti-fascist movement in the direction of the leadership of the working class, in spite of all this, the passage from the conclusion of an agreement between the leaders of the two parties to the organization of joint

action by the Socialists and Communists in the country is taking place very slowly. In Austria, the waverings of the Social-Democratic leaders, and the obstacles which they place in the way of the development of the united front, continue to exist. Even in France there is now a strong tendency which is hostile to the united front. This tendency which was almost triumphant at the National Council held in April made itself felt at the recent Socialist Party Congress held in Moulouse. It only retreated when it became convinced that the majority of Socialist workers will not tolerate any manuevers directed towards breaking or sabotaging the united front.

We do not speak of the establishment of the united front on an international scale, since all the proposals and all the efforts made by us hitherto have been without result. Although, the "Left" wing, which was formed in the Second International (at the session of the Executive Committee held in November) included a point in its platform regarding the recognition of the necessity of the united front on a national and international scale, it has to this day not rendered the slightest assistance in bringing it about, whereas the Right wing is more and more energetically opposing any kind of united front policy.

To this day only the first steps have been taken on the road to the united front, but these steps (and especially those that are taking place in France) are so rich in lessons and have given such considerable results that it should be clear to everybody how necessary it is to advance insistently and at all costs with a view to extending and consolidating the successes already achieved and to achieving new ones.

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The experience of the French Communist Party over the last year has primarily shown once again that the masses of the toilers are being convinced of the correctness of our policy, and are following our advice following the line we indicated only on the basis of their own experience. This experience must be an experience gained in the process of action and struggle. And this frequently demands the passage of much time. It is a mistake to consider that it is sufficient to send a united front proposal in the form of an ultimatum to the leaders of Social-Democracy and to register the fact of their rejection of our proposal, it is a mistake to consider that in this way everything has been done to withdraw the worker from under the influence of reformism. We must convince the Social-Democratic workers that we are really striving to bring about joint action, that we are always ready to fight along with them against the bourgeoisie and fascism and that the conclusion of a formal united front agreement with the leaders of their party is the immediate aim which we really wish to bring about (in so far as such an agreement makes joint action possible). To achieve this aim we are prepared, if necessary, to "pay", *i. e.*, to make certain concessions. This implies that especially if our Parties are still a minority in the working class, as compared with Social-Democracy, at a time when the most important thing is to break the ice and begin joint action,

should not insist on second rate questions or prestige and form, but must patiently and insistently continue the struggle for the united front, and not be disturbed by first failures. This means at the same time that we must always know how to concentrate our criticism against the reactionary section of Social-Democracy and those Social-Democratic leaders who struggle against the united front, and attempt to hinder and sabotage it. We must not place the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders and those who are moving to the united front through waverings and doubts in one category, since this keeps the masses of the Social-Democratic workers away from us. This latter remark is of importance today as regard to Spain. Taking into account the present situation of the Spanish Socialist Party, when Largo Caballero, as leader of the Left wing of the party, is being subjected to fierce attacks by the Rights (Saborite, Besteuro and Co.) and the Center (Prietto), it would be a mistake to engage in "pinprick" criticism of him. On the contrary, we must say and show that we energetically support in the ranks of the working class any action taken by Largo Caballero which assists in bringing about the defeat of the reformists and centrists and which brings nearer the operation of the united front.

In not a single country hitherto have the Social-Democratic leaders expressed their willingness to compromise with us on one fundamental point, namely, on the organization of the united front on the basis of committees elected and directly appointed by the masses in the factories, in the villages, in the working class quarters, etc. In this form of the united front the Social-Democratic leaders see some sort of devilish instrument thought out by the Bolsheviks for the purpose of undermining the Social-Democratic Parties. Actually, however, this is not the case. We raise the question of the organization of the united front in this form because, in our opinion, the fulfillment of united action between the Communists and Socialists is still not sufficient to ensure the victory of the working class over fascism and the triumph of the proletarian revolution. The united forces of the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties still do not represent the entire working class, and in some cases do not even represent the majority of the working class. We must utilize the popularity of the united front among the wide masses, so as to draw into the struggle and to organize the non-Party masses, the masses of Catholic workers, anarchist workers, and the working masses who are still under the influence of the bourgeois parties. In the countries where there is a fascist dictatorship, or where there is a wide fascist movement, we must also draw the "fascist" workers into the struggle. As long as we do not achieve these results, the perspectives for the development of the movement in favor of the united front will be limited. One of the reasons for the defeat of the working class in Austria and Spain was the fact that wide masses of toilers stood aside from the struggle at the time when the advanced elements took to the streets and resorted to arms. And this took place because there was no wide movement in favor of the

united front, organized on the basis of committees directly connected with the masses. Had such a movement existed, the call to struggle would have directly touched hundreds of thousands of toilers; what is more, these toilers would have been to a certain extent organized for the struggle, and when entering the fight would have been able not only to undertake action against the class enemy, but also to put an end to the waverings of the leaders at the decisive moments. The existence of a network of united front committees directly linked up with the masses is a guarantee of victory, just as the existence of the Soviets of the proletarian revolution in October. It is, therefore, incorrect to again reorganize the *Alliance Obrero*, as is now being done in Spain (and also with what waverings and in face of what obstacles!), exclusively on the basis of committees which only include certain leading elements of the local Party and trade union organizations. If the *Alliance Obrero* is organized in this way, it will be insufficient to rouse the energy and initiative of the masses, and to lead them in correspondence with the tasks which face the Spanish proletariat in the future serious battles against their powerful enemy, who is armed to the teeth. Why repeat the mistake committed in October, and which cost the Spanish toilers so dear?

We must, therefore, with unweakening determination, insist that the united front agreement should contain a point about the organization of united front committees elected directly by the masses. We, quite naturally, also recognize any other form of organization if it makes it possible for the first steps to be taken towards united action, and action by really wide masses. But in the process of the movement, all our efforts must be directed towards establishing united front bodies, which will serve to draw into action and to organize ever more numerous masses and which will ensure the development of the initiative of these masses in the struggle.

The questions which I have raised refer exclusively to our relations with Social-Democracy and its organizations. But the successes of the united front, which multiply the strength and determination of the working class in the struggle against the bourgeoisie inevitably raise the question of extending the sphere of the struggle, for this struggle at a certain point can no longer remain a defensive struggle, but must develop as a struggle for power. This implies, in other words, that the successes of the united front speed up the process of the ripening of the revolutionary situation. On the basis of these successes which give the proletariat the consciousness of their own power, the problem of the struggle for power also faces those masses who till yesterday were and partly are still under the influence of reformist ideology and policy. At the same time the most reactionary groups of the bourgeoisie organize and continue their offensive, and the necessity for the struggle against fascism becomes ever sharper. The united front bars the way to fascism but only the victorious struggle of the proletariat for power can finally prevent the victory of fascism. How to prepare this struggle, how to direct and lead the forces



of the proletariat, how to create the conditions which will ensure the victorious outcome of this struggle? These are new problems which now arise in certain countries. To solve them, there is no doubt that we shall have in the near future to work in an ever wider arena.

The first problem which has arisen in connection with the development of the united front in France is as far as possible to draw all the forces of the proletariat into the struggle, and to rally their reserves. It is by no means an easy thing to solve this problem in France. A simple calculation of the number of workers, members of the Communist and Socialist Parties, as well as of the two big trade union organizations (the General Confederation of Labor and the General Unitary Confederation of Labor) gives us only a minority of the proletariat. Great masses of workers are politically still under the influence of the bourgeoisie, for whom they vote when elections take place. The bourgeois parties, both Right and Left, have a very wide and firm base in the village and among the town petty bourgeoisie; the fascists are winning support among these people, and account must be taken of them. A point which is very much in our favor is the fact that revolutionary traditions exist, based on memories of the Great French bourgeois revolution and of the revolutionary movement of the century completed by the Paris Commune. But the greatest importance is assumed by the fact that the dissatisfaction of wide masses of toilers who are seeing more and more clearly the offensive being conducted by the bourgeoisie, the masses are afraid of the victory of fascism and are determined to prevent it. In such a state of things, the anti-fascist struggle can be organized only on the basis of the defense of the day-to-day economic interests of the toilers and the defense of the bourgeois-democratic liberties?

Why do we defend bourgeois democratic liberties?

Primarily because we, the Party of the working class, have no other interests than those of the entire proletariat. We are quite well aware that however reactionary the real essence of the bourgeois democratic regime it is still better for the working class than open fascist dictatorship, where all possibilities for the legal organization of the working class and legal defense of their interests are destroyed. We can not remain unmoved in face of the efforts of the most reactionary groups of the bourgeoisie to do away with the last remnants of bourgeois democratic liberties.

The defense of these liberties is necessary precisely so that the vanguard of the working class may show these non-proletarian elements that only the conquest of power by the workers, only the dictatorship of the proletariat, can ensure the liberties of the people. Of this, it should be added, we need to convince the great majority of the workers who are still far from being Communist.

These elementary truths of Marxism and Leninism need to be constantly drawn to the attention of those comrades who as a result of sectarianism have forgotten them and have taken the view that fascism has

already been crushed, that the majority of the proletariat have already been won over, whereas this is far from being the case. It is precisely these truths that guided our French comrades when they raised the question of people's front. There is no doubt that the things that our French comrades are doing in this sphere are of importance not only for France; their experience will serve as a lesson and as guiding lines for other parties as well. But a few remarks need to be made so as to avoid hasty and mechanical conclusions.

First, in their action in organizing the anti-fascist people's front, the French Communists base themselves on the results achieved in the organization of the united front between the Communists and Socialists. At the foundation of the people's front there lies the unity of action between the Communists and Socialists, who are primarily workers and who are marching together to fulfil their common class tasks. This is a guarantee that is already ensuring to a certain degree the leadership of the proletariat over the petty bourgeois elements. This is not understood by the Spanish Left Socialists, some of whom at the present moment are against the organization of a broad people's front which will also include the Republican petty bourgeoisie as well. They regard this people's front as a return to the political *bloc* of the "14th of April", (the day when the Republic was declared in 1931). However, in the bloc of the "14th of April" the leadership was in the hands of the bourgeoisie, while the proletariat dragged at the tail. In the people's front which we propose to organize, the leading force must be the proletariat. But this can be brought about only if the Socialist Party follows the policy of the united front with the Communists. On the other hand, in those places where the working class does not undertake wide activity, the people's front there must risk of remaining an agitational formula with no links with reality. The most interesting example of this is the election to the senate in the Seine Department (Paris) in 1927. At these elections the Communists supported certain Left bourgeois candidates against the candidates of the Right, but this brought practically no results, and even compromised the Communist Party with being of any advantage. Now, however, the support in certain cases of the candidates of the Radicals against the fascists, and the contact established in the people's front with a section of the petty bourgeois Left political organization are the result of and the completion of a wide movement in favor of the united front which began and in fact developed under the predominating influence of the Communists. Thus this contact with a section of the Radicals has given a great spurt forward to the struggle against fascism: it has brought new sections of the toiling masses closer to the working class and to the revolutionary struggle, and has led to a sharpening of the contradictions in the camp of the bourgeoisie.

Second, the extension of the front of the anti-fascist struggle against the bourgeoisie as a result of mobilizing ever wider sections of workers and of ever greater reserves of the proletariat cannot fail to lead to an extension of the aims of the struggle. Partial economic and political

demands are now insufficient. To achieve a successful defense against the offensive of the bourgeoisie and fascism more advanced demands have to be brought forward. The demands must be directed towards shaking the power of the capitalist groups, who are masters of the bourgeois state and who arm the fascist bands, toward breaking up the forces of the fascist organizations and towards ensuring new powerful positions for the working class. In each country these demands will have a different content, depending on the concrete conditions and on the degree to which the struggle has developed, but at all points they must be demands of a transitory character which open the way for the struggle for power. If we do not carry on agitation for demands of such a character, this is not merely a tactical mistake. This renders it easier for the reactionary section of Social-Democracy to deceive the masses of the workers, to put a brake on their struggle, and once again to tie the workers to the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The Belgian example is a sufficiently clear one. In January and February of this year, such a situation arose that if we had led the movement begun by the miners to the point of a strike, if new sections of toilers had entered the struggle, a very sharp situation would have been speedily created when the working class would inevitably have been faced with the question of power. The Social-Democratic leaders tried all possible ways to avoid such a turn of events, which was dangerous both to the bourgeoisie and to themselves. They utilized all means possible, and first and foremost prevented the establishment of a united front with the Communists. At the same time, by their campaign in favor of the de Man plan they filled the workers with the idea that Social-Democracy was about to solve very "advanced" problems, and to alter the "structure of the capitalist system . . . without a revolution". By covering themselves in this way, they put a stop to the real struggle of the masses against the bourgeoisie and made it possible for themselves to return to their old policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the government of National Unity. As against the de Man plan our comrades set their struggle for the immediate demands of all categories of the toiling masses and our program of Soviet power. All this was good and correct (there is no place here to speak of the serious mistakes of a sectarian character committed by the Belgian Communist Party over a period of many years). But their struggle would have been more successful had they been able to set against the "planned" demagogy of the Social-Democracy a program of political and economic demands which could be understood and accepted by the workers, who are as yet not in favor of Soviets (unfortunately, the majority of workers in Belgium are still of this kind), demands which would appear to the workers as being capable of realization and the contents of which would be a real step forward into struggle to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the working class.

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Have we a perspective of the movement for the united front growing into a struggle for power, and what, in our opinion, will be the role played

in it by Social-Democracy? What will be the perspective of the development of Social-Democracy in the coming revolutionary crisis, the conditions for which are maturing throughout the capitalist world?

We must first of all take account of the fact that the reactionary forces still hold sway in the Second International as a whole. We have no ground for anticipating that Social-Democracy as a whole will in the next revolutionary crisis play a role different from that which it played in the past. We must, however, foresee the point that we shall come to this revolutionary crisis by weakening the hold of reformism over the working class. We must therefore foresee an intensification of the process of the differentiation and crisis of Social-Democracy, a process thanks to which there are now Social-Democratic Parties which are fighting with us on the basis of united front agreements whereas other Social-Democratic Parties are collaborating with the bourgeoisie and consider the Communists their main enemies. It is impossible for us now to foresee to what limit this differentiation will go. It is, however, not excluded that at moments of sharp struggle considerable sections even of Social-Democratic organizations will be on our side, at moments when the question will be decided by the general strike, by uprising, by arms, and by barricades. The Socialist Federation of Asturias was a Social-Democratic organization, but it stood at the head (along with the Communists) of the armed struggle in which the workers fought for power. In these cases the problem of leadership will stand out sharply. To resort to violence as a means of struggle against fascism still does not mean that reformism, its influence and its methods which inevitably lead to the defeat of the proletariat have been completely overcome. To convince oneself of this, it is enough to call to mind the history of the leadership of the armed struggle of the toilers of Asturias by three revolutionary committees which followed one after the other and in which the Socialists played a predominating and decisive role (while the Communists were not always able to free themselves from their influence). This history, it is true, cannot as yet be fully published, but no one can deny that the leaders of the revolt in Asturias showed an absence of determination and faith in the forces of the proletariat, and displayed a complete inability to apply the principles of the leadership of the proletarian uprising, principles laid down by Marx, Lenin and Stalin, principles which are a component part of Bolshevism. We must stress the fact once again and in the most energetic fashion, that the only real guarantee of the victory of the working class over the bourgeoisie at all moments of the struggle and especially at the decisive moments is that fact that a Bolshevik Party exists which will never refuse to fulfil its functions of leadership and to assume its revolutionary initiative. And we insist on this point of view when as a result of the successes of united action, the problem arises of the organization of the united working class party. This problem cannot be passed by. It has inevitably been raised by the whole trend of events. Many leaders of Social-Democracy have raised and are now raising the question of a united party so as to avoid the necessity of

carrying through the policy of united action and to maneuver against it. This is not the case with us. As far as we are concerned, the perspective of establishing a united revolutionary party of the proletariat becomes absolutely real to the extent that we succeed, with the aid of the united front policy, in defeating the reactionary section of Social-Democracy and in compelling it to retreat; to the extent that we succeed in inflicting defeat on reformism in the ranks of the working class. A united party of the working class must be a party completely free and for ever from any direct or indirect influence of reformism, and this implies complete liberation from all direct or indirect influence of the bourgeoisie. To create such a party we fought by breaking in the post-war period reformism and all those who wished to maintain contacts with it. We are fighting now, and we shall continue to fight for such a party.

# At the Turn

*(Speech delivered at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International)*

By J. R. CAMPBELL

COMRADES, Comrade Pieck's report, covering, as it does, seven years in the life of the Comintern, is of the utmost importance for the whole international struggle of the working class. It was no easy task for Comrade Pieck to summarize in a report the tremendous developments of these seven years, the profound transformation which has taken place in the Soviet Union, the development of the world economic crisis and of its economic, social and political consequences, the coming to power of fascism in a number of countries, the opening of a new round of wars and revolutions, and the developing crisis in Social-Democracy.

Comrade Pieck's report was an important contribution to an understanding of those developments and will be helpful to all Sections of the Comintern. Yet the British delegation got the impression that there might have been in Comrade Pieck's report a more fundamental examination of the international line as expressed in the various plenums since the Sixth World Congress, a more fundamental examination of how that international line has been developed to meet the changing circumstances. In some respects also, perhaps a sharper defense of that international line against the criticisms which have been levelled upon it and an examination of whether the formulations of the line and the supervision of its carrying out were effective both on the part of the individual Sections of the Communist International and on the part of the Executive Committee. It goes without saying that the Executive Committee must examine its own work in those seven years in the same objective spirit as it examines the work of the various Parties. Of course, there will be no tendencies in this Congress which deny that the decisions of these seven years were as a whole correct. If there is such a tendency, the British delegation will do all in its power to combat it. But there is much more than merely arriving at correct decisions. A decision may be correct, but belated, so that valuable time has been lost in approaching the working class and in leading them forward to a more decisive point of the struggle. A decision may be on the whole correct, but certain formulations of that decision can be giving rise to wrong tendencies which destroy its essence. So we must, in our opinion, in examining the line of seven years, not merely discuss whether the decisions were on the whole correct, but whether they were timely and whether the E.C.C.I. supervised the carrying out of those

decisions in such a way as to prevent harmful distortions. On the question of whether the E.C.C.I. supervised the decisions in all respects, there is a question of our trade union work. No one, I think, can read the report of the Executive without coming to the conclusion that, in overcoming very dangerous Right-wing lines in our trade union work, there grew up many examples of sectarianism, which continued to hamper our trade union work for a number of years and which still continue in a measure to hamper our trade union work.

We cannot say that this sectarianism was an isolated tendency in one or two Parties of the Comintern. It was, on the whole, a tendency almost as universal as a Right-wing tendency, of which, of course, it is, in a measure, the product. Now, sectarianism in our trade union work based itself fundamentally—or theoretically—on two things: on the Strassburg Resolution on strike strategy, and on a distortion of the theory of social fascism as applied to the trade unions.

I don't think there can be any question in this Congress but that the decision on the independent leadership of economic struggles was absolutely correct and any tendencies to suggest that this Congress, in making a more flexible approach to trade union work, is returning to the position previous to 1928, is giving up its position with regard to the independent leadership of economic struggles by the workers—any suggestion of that kind will have to be ruthlessly opposed by this Congress.

Nevertheless, there were certain formulations in the Strassburg Resolution which did give rise to sectarian distortions of the policy of independent leadership of economic struggles. There was an underestimation of the possibilities of utilizing the lower organs of the reformist trade unions. There was an underestimation of united front tactics with reformist workers, in the course of the carrying out of a strike.

Can the Executive Committee really say that the entire responsibility for this rests on the individual Parties? Can the Executive Committee really say that in a timely fashion it took the initiative in correcting those tendencies? Our own experience in Great Britain was that, two years after the Strassburg Resolution was passed, it was being imposed upon us in Great Britain as being fundamentally correct in all particulars and in all its formulations. We will deal with that at a later stage, but we are suggesting at this moment that the Executive, in addition to criticizing the tendencies around this in the individual Parties, must examine how it reacted to the question and whether it corrected the tendencies in sufficiently good time.

Then, there are a number of questions in connection with the application of the united front which we believe will have to be discussed a little more thoroughly and a little more fundamentally than Comrade Pieck did. With the Trotskyist and Brandlerist suggestions that the united front from above and below could have been operated in

those years, 1925-1932, we can have nothing to do, but when the circumstances changed, did the Executive ensure that the change was carried out in all the Parties with the necessary vigor? Did the Parties, when the change was carried out, react sufficiently to that change and carry it out in a vigorous fashion?

It would be interesting to survey the position of the various Parties from the moment we changed, at the beginning of 1933. It is clear that we would have to record for the first year of the change, in most of the Parties, that the united front tactic was carried out in a half-hearted fashion, that we did not utilize all our opportunities and that valuable time was wasted and the possibilities of accelerating the crisis of Social-Democracy were not taken full advantage of.

If we look at the report, we will see the beginning of the change in our united front tactics, in the approach of the various district organizations of the German Party in Berlin on June 16, 1932, to the corresponding organizations of the Social-Democratic Party and of the reformist trade unions. We will find that tactic carried a little further in the united front offer of our fraction in the Prussian Landtag to the Social-Democratic fraction. We will find it carried a stage further in the united front offer made on a national scale to the center of the reformist trade union at the time of the coup. Here was the beginning of a big change in our international tactic of the united front—a change that was soon to be applied throughout the whole International.

Can we say that, from this time to the coming to power of Hitler, this change was carried through energetically in Germany in such a way as to strengthen the united front tendencies of the Social-Democratic workers, were the other Parties in the Comintern conscious that a change was beginning in relation to the tactics of the united front?

The British delegation would remind the Congress that the Twelfth Plenum took place between the time of our approach to the German Social-Democracy, in mid-summer 1932, and the coming to power of Hitler, at the beginning of 1933. And yet it is difficult for us to say at the moment that the discussions on the development of our united front tactics occupy an important place in the deliberations of the Twelfth Plenum. Can we say that in this situation the individual Sections were reacting sufficiently speedily to the change in circumstances at this time? At any rate, we raise the question for the Congress to discuss. It must be discussed: there can be no question of passing it over as if it simply does not exist.

In our opinion, it is unfortunate that the International declaration on the united front of March followed a declaration of the L.S.I. of a similar character. We know that the L.S.I. proposals were a maneuver to prevent the united front. It is unfortunate, however, that we did not anticipate them.

It was correct, however, in the opinion of the British delegation, that the E.C.C.I., in its reply, should have laid stress on national negotiations for the united front, rather than entering into international negotiations of a long-term character. At that period it was important



to develop the united front speedily and on a national basis, and entrance into international negotiations would have retarded the important developments which subsequently took place in France and elsewhere.

The British delegation was also pleased to note the point raised in Comrade Pieck's speech about the necessity of more frequent consultation with the Sections.

We know that, in a number of individual Sections, there were hesitation and confusion for a time on the question of the U.S.S.R. joining the League of Nations and of the signing of the Mutual Assistance Pact. And we know further that an examination of our press will show that, for at least a week after the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet Pact, there was, in the British press, in the American press, perhaps less in the French press—but still, in the French press—hesitations and confusion on this question.

I believe it is a tribute of Bolshevik maturity of the Sections of the Comintern that, on the whole, the reaction was made quickly and correctly to this development. Nevertheless, the Executive has no right to bank exclusively on the Bolshevik maturity of its individual Sections. Therefore we welcome the statement of Comrade Pieck on behalf of the Executive that there will be more frequent consultations with the Parties in the future.

Last, we think that the situation in Germany since Hitler came to power requires a more fundamental review than was possible for Comrade Pieck to make in his speech, and we are sure that either Comrade Dimitroff, or some leading German comrade, will give us that more fundamental review. The support of the German workers by our Party becomes one of our most fundamental duties. The whole International at the present moment is very anxious to have a careful examination of our German comrades so that the Congress can understand fully what they are doing and be in a better position to give them help in the immediate future.

We believe that it would be a mistake that if there grew up any tendency in any of our Parties to concentrate attention on the very important events that are taking place in France at this moment, to the great successes that are being obtained in France, and neglecting what is happening in Germany at the present moment.

In my own personal opinion, the reaction of some of our Parties to the recent terror wave in Germany, particularly the terror wave launched against those comrades who were engaged in rebuilding the unions, leaves much to be desired, and yet, here we had great possibilities of developing a strong campaign in conjunction with the workers in the reformist unions. The more energetically we are turning against the Hitler government as the principal instigator of war, the more energetically we turn against the British government, which has been giving support to Hitler, the more powerful must our solidarity be with the German workers, and the more should be our understanding of what is taking place in that country at the present moment.

Before turning to the British situation, I should like to say that the British delegation can say that the Executive Committee has given splendid assistance to the British Party throughout the entire period under review, assistance which has enabled us in many respects to get closer to the masses and to obtain very good results. There can be no doubt at the present moment of the importance of Great Britain in the general international situation. We are in the midst of an eve of war situation and, next to the war-like powers like Germany and Japan, Britain is one of the most important centers of war-like incitement at the present moment. There can be no question about it that Germany and Japan could not have developed to the stage that they have if it had not been for the continual support of the British bourgeoisie—financial support for the purchase of munitions, political support in the League of Nations and elsewhere, diplomatic encouragement in every possible way. And Great Britain stands today as the chief supporter of those powers who are bent on provoking an immediate outbreak of war.

Great Britain is also today the chief center of resistance to the united front of the working class on an international scale. The British Labor Party is the strongest Party resisting the extension of that united front, and there is no doubt whatsoever that, if changes could be brought about in the situation in Great Britain, it would have a great effect on the Scandinavian Social-Democratic Parties and other of the parties of the smaller countries which are resisting the extension of the united front.

What is the actual situation in Britain today? A few days ago the British Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, delivered a speech, the main theme of which was that, while there were still some problems left in Great Britain, Great Britain, on the whole, was the best country in the entire world for any worker to be living in at the present moment. And he painted a rosy picture of the past progress and the future developments in Great Britain. If one went all over Britain at the present time, one would find in every advertisement board big posters of the National Government, describing how it has wrested Britain from the crisis and put it on the high road to prosperity again.

On what are those assertions based? They are based, in the first place, on the fact that Great Britain has already reached its pre-crisis level of production. Production today in Great Britain is on the level that it was before the crisis. There has also been a fairly steady increase in the profits of the bourgeoisie in Great Britain in recent years. In the year ending June, 1934, the profits increased 12 per cent over the 1933 figures, and in the year which ended in June, 1935, they increased 19.5 per cent over the previous year's figures.

But the other side of the picture is that British imperialism did not go crashing into the depression from the height of a powerful boom, as was the case in the United States and other countries, but, rather, slid into the crisis from a depression which had lasted for ten years

and which had fundamentally affected all the basic industries of Great Britain. And if we take the actual production figures in Britain at the present time, and compare them not with what they were previous to the crisis but what they were previous to the European war, one finds that the production figures today have practically only reached the level that they had reached in 1913. That is to say, after 21 years, after new inventions, after technical progress, British capitalist production has only reached the level of wealth production that it had reached in the year 1913.

The other side of the bright picture is the presence of a hard core of more than two million unemployed, which it seems to be difficult to reduce by any measure now at the command of the British bourgeoisie. There has just been published a report of the National Government on what are known as the derelict areas—the depressed areas—of Great Britain. Those are great centers of former heavy industry, of flourishing coal and iron and steel and ship-building industry. Today, from those centers in South Wales and the northeast coast, all industrial life has fled. Not a factory, not a pit, not a steel works, not an industrial enterprise of any kind is going at the present time. There are, in those centers, in some cases, a majority of the youth who have grown up, from when they left school at 14 years of age until they have reached manhood, without ever having done a day's productive work. And, at the very moment that Baldwin was making his optimistic predictions of the bright future that awaited British imperialism, the Commissioner appointed by the Baldwin Government was outlining the desperate plight of those areas and saying that the present state of the depressed areas is due, in the main, to economic and international factors which are beyond human control. And so, the other side of the picture of prosperity is the side of the chronic unemployment, the chronic underutilization of the industrial enterprises, the terrible depression which hangs over basic industries like coal and cotton, the hundreds of thousands of unemployed youth for whom imperialism can offer no future, the derelict areas from which all work and hope have fled.

Nevertheless, there has been a certain improvement in the recent past, and it is not excluded that British industrial production, on the basis of the huge rearmament program of the National Government, may yet reach a slightly higher level. Does this mean that Britain is going into a period of stabilization? The answer is—No. And the reason for answering in the negative can be seen, if we discuss some of the ways in which that improvement has been brought about. It has been brought about, for example, by squeezing the colonies. In 1932 and 1933, particularly, colonies like India were squeezed through the forcing down of the prices of agricultural goods and raw materials, and finally squeezed out of some of their hoarded supplies of silver and gold, in order to stabilize the currency situation in Britain. It is an improvement which has been brought about by the British bourgeoisie engaging in ferocious trade rivalries against its enemies, in currency warfare, in

erecting high tariffs around the British Empire, in subsidies to British enterprises, etc.

And so, we can say, the British imperialists have contributed enormously to the war-like situation by the policy of economic warfare they have carried on.

It has been accomplished, in the third place, by the intensified exploitation of the working class. This applies not merely to reduced wages, though there have been reductions in wages in Great Britain, but has been accomplished still more by the fierce rationalization process that is going on in British industry in the course of the crisis and that is still intensified. The British worker today is probably, on an average, producing 25 per cent more than he was producing in 1929.

In a whole series of basic industries, safety precautions are being neglected as they have never been neglected in Great Britain since the early years of the nineteenth century. We can only refer to the terrible neglect of every-day precautions in the mining industry in Cressford, which led to the great pit disaster which destroyed the lives of 200 miners. We can refer to the fact that at the present moment Wrecks Inquiries Proceedings are being held as to the reasons for the loss of British ships at sea and in a number of cases it has been shown that the ship-owners have sent ships to sea poorly equipped, steerage equipment out of order, etc. With reference to the railways also, there is a mounting death rate owing to the speed-up, the rationalization and the neglect of safety precautions.

But the other side of the picture is that there is developing against this a powerful movement of the British miners that is passing to the offensive. In 1934, practically every section of the British working class was applying for increased wages, in some cases the restoration of the cuts of 1931, in others a further increase in wages. It is true that the bourgeoisie bought off this movement to some extent by making concessions to most of the workers, except in mining and in textile. But those concessions have in no way hindered the development of the movement; on the contrary, they have led to powerful recruitment to the trade unions, to a growth of a militant spirit in the factories, to the growth of organization in the factories, and to a wide wave of new demands for a further increase in wages and shortening of hours.

It is in this situation that the British Party is seeking to apply the tactics of the united front at the present moment. The British Party has had very rich experiences in the application of the tactics of the united front. In the period from 1928 to 1933 we were seeking to apply the united front from below. What were the mistakes we were making in this period? First, we had to deal with the Right-wing tendency that the only perspective for the united front was to continue to work in the Labor Party, to continue to work in the reformist trade unions, subordinating the work of the Party to reformist discipline and reformist policy in both of those fields. It was absolutely necessary that the Party

should make a change in this respect and should get rid of the leadership who express this policy.

But, in applying the united front from below, after having changed our policy, there were many sectarian traits in our approach to the Social-Democratic workers. Sometimes, we asked them to accept criticisms of the Social-Democratic leaders as a condition for participation in the united front. Other times the slogans on which we approached them were slogans which the Communists were interested in rather than slogans which grew out of the immediate needs of the workers as expressed in their daily struggle. And when, in 1933, we appealed to the Labor Party for the united front from above and below, we showed, on the whole, an underestimation of the necessity for a daily fight in every locality for the achieving of the united front, of continual approach to the Social-Democratic workers in the unions, in the cooperatives, in the Trades Councils, as well as exchange of letters between our Party organizations and the Labor Party organizations. And we lost a lot of valuable time in 1933 because Party members came to the conclusion: We have approached the Labor Party; they have turned down the united front; we can do nothing about it except expose them and denounce them as enemies of the united front. We did not see that it was necessary to carry on daily the fight for the united front, utilizing all possibilities we had in this connection. Nevertheless, when we corrected these tendencies, we can say that the united front opened out considerable possibilities for the British Party and led to some success in mass work.

In conjunction with the Independent Labor Party, it enabled us to develop the great hunger march in the spring of 1934. Into this hunger march there were drawn all parts of Britain, sections of Trades Councils, hundreds of trade union branches participating in this march in direct defiance of the orders of the trade union executives and the General Council of the Trade Union Congress. Nevertheless, we found in the course of the development of the united front that we were against several barriers. Labor Party workers said: we do not believe you Communists are sincere in this united front business because if you were sincere you would be prepared to arrive at united front with us during elections instead of opposing us all along the line as you do at the present moment. As a reaction to this criticism, we had to develop the united front tactic a stage further, to embrace united front work in elections.

We can say that that tactic brought immediate results because, when at the beginning of this year the government sought to apply the second part of the Unemployment Act, we were able, on the basis of our united front electoral tactics, to make approaches to new strata of Social-Democratic workers, to bring in Labor Councillors who had never participated in united front actions before, to bring in trade union branches which had never participated before, and to develop the united front on a still broader scale, on a scale which led to the development

of mighty mass movements in South Wales, in Scotland and the North East Coast, above all, in the most important center of the war industry, Sheffield. There, mass movements reached such a character that the National Government was shaken for a period and began to talk about the necessity of a more vigorous policy, etc. We believe that, on the basis of this experience, on the basis of the self-criticism of some of the defects of this experience, it will be possible to still develop our united front tactics, and Comrade Pollitt will speak on this at a later stage of the Congress proceedings.

In the trade union movement, the correct application of the united front tactics has enabled us to strengthen our position considerably. At the time of the Sixth Congress, we were working with a number of Left workers in the Minority Movement, as a militant movement working within the reformist trade unions and basing our whole policy on the slogan of "Make the leaders fight". It was necessary to make a change in this policy. But, in changing from this policy to the policy of an independent leadership, we interpreted this policy in a rather sectarian fashion. We interpreted it not as independence from the top leaders who are leading the unions, but as independent from the lower organs of the trade unions, of the trade union branches, of the trade union work-shop organizations, and we interpreted this as meaning root and branch opposition to the lower trade union officials, characterizing them as reformists of the same caliber as the leaders of the trade union movement itself.

It was only after those tactics had led to a measure of isolation that we realized that independent leadership was only possible if based on strong positions in the lower organs of the trade union movement, and undoubtedly the Comintern helped us considerably in making this necessary change. It was also necessary to combat the idea of some of our comrades that work in the reformist unions was becoming more and more impossible. It was true that by 1930 many of our comrades in the reformist unions were being threatened with expulsion, and this gave rise to the opinion that it was becoming less and less possible to work in the reformist unions. This opinion was based on a very great overestimation of the strength of the bureaucracy and an underestimation of the radicalization of the rank and file workers and of their willingness in the process of fighting capitalist offensive to defend democracy in the lower organs of the trade unions.

From the beginning of 1932, with the assistance of the Comintern, we changed this policy. We worked to conquer the lower organs of the unions for a militant policy; we worked to associate the militant branches within a given union and with the shop stewards' organization in pursuit of a common policy, and we immediately began to get a measure of success. We have in a number of unions developed rank-and-file movements and there are important differences between these rank-and-file movements and the old Minority Movement or opposition movement which we were trying to develop previously. The Minority Movement

was constructed, for example, in such a way that it appeared as a body outside of the trade unions, dictating to the trade unions as to what they had to do. But the new rank-and-file movement is a grouping of militant branches and shop stewards springing out of the growing life of the unions themselves and expressing all the militant and progressive tendencies of the rank and file. The old Minority Movement, and this applies to opposition groups in many countries, was a movement of close Communist sympathizers, many of them people who ought to have been in the Party if they had been prepared to accept Party discipline. It repeated not only all that the Party said on questions of immediate demands; but it repeated all the Party said on the seizure of power, of a revolutionary workers' government, and so on.

The new rank-and-file movement is a broader movement of the workers; it embraces the workers willing to fight for immediate demands that will carry the struggle forward and express the needs of the workers. Further, the rank-and-file movements are better adapted to the level of development of the various sections of the workers. They do not start out as the old Minority Movement did, with the presupposition that the workers of all industries have reached the same level of development and the same type of program will do for them all. The rank-and-file movement is more flexible; it could adapt itself to the actual level of the workers, which in a given situation, varies from industry to industry. The old Minority Movement also had an apparatus outside the trade-union movement and appeared as an alternative apparatus to that of the unions. This enabled the officials to raise the question of loyalty and discipline and to ask "to which apparatus are you loyal, to the one you have elected inside the union, or the one which is set up outside the union". This made it easier for the bureaucracy to isolate the militant workers inside the unions. It is not so easy with the rank-and-file movements, because they grow up from within the unions and cannot be open to the same charge and can defend themselves against expulsion tactics in a way that rallies a greater amount of support than the old form of opposition movement could.

Does this mean that we have given up the idea of independent leadership of economic struggles, and that we are now concentrating on the old form of pressure on the bureaucracy? It must be said that it is quite impossible in the present situation to give up the idea of independent leadership of economic struggles. What is the situation in Britain at the present moment?

A big rationalization offensive is being carried out in all industries and it is quite possible, in a whole series of industries, for the employers in individual factories and sections of industry to carry out that rationalization offensive without in any way violating either the letter or the spirit of the trade-union agreement which the union has with the employers. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that the workers, in defending themselves against the rationalization offensive, must be prepared to take action where that action is nominally against the agree-

ment which the bureaucracy has signed with the official leaders of the union. But, in a country of strong trade unionism, it is impossible to develop action independent of the top bureaucracy without a powerful inner union campaign. And, an integral feature of that powerful inner union campaign is the development of pressure on the bureaucracy. We cannot counterpose the two. The development of pressure on the bureaucracy from within the unions is the necessary condition for creating the prerequisites for any action independent of the bureaucracy. Further, it is absolutely necessary for independent leadership to have the powerful support of the lower organs of the trade-union movement.

But a still more notable feature of a flexible Left-wing movement is the development of proper work by the Party fraction. In the old Minority Movement, the Party trade-union leadership consisted of a special group of Party comrades who specialized in trade-union work, who tended to live somewhat apart from the general political life of the Party, to develop tendencies toward trade-union specialism. And many Party members did not regard it as being their duty to gather the militant forces within the trade-union movement and lead them forward to the development of the struggle. Now we must have the conception that the entire membership of the Party within a given industry must be mobilized in the Party fraction, organized in the factory cells, organized in the branch fractions, in contact as individuals with the sub-District fraction leadership, with the District fraction leadership, with the National leadership, so that in every phase of our trade-union work the central responsibility for leading our trade-union fractions is not a group of specialized comrades, but the leading organs of the Party, the Central Committee and the Districts, the sub-Districts, etc., working through the fractions as instruments for carrying out that leadership within the rank-and-file movements and within the trade unions.

We find that it is absolutely necessary, not only that we should have this continual Party leadership of these movements from within, but that that Party leadership shall be flexible, that it shall avoid hanging on to old slogans after those old slogans have become obsolete.

We suffered a serious loss of tempo last year in the railway industry, due to the fact that, at the moment when the railroad workers were surging forward, our Party fraction and our Party leadership as a whole did not adapt itself quickly enough to the changing situation and continued to adhere to slogans which were out of touch with the immediate needs and were unreal in the eyes of the masses engaged in struggle.

In our opinion, in Britain, in Europe generally, and in the U.S.A., we are on the wave of big economic and political movements. The tempo of the working class struggle is rising. A series of local struggles are the harbingers of the coming great mass struggles in countries like Great Britain, and in this movement of advance, the ordinary reformist worker is getting more and more annoyed with the restrictions imposed upon him and his activity by the trade-union bureaucracy. That



has been shown in Great Britain by the defeat of the Black Circular, which denies the right of Communists to stand for union office, in some of the most decisive unions—and not only so, but the defeat in unions like the Engineering Union and in unions like the Miners' Union of attempts on the part of the bureaucracy further to strengthen their power as against the rank and file.

We see the prospects for the development of a broad, Left, militant movement within the reformist movement, under the leadership of our Party, as being exceptionally good and as being exceptionally important in the period that lies immediately before us.

Now, a word on the state of our Party. Our Party has increased its membership by 33 per cent since the beginning of this year. That is a fairly good advance as far as our Party is concerned. We have 3,200 members who work actively in the reformist trade unions; we have, according to the figures before me, 448 Party members who hold trade-union office of some kind in the reformist unions in all the districts outside London. The London figures are not available in this report that I have, but on my own knowledge of the London district, I should say that the inclusion of the London district in those figures would show that at least 600 of our Party members are holding trade union office of some kind, either in the branches, the district committees, and, in one or two exceptional cases, in the executives of the reformist trade unions in Great Britain. And yet our membership in Great Britain continues to be very small. Our total membership is only 7,700—a membership that is not only altogether inadequate to our tasks, but is altogether an inadequate expression of the influence we have already won in sections of the British working class movement.

Why is the British Party so small at the present moment? Of course, there are objective difficulties inside Great Britain. There is, for example, the historic fact that the trade unions developed before the political labor movement, that the political labor movement is, to a large extent, the reformist trade union bureaucracy, and certain sections of the petty bourgeoisie dominating the trade unions in a political sense. The average trade unionist feels, in many districts, that his union is sufficient for everything, that by being a member of his union, paying his industrial contribution on the one side, paying his political contribution to the political funds of the union on the other side, he is doing all that is necessary in the way of actively participating in politics. And we have found, in our association with the Rank and File Movement, that many trade unionists, who are by no means out-and-out reformists, who, on many occasions, support our Party within the unions, are of this opinion—that the trade union expressing itself politically and industrially is sufficient for all purposes and there is no need for any further political party. We have got to meet this situation, and when Comrade Pollitt at a later stage deals with certain aspects, in developing our united front work, he will deal with this important aspect on united front work.

Undoubtedly, our Party has done good work in individual spheres.

It has participated in various important mass movements, but our Party does not yet appear before the masses in Britain as the political leadership on all questions which vitally affect the British working class. We appear to many workers as a group of good militants working within the unions, workers on the political field and workers who are new to the Labor Party, who do not understand the relations that the Communist Party has had with the Labor Party in days gone by, very often come forward and say, "Yes, you are good fellows; you are working, helping us along in the unions; you are working in building the united front, but wouldn't it be better if you came into the Labor Party as individuals and worked alongside us?" And so on. That is why, in the carrying out of our Party work, particularly in the fight against the National Government, it will be necessary to come out more with the full policy of the Party, explaining our policy in relation to all questions affecting the British workers, showing ourselves as being the active driving force building the united front that can alone bring down the National Government.

In connection with the development of the struggle against war, it is vitally necessary that our Party comes out as the leader of all those forces which are making for the maintenance of peace at the present time, not merely for a united front that embraces the working class, but a people's front that bases itself even on broader sections of the people who are struggling for peace at the present time. In our Party, in the past, there has been an unfortunate tendency in changing from mere sectarian propaganda to leadership of the day-to-day struggle, to neglect fundamental agitation and propaganda altogether, to concentrate on the immediate question, not to link up our fight on the immediate questions with the propaganda for our fundamental line as a Party. Therefore, we have got to overcome that in all the spheres of our Party work and on that basis we can undoubtedly develop.

Here also the work in conjunction with this, the work of our lower organs in recruitment, is important. A year ago, we had only 97 functioning Party cells in Great Britain. This year we have 174 Party factory cells in Great Britain, with 1,010 Party members; about one-seventh of the membership of the Party is organized in these factory cells but there are obviously many other possibilities, and it is quite clear that many of our comrades who do good work in the reformist unions, in the trade union branches, as ordinary functionaries, do not see the big possibilities in building cells in the factory. They are still carrying with them the mentality of the years of 1930 and 1932, when it was exceedingly difficult to build organizations in the factories. They do not see the great changes which have taken place and the possibilities which those changes have on the different sections of the working class.

Then, there is the tendency of lower organizations, whether they are factory cells or whether street cells, not to look outward to the working class, not to examine all the possibilities for developing the daily struggle, not to explore the possibilities of recruitment in con-

nection with the daily struggle. We have examples of comrades who have been prominent trade union officials for years, have recruited many members to the trade unions, but have not recruited members to the Party. Undoubtedly even with our present influence, we could enormously increase the membership of our Party if there was this constant attention to the problem of recruiting.

We have made big progress; we have overcome many sectarian tendencies; we have increased our influence with the masses, but much more remains to be done, and I am not going to say that before the next Congress of the Comintern, but I am going to say that, before the end of the next year, the British Party, if it takes advantage of the great possibilities before it, will be playing a more significant role in the whole fight of the international working class, and, when the British Party begins to play a more significant role in the fight of the international working class, then the final victory of the whole international movement against capitalism is brought very much nearer.

# The Imperialist Contradictions and the Drive to War

By R. PALME DUTT

**T**HE now completed preparations of Italian fascism for its war of plunder and conquest against Ethiopia throw a glaring light on the realities of the present stage of the international situation.

What does this open and cynical preparation of a war of conquest reveal? It carries to a new stage the process begun by Japan in Manchuria, it generalizes this process on a world scale, brings it now closer to the center of imperialism in Europe, and thereby reveals that the battle for the redivision of the world has already begun.

Four years ago on the basis of the division of the main imperialist powers, Japan was able to carry through a war of aggression and annexation unchecked. Today the Italian war preparations against Ethiopia reveal the same situation at a higher stage. Behind the Italian-Ethiopian conflict can be traced all the conflicts of world imperialism today. It was the war menace of Nazi Germany that led to the Franco-Italian rapprochement of the Rome Pact at the beginning of this year, which paved the way for the Italian offensive. It was the British National Government's line of assisting and supporting Nazi Germany, and in particular the British-German Naval Agreement, which broke the British-French front, at the same time as the British-French-Italian front of Stresa, and thus freed Italy's hands, while dissociating France from supporting Britain's interests in Ethiopia against Italy. The British-French division in turn paralyzes the operation of the League of Nations. Finally, the American and Japanese interests have already been officially expressed.

All this conflict of interest of the imperialist powers is not capable of checking Italy going forward with its bandit war in Ethiopia, any more than in the case of Japan in Manchuria. But it means that if the Italian war on Ethiopia once begins, if no compromise division of spoils is reached between the interested powers, then such an outbreak of war will have immediate reactions on the whole international situation. Germany, in particular, is visibly awaiting such a diversion and concentration of Italian interests outside Europe, in order to press forward its own plans with regard to Austria and Southeastern Europe.

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But if the Italian-Ethiopian situation thus today most sharply expresses the war danger, this is only the mirror of the whole development of the world situation.

The dominant feature of the present world situation is the increas-

ingly rapid growth of the present phase of economic depression towards the phase of renewed world war.

The Sixth Congress analyzed the basic and growing contradictions of the general crisis of capitalism which would inevitably shatter the then prevailing temporary stabilization and upward movement and lead to the world economic crisis and the increased drive to war. This prediction has been completely fulfilled in the ensuing seven years. The ever-sharpening conflict between the growing productive forces and the capitalist relations of production not only made inevitable the world economic crisis, with the consequent intensification of antagonisms in every sphere, but also made it inevitable that even when the world economic crisis had run its course, with wholesale destruction of capital, material and human values, and passed its lowest point, the outcome could still provide no solution in the same way as the previous economic crises of classic capitalism were able to provide a temporary solution of the contradictions and open the way to a peaceful revival of new heights. The present depression, so far from being accompanied by a softening of antagonisms, is accompanied by an extreme intensification of antagonisms in every sphere, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between imperialism and the Soviet Union, and between the imperialist powers for the shrinking world market, for colonies, for the redistribution of the world. Herein lies the special significance of the present abnormal type of depression in relation to the war question.

Comrade Stalin's definition of the present "depression of a special kind" differentiated it from an "ordinary depression" in the fact that it "does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry", since "all the unfavorable conditions which prevent industry in the capitalist countries from rising to any serious extent still continue to operate". The experience of the two and a half years of this phase from 1933 to 1935 has powerfully confirmed this definition, with the limited upward movement not yet, after two and a half years, having reached the pre-crisis level, and with the heavy adverse factors continuing of shackled world trade still at the lowest level, of currency instability, of extreme diminution of the export of capital, and of continuing chronic mass unemployment and working of enterprises under capacity.

But this at once sharply gives rise to the question: *Since the present abnormal depression "does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry", to what does it lead?* And this question is beginning sharply to exercise the minds of the bourgeoisie, not in theoretical form, but in very practical form. In the first stage of the depression, during 1933 and even the beginning of 1934, the hopes and prophecies of world recovery beginning were still widely expressed. That is to say, the bourgeoisie saw the signs of depression as of an ordinary depression precluding recovery, and did not see its special character which was correctly diagnosed by Communism. These hopes have long dwindled. But this brings the bourgeoisie face to face with far-reaching issues. Even the slight upward movement during 1933-34, before it had begun to reach the conditions of

a boom (save in the stock markets), already began to hit the limits of existing market capacity and suffered a certain setback in the summer of 1934. The productive apparatus had not begun to work to anything approaching capacity before it was already beating against the limits of the possibilities of absorption within existing capitalist conditions. At the same time productive power increases; technical development is pushed forward by intensified competition and rationalization; accumulating capital must find its outlet. The same expansion process which drove forward the ascent in the period of rising capitalism now in the period of decay becomes the driving factor to further decline. It becomes increasingly clear to the bourgeoisie that no peaceful way out is possible.

What is the way out? This question hammers at the heads, not only of the workers, but equally of the bourgeoisie. The only peaceful solution of the contradictions, the path of socialism, is closed to the bourgeoisie. The "normal" solution of the old classic capitalism, through crisis and depression to revival, no longer functions in the same way as previously. The new attempts of fascism and "planned economy" to overcome the contradictions have only intensified them and prepared the way for a still more intensive struggle. *In the situation, with increasing clearness the bourgeoisie in all imperialist countries, though in varying degree, begins to turn to war as the only "way out", to blast a way out of the impasse—both to utilize the existing idle capital and productive plant to full capacity in the process of destruction (destroying also the menacing unemployed armies), to drown the rising social-political discontent in a national-chauvinist wave, to smash the ever more formidable contrast of socialist advance in the Soviet Union and capitalist decline and destroy the citadel of the international working class fight, and finally for each particular imperialist group to aspire to find its own solution at the expense of the rest by appropriating a larger share of world domination and exploitation.*

The present phase is the phase of *intensified war-preparations and advance into war-conditions* in every sphere, not only as shown directly in armaments and strategic preparations, but in every sphere, economic, political, ideological, diplomatic, etc., on a scale never before equalled. What is significant is the way in which the present depression is *growing into world war* through a whole series of stages, gradually transforming the economic and social fabric and the lives of the people into war conditions, and beginning with partial and local wars and mobilization for war.

The growth into war conditions since the Sixth Congress is evidenced in the first place *by the collapse of the pillars of international political settlement* established by the victor powers since the war and centering in the Versailles and Washington Treaties, as well as the breakdown of the World Conference and of the World Disarmament Conference, and the weakening of the League of Nations by the withdrawal of Japan and Germany. While the first phases of this collapse belong to the period of the world economic crisis (the collapse of preparation and

war debts, the violation of the Washington Nine Power Treaty by the Japanese conquest of Manchuria, the exposure of the role of the League of Nations over Manchuria, and the departure of Japan from the League), the culminating phases have developed during the depression (the breakdown of the World Economic Conference and Disarmament Conference, and the departure of Germany from the League in 1933; the Japanese denunciation of the Washington Naval Treaty in 1934, and the German repudiation of the Versailles Military clauses in 1935). Thus only the territorial clauses of Versailles now remain of the post-war settlements; and the revisionist offensive against these for alteration by forces of arms is preparing for action. The attempted regulation of the proportions of armed power has broken down with the 1934-35 violations—the necessary preliminary to the struggle for a new settlement. *Thus the whole ground is cleared for the battle for a new division of the world; and the first preliminary encounters of this battle have already begun in several parts of the world.*

Second, the growth into war conditions is directly expressed by the *growth of armaments and strategic preparations*. The facts of these are sufficiently familiar and need no emphasis. The German Institute of Economic Research estimated the world expenditure on armaments in 1934 as equivalent to 2,500,000,000 or double the level of 1929 and three times the level of 1913. Even the League of Nations Armaments Year-Book, which records only the official figures and ignores the manifold concealed and semi-concealed expenditure, records an increase from 3,987,000,000 gold dollars in 1928 to 4,900,000,000 gold dollars in 1934, alongside a heavy fall in the price level; and of this increase it may be further noted that from 1928-33 it totalled 412,000,000, while the increase in the single year from 1933 to 1934 totalled 501,000,000 or more than 50 per cent of the period 1928-34, thus showing the enormous acceleration. Similarly, the strategic preparations are instanced not only by fascist Germany and fascist Italy, but equally by the Roosevelt program and the National Government program in Britain, by the Hankey tour of the British Empire for war preparations, or by the recent gigantic American naval and air maneuvers in the Pacific.

Third, *world economy is growing more and more intertwined with the process of war preparations*. This is manifest in the economy of Nazi Germany, which is being constructed completely on a war basis. Similarly the situation in Japan was recently reported as follows in the *Times*:

“During the past three years war preparations have become after textiles Japan’s largest industry. . . . *An Administration which stopped preparing on a large scale for war would precipitate an economic crisis.*” (*Times*, May 3, 1935.)

But in varying degree signs of a corresponding situation begin to develop in all the imperialist countries. The British War Minister, Lord Hailsham, challenged in the House of Lords on May 15, 1935

with regard to British war preparations, proceeded to elaborate with considerable previously unpublished detail the intricate network of economic war preparations which was in fact going forward:

“He did not want to go through all the other committees and sub-committees, probably 40 or 50, which were in existence, all of which were dealing with one or other of the branches of preparation for war.”

A leading London brokerage firm, Keith, Bayley and Rigg, recorded in its June *Market Letter* for clients, the role of rearmament as in their view the main basis for a prospect of world industrial recovery:

“The whole point about competitive rearmament is that it is international competition in expenditure on a form of public works. . . . The net result for the world can hardly fail to be a substantial increase in the volume of industrial activity, and the giving of an important impetus to world recovery at a time when it is likely to do most good.”

The *Economist* records with some apprehension (June 29, 1935):

“There is a sinister factor in the situation which suggests the part of such recovery as has taken place is artificial and neither permanent nor healthy. We refer to the economic influence of rearmament. Readers of our foreign correspondence columns must have been struck by the fact that for months past constant reference has been made to the stimulating effect of armament orders in Europe, America and Japan, and that in Europe there are many cases where the ‘rearmament industries’ are the only ones that are doing well. . . . It would indeed be a paradox if political tension—which has quite clearly been a factor in bringing about the economic crisis and in impeding its cure—should bring into being vested economic interests which depend for their existence on the maintenance of political unrest. Politicians the world over who are working for peace are rightly apprehensive of a situation developing in which the only active trades will be those which are making arms.”

Fourth, *the forms of total preparation of the populations for war, ideologically, socially and politically as well as economically and strategically are enormously developing.* Herein lies the special significance of fascism in relation to the war question. Fascism arises out of the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism, of capitalism in extreme decay and faced with the close approach of the proletarian revolution, as the desperate method of the ruling capitalist class to overcome the contradictions and maintain its power. But even where fascism succeeds in winning a temporary political victory and inflicting temporary heavy subjection on the working class, it cannot solve the economic problems of the present stage of capitalism. On the contrary,



its very attempt to carry the organization of monopoly capitalism to the highest point only intensifies the contradictions and makes more inevitably necessary the only final outlet in war. *Fascism develops in every aspect of its policy as organization and mobilization of the entire economy, political structure and population as a whole, so far as its control can reach, for war.* This sharply expresses the profoundly reactionary role of fascism, which in this way directs its main organization, even where it appears to carry forward the highest organization and technical development, for destruction, objectively hastening forward the decline and decay of capitalism. Just this demonstrates the significance of the role of fascism (it may be here worth noting with reference to recent discussion and some misunderstanding that has arisen of my suggested definition of fascism as the "organization of capitalist decay") as the typical *system of organization of capitalism in extreme decay, seeking to overcome the decay and contradictions by intensified organization, but in fact only able to lead by its very organization to intensified contradictions, war, and the acceleration of capitalist decay*—and thus in the end, despite its temporary strengthening of capitalism against the proletariat, laying the objective conditions for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

It should be noted that, while the fascist "totalitarian" system most completely expresses this organization of the entire social framework, population and ideology for the future type of *guerre totale*, a corresponding preparation through other forms develops in varying degree in all the imperialist countries. This is illustrated in the Roosevelt system of mass organization as well as propaganda in the United States, in the systems of air-raid drill in all the European countries, in the National Government's frequent military displays and chauvinist jubilee campaign in association with the Labor Party, and similar measures. In the countries of still formal bourgeois democracy, the role of reformism becomes of especial importance in the preparation of war. This is most completely illustrated in the case of the British Labor Party. Up to 1933 the Labor Party, while in practice fully collaborating with imperialism, still carried on a propaganda of nominal opposition to all war, "Never again", etc., and at the 1933 Conference even adopted a pledge "to take no part in war and to resist it with the whole force of the labor movement". The Southport Conference of 1934 has completely wiped this out, and laid down an explicit policy enjoining "the duty of supporting our government unflinchingly" against an "aggressor" ("there is little likelihood that this country would be an aggressor nation" explained the Trades Union Congress report in the same year), and laying down in black and white, in the terms of the Labor Party Executive Report, that

"There might be occasions when the movement would assist any defensive action taken to preserve the nation and its democratic rights."

This official lining up of the British Labor Party for war in support of British imperialism is a sign of the close approach of war.

Fifth, the growth of the advance to war is demonstrated most conspicuously in the diplomatic situation, in *the extreme sharpening of all imperialist contradictions, the acceleration of diplomatic war maneuvers, formation of blocs and counter-blocs, and extending development of local wars and threats of war*. From 1931 onwards this developing war situation was centered in the Far East, with the Japanese war on China and the extreme division of the other powers facilitating Japanese expansion. But from 1934, with the establishment of Nazi Germany and its military power, this same type of gathering war situation has begun increasingly to develop in Europe (with repercussions in Africa) with the Nazi threats of aggression in all directions, with the struggle over Austria and partial mobilization of Italy against a German raid on Austria, with the British-German collaboration for increased armaments, and with the Italian war preparations against Ethiopia, and above all with the extension of the campaign for war on the Soviet Union.

These increasingly rapid moves of imperialist antagonisms and strategic war preparation today are marked at the same time by *extreme instability, vacillation and quick changes of front*, even exceeding the already characteristic instability of the whole post-war period. For this reason in any single summary survey it is only possible to touch on certain outstanding features; whereas for the actual analysis of the situation at any given point it is just the close concrete details and moves of the particular phase, the exhaustive examination of the particular regional situations, and the interplay of the relationships of the powers to the particular situation, that is of decisive importance for a correct estimate of the relation of forces at any given point. Just as Lenin stated that not only every war, but each succeeding phase of a war requires to be judged in its concrete character in order to determine our line, the same applies to each succeeding stage of the period of war preparations. Hence the basic task of the Seventh Congress on the war question is to bring out the underlying principles of the present stage of imperialism and imperialist antagonisms, the character and types of future war and war extension that threaten, and the consequent principles which will govern the particular revolutionary line in a given situation, rather than to attempt any short-term estimate of a single moment of the shifting diplomatic relationships.

*It is manifest that the main imperialist groupings which are closest to the explosion of war, which are most visibly pursuing an aggressive expansionist policy, and driving forward to war, are the three powers, German (drawing at present Poland in its wake), Japan and Italy, i.e., essentially the fascist powers. All these pursue an openly revisionist policy in relation to the status quo, seek to change territorial frontiers, prepare by arms and by military alliances and by a shifting of the balance of forces to realize these changes, and thus visibly drive forward to the battle for the redivision of the world. In essence the fascist powers*

are the revisionist powers, the openly expansionist war-making and war-preparing powers, the visible dynamic centers of the drive to war.

*But this does not mean that the other main imperialist powers, the victor powers, Britain, France and the United States, which are still the dominant imperialist powers on a world scale, are therefore to be treated as "pacific powers, as sated powers" without war aims or expansionist aims—the common Social-Democratic illusion behind which Social-Democracy in the non-fascist imperialist countries preaches support of "their own" "pacific" imperialism and its war preparations. These dominant powers still remain the decisive ruling forces of world imperialism as a whole; their armed strength and war expenditure is the highest in the world; it is only their division and particular conflicting aims that makes possible the advance of the openly aggressive expansionist forces. (British-American division leaving the road open for Japan, British-French division leaving the road open for German expansion and successful violation of Versailles or playing into the hands of Italian aggression in Ethiopia.) While therefore the dynamic war-making forces, Germany, Japan and Italy, occupy today the immediate international foreground in relation to the drive to war, a correct estimate of forces must devote no less careful attention to the role of the decisive imperialist forces, Britain, the United States and France. The British-American antagonism remains the basic antagonism of world imperialism, even though this remains a deeper, more slowly maturing, all-pervading antagonism, and does not occupy the immediately foreground of the closely threatening issues of war. Just as the war of 1914 formally began over the conflict of Austria and Russia in the Balkans, yet speedily revealed its true character as the British-German conflict for world hegemony which was then the basic antagonism of imperialism, and which governed the world situation leading to 1914, so the influence of the British-American antagonism today can be traced through every feature of the world situation, and will come more and more visibly to the front as the war situation develops.*

This analogy, however, between the underlying and gathering British-German antagonism which more and more visibly governed the world situation during the period of 1890-1914, and the corresponding basic British-American antagonism today is complicated by one new factor of decisive importance, without parallel in the world of 1914. This is *the development, alongside the basic antagonism within imperialism, between Britain and the United States, of the still more basic antagonism of the world situation as a whole, between imperialism and the Soviet Union, which becomes more and more the decisive issue and tends to throw every other antagonism, even the British-American, relatively, into the second plan.* The Sixth Congress already analyzed these two pivotal antagonisms of the post-war world. But since 1928 the enormous development of the Soviet Union, and its correspondingly increasing weight in world politics, has transformed the world situation and made the issue of imperialism and the Soviet Union more and more

visibly the decisive issue of the whole world situation. Every antagonism within imperialism can only be correctly analyzed, not merely on the basis of imperialist relations, but in relation to this basic world antagonism.

The British-American antagonism, which extends over the whole world, especially in the spheres of trade conflict and currency war (the American silver offensive being above all directed against the British position in China and India and also in Mexico), operates most actively in Central and South America, in the British Dominions, and above all in the Far East. *The Far East is the central ground of the future imperialist conflict for world hegemony.* Up to the present the most active aggressive role in the Far East during the recent period appears as that of Japan. But in fact *the Japanese expansion could only develop on the basis of the British-American antagonism.* In the same way during the World War of 1914-18 Japanese expansion was able to go forward with the Twenty-one Demands and the seizure of Shantung on the basis of the division of the imperialist powers. But as soon as the World War was over, the United States was able to exercise its pressure to compel Japan to weaken its hold on its conquests through the Washington Conference; by the Five Power Naval Treaty the United States destroyed British superiority at sea without a battle, and brought Britain to parity, while reducing Japan to fixed inferiority. By the Nine Power Treaty the United States established the principle of the Open Door in China and of the integrity of its territory. This formal equality of competition of the powers in China meant in practice to open the door to American domination on the basis of its technical and commercial superiority over Britain and Japan. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was forced to be nominally dissolved. But with the advent of the world economic crisis and the consequent intensified antagonisms of the imperialist powers, Japan immediately took advantage of the position to smash the Washington basis in the Far East by direct action. The success of this Japanese aggression was made possible by covert British support, as shown in Simon's role at Geneva, reflecting the antagonism to America. The use of the direct military weapon by Japan on an increasing scale since 1931 has put the United States for the time being at a disadvantage in the Far East, since its predominance has been commercial and it is not yet prepared for the difficult conditions of war across the vast expanse of the Pacific. Hence the embarrassment of American policy, which has repeatedly sought British cooperation against Japan, but in vain, and has sought to bring into play every weapon short of war, as notably in the recent silver policy. Faced with the final necessity of armed struggle, the United States is now concentrating all its forces on accelerated preparation for war with Japan. In this situation the United States seeks to hold Britain neutral, while Japan seeks to win the British alliance. British policy is torn by conflicting considerations, owing to the increasing economic war with Japan, and the menace of Japanese expansion also to British interests in China.

As in every phase of the world situation, the situation in the Far East is complicated, and may be at a given moment dominated by the issue of imperialism and the Soviet Union, as well as by the fight of imperialism against Soviet China. The Japanese expansion plans for war against the Soviet Union are actively supported by the dominant British anti-Soviet forces, which thus calculate on relieving the menace to British interests in China, as well as by influential sections in the United States. Similarly alongside the triangular conflict of the three main imperialist powers in the Far East, we see the combined action of all the imperialist forces with the counter-revolutionary Nanking Government against Soviet China.

Corresponding to the breeding ground of war in the Far East, the main breeding ground of war in Europe centers round the aggressive aims of the fascist revisionist power, especially of Nazi Germany towards the East, herein coinciding with the anti-Soviet line of imperialism, alongside the conflict of Italy and Germany over Austria and influence in the Balkans, and the expansionist aims of Italy in Africa. But here once again, while Germany and Italy appear as the dynamic forces driving to war, it is precisely the *British-French* division in the background, alongside the basic antagonism of imperialism and the Soviet Union, that provide the final governing forces of the situation and the antagonisms on the basis of which Germany and Italy are able to go forward. If Britain and France, drawing Italy with them, stood firmly with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in maintaining the principle of "collective security" in Europe, the Nazi expansionist aims would become impossible of realization. But it is just the strong tendency of *British-German collaboration* (not constant, fluctuating, but appearing markedly at each critical point) that has made possible the successful Nazi rearmament and war preparations. In consequence the tendency of British-German collaboration for rearmament and expansionist plans in Eastern Europe confront the line of the Franco-Soviet Pact for preventing war while Italy plays its hand between the two groupings for its own advantage. The British-French division clears the path for Italian aggression in Africa, while the Italian preoccupation in Africa opens the way to Nazi extension of influence in Austria.

British policy in this situation follows a complicated path. At every stage since the accession of Hitler, Britain has in fact assisted the process of Nazi rearmament, both diplomatically and materially (MacDonald Plan in 1933 for doubling the German army and halving the French, British attitude to German March conscription law and Simon's visit to Berlin, British-German naval agreement, Bank of England assistance to German rearmament, and British exports of materials and arms). Further, under cover of a benevolent, but passive attitude, Britain has in fact assisted to sabotage the Eastern Pact and the whole principle of an "indivisible" settlement for Europe as a whole, and played for security only in Western Europe. This policy has undoubtedly reflected the close financial connections of Britain and Nazi Germany,

the fear of Communism in Germany, and the strong and unceasing basic anti-Soviet line of British foreign policy. At the same time Britain has sought to build up the common front of Western imperialism, as in the Four Power Pact and Locarno and the projected Western Air Pact, and for this purpose has sought to maintain close common working with France and Italy, as in the February 3 declaration, and the Stresa, and even the formal joint condemnation of German violation of Versailles at Geneva. Finally, Britain is aware of the menace of its own position in the increased military strength of Germany, and is therefore concerned to establish the strongest barriers against German expansion westwards (Baldwin's declaration of the Rhine as the new British frontier, the negotiations for a Western Air Pact, and the British rearmament program with especial emphasis on the air). In this connection the British statesmen are fully prepared for home propaganda purposes to exploit the "menace of Hitler" (whom they have helped to rearm) as a justification for the British rearmament program.

Through all this complication, which results in many-sided expressions from different sections of British bourgeois opinion, the governing lines of British foreign policy in Europe through the post-war period, already most strongly expressed in Locarno, can be clearly traced; the counterbalancing of the French Versailles dominance in Europe by the restoration of German strength, the building of the bloc of Western imperialism under British hegemony, and the turning of this combined imperialist front against the Soviet Union, as well as to make a counter-balance against the United States. The accession of Hitler with his open Eastern expansionist aims has enormously accelerated this policy. At the same time influential elements in the British bourgeoisie, especially the Right Conservative elements voiced by Lloyd, Churchill and Austen Chamberlain, and the less influential moderate elements voiced by Eden, see the menace of German preponderance and from varying standpoints have criticized the dominant line or advocated the line of a general settlement. The significance of these divisions should not be exaggerated. The Right Conservative line has mainly stressed the need of increased British armaments, therein coinciding with the government line. The subordinate role of the Eden line for League of Nations purposes and maintaining contact with France, Italy and the Soviet Union, without affecting the decisive policy, has been repeatedly shown, as in the sequel to his Moscow visit, the appointment of Hoare as Foreign Minister, and his mission to France and Italy to be the scapegoat for the British-German naval agreement. The dominant governmental line has consistently assisted Nazi rearmament, while forcing the expansionist plans to the sphere of Eastern Europe. The British-German Naval Agreement is the sharpest expression of the current policy. On no grounds of defending British naval interests would either its concession of parity with Britain in the North Sea or the special 100 per cent submarine clause be explicable; it is only explicable on the basis of an assumed understanding, whether explicit or implied, that the

new German navy will under no conditions threaten British interests in the North Sea, but is primarily intended for use in the Baltic.

Thus once again the imperialist antagonisms on every side pass into the dominant issue of imperialism and the Soviet Union. The Nazi coming into power in Germany, acting in unison with the National Government in Britain, has enormously increased the danger of a combined imperialist attack on the Soviet Union (the plans for a combined Japanese-German-Polish attack, with British support). On the other hand, this same situation has produced a counter-force within the world of imperialist antagonisms through the French fear of Nazi Germany's military predominance and eventual victory, and the consequent passing of French imperialism to closer relations with the Soviet Union and the line of the Franco-Soviet Pact. *The Franco-Soviet Pact is thus revealed as the principal obstacle in the world of interstate relations to the war plans of imperialism.* The continuously increasing power of the Soviet Union, consistently applied for the maintenance of peace by every possible means, and with the growing support of the mass of the populations in all countries, has provided a new factor which has been repeatedly able up to the present to hinder and delay the war plans of the imperialist powers. *Nevertheless there is no room for false confidence.* Every pressure is being exerted by British imperialism to divert France from its policy of association with the Soviet Union and to establish a French-German rapprochement. The strong Right-wing and fascist sections of the bourgeoisie in France, which are seeking by every means to overthrow the existing regime, openly support this line. At the same time there is evidence that the British-German war-makers are planning to use Locarno in order to paralyze French action under the Franco-Soviet Pact (a close examination of Simon's answer in parliament on May 2, 1935, will show that this possibility is being held in reserve).

The whole international situation shows an extreme and growing *tension*, leading to the close menace of the outbreak of war at many possible points and leading to rapid extension to a world conflict. At the same time the imperialist powers, and in particular the governments of the strongest imperialist powers, Britain, the United States and France, show no less marked *hesitation* before the unknown and formidable possibilities of a new world war, even at the same time as they are feverishly arming for it. This hesitation and even vacillation reflects in part a certain *maneuvering for position* in the future inevitable conflict. The lesson in the last World War of the United States, which came in last, sacrificed least and won most, has sunk deeply in the minds of all contemporary imperialist statesmen. Each power aspires to repeat this role and to push the other powers first into the maelstrom in order to exhaust their forces, while itself remaining outside in the first stages to await the favorable moment. This is especially characteristic of the policy of Britain and the United States, and two powers which hold the final decisive word in world imperialism.

But in the second place this hesitation also reflects a genuine fear on the part of world capitalism, as it draws closer to its doom, fear of the growing power of the Soviet Union, fear of the growing inner discontent and revolutionary possibilities, fear of the victory of the world revolution arising out of world war. These factors have played a big part in holding back the outbreak of war, despite the extreme intensification of antagonisms.

Nevertheless these very fears can finally lead to the opposite result, as the tension steadily grows. On the one hand, precisely as the internal situation grows more difficult, they can lead to the desperate plunge to war. On the other hand, they increase the forces in imperialism working for a combined imperialist front against the Soviet Union as the one hope of salvation. Hence the steady acceleration and intensification of the anti-Soviet campaign, even at the same time as caution is displayed against a premature opening of the battle.

The Seventh Congress will have the task, on the basis of its analysis of the present stage of imperialism and of imperialist contradictions, to examine closely the character and types of future war that are now preparing, and their consequences for the line of the revolutionary proletariat, as well as the problems of our line in the present period of intensified war preparations and growing into war.

What is new in these problems?

A detailed analysis of the tactical questions raised is not within the scope of the present survey, but the following very brief considerations may be given on the basis of the foregoing analysis.

The peculiar character of the present situation consists in the fact that the fight against war *before the outbreak of war* is able to reach an extremely high point and even to raise the possibility of reaching to the development of the revolutionary crisis in a number of countries before the outbreak of war. This is why the slogan of the "struggle for peace" is the central slogan of the present stage.

What has made this possible? Three factors may be distinguished which markedly differentiate the present situation from that before 1914.

The first completely new factor is *the role of the Soviet Union*, on the basis of its development to be the basically strongest world power, as a counterbalancing weight to the factors driving to war, and role of its policy of consistent fight for peace, in mobilizing a wide support on this basis both among the masses of the population in all countries and also drawing into its wake the sympathy of the small countries that feel closely the menace of war. This is the main transforming factor in the present situation.

The second new factor is the development of the fight against fascism in close unity with the fight against war. The offensive of fascism, which bears visibly and directly the character of preparation for war, has already aroused enormous and growing forces of resistance, which, coming into existence on the basis of the fight against fascism, inevitably



becomes at the same time a far-reaching front of the fight against war. The experience in France with the simultaneous united-front fight against fascism, for the Franco-Soviet Pact and against the vacillations of Laval, in unity with the fight against militarism, has illustrated this process most clearly.

Third, the degree of confusion, the hesitations, vacillations and maneuverings in the alignments of imperialism, in contrast to before 1914, which certain capitalist countries are maneuvering to delay the plunge into general war, alongside ever sharper tension and preparation of war (these hesitations reflecting also the delaying role of the Soviet Union's peace policy) have given more time and favorable possibilities for the mobilization of the forces against war before the outburst of war and have at the same time enormously awakened popular feeling to the menace of war, to a much greater degree than before 1914.

All these factors have made possible, and make further possible the development of a very broad front of struggle against the menace of war and for peace, a popular front, a "peace front" combining the forces of the working class with considerable elements of the petty bourgeoisie represented by the pacifist organizations, "progressive" intellectuals, etc.

What is the significance of such a broad "peace front" in the practical struggle against war? Does it mean that the tasks of the struggle against war, already laid down by the Sixth Congress thesis are in any way changed, or that the illusions of pacifism are any the less harmful illusions facilitating the path to war. In no wise. The significance of the broad popular front against war and for peace is that it is a preliminary mobilizing of the wide masses for the struggle, even though the full meaning of that struggle is not yet understood save by the revolutionary minority. And it is here that arises the specific task of the Communists within this broad front at the same time as uniting with all elements prepared to take up even a limited part of the struggle, to help and assist these elements to overcome the illusions they have, to understand the true character of the struggle, and above all to transform the character of the movement from the abstract aspiration of peace to the recognition of the real enemy, to fight against imperialist war-making policy. *On the role of the Communists within the broad popular peace movement depends whether it serves finally to assist the illusion of pacifism and thus to assist the war policy of imperialism, or whether it serves to prepare the mass struggle against the imperialist war.*

The character of the struggle in front, both in the approach to war, and if war breaks out, will raise many complicated problems requiring the sharpest political understanding. We are no longer in the position of 1914. In 1914 the workers had no country, the only interest of the workers in the imperialist war of 1914 was the defeat of all the imperialist powers and the victory of the revolution. Today the workers have their fatherland, the Soviet Union. Every question of war is bound, sooner or later, to raise the question of the Soviet Union. Even

what may begin as an inter-imperialist war is likely to transform itself into imperialist war against the Soviet Union. The workers of the entire world are vitally concerned to secure by every means in their power the victory of the Soviet Union, and the defeat of the imperialist attacking powers. Such a war becomes the sharpest expression of the international class war.

Further, the fascist offensive and the aggression plans of fascism threaten directly the existence and independence of smaller nations, not only outside Europe (the Italian aggression against Ethiopia) but also in Europe (the Nazi plans of conquest in Eastern Europe). Here we are vitally concerned in the defeat of the fascist offensive.

This in its turn affects the situation preceding war and our line in this situation and in current diplomatic questions. It is not only that we actively support the defense of the Soviet Union and every means necessary for the defense of the Soviet Union, including, in the first place, such peace pacts as the Franco-Soviet Pact. It means also that we are vitally concerned to concentrate the fight for peace against the fascist war-making powers and against those powers that support them; and we are vitally concerned in every move in the diplomatic situation from this standpoint.

This, in turn, affects the whole character of our struggle against militarism. Our anti-militarist struggle was never a struggle against armaments as such, for disarmament within the conditions of imperialism. Our struggle was always against the bourgeois control of armaments, for the workers armed power. This struggle reached a new and sharper stage in the present situation. *The anti-militarist struggle passes into the struggle for power.*

In general, the present situation raises more sharply than ever before the necessity of applying the Leninist precept that *every war requires that we Communists analyze it in its concrete character in order to determine our line.* The independent line of the proletariat at every stage and in every country requires to be combined with our analysis of the position of the world situation at the given point. It would be contrary to Marxism to lay down detailed lines beforehand for concrete operation before these have arisen; our line in principle is already laid down in the Sixth Congress Thesis. What is manifested is that the present extremely complicated situation raises important new problems for the concrete application of the Leninist line on war; that there is an increasing growing together and intertwining of all the issues of imperialist contradictions, of imperialism and the Soviet Union, and of the inner social-political issues, and that every stage of the process will require the closest analysis in the light of Leninist tactics, as we develop closer and closer into the stage of imperialism growing into renewed World War, itself growing into world civil war.

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