

FOR UNITY AND VICTORY

Report by HARRY POLLITT

The 16th Congress of the Communist Party will be judged by its positive contribution towards a speedier winning of the war and the peace.

While we have no illusions about the formidable character of the struggles still ahead, or of the strength and resources of the Axis Powers, we should realise and make Britain realise the far greater strength, power, and unity of the nations united against Fascism.

We have not yet thoroughly appreciated the profound military, political and moral change brought about in the international situation by the victory at Stalingrad, or the tremendous shock that the German people experienced at the greatest military defeat ever sustained by the German nation.

There are still inclinations to take Nazi legends at their face value, and to fall for certain aspects of Goebbels' propaganda, the essence of which is to try and delay the striking of decisive blows, to sow political discord between the United Nations, and find ways and means for a peace based on coming to terms with Fascism, in place of its unconditional surrender and complete defeat.

Three Nazi legends have been destroyed in the past two years : first, the invincibility of the Nazi Armies ; second, the belief that no bombs would ever fall on Germany ; third, that the

U-boats would conduct such a campaign that Britain would be starved out and brought to its knees.

Given the correct policy, there is no reason why 1943 should not also smash the legend of the impregnability of Hitler's so-called "Fortress of Europe."

If ever there was a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to victory, it is now.

That is why we express full confidence in the power of the United Nations, helped by the heroic struggle of all anti-Fascists in the enslaved countries, to organise the speedy defeat of the Axis Powers, opening out for world humanity a new epoch of social advance and progress.

The Second Front

The triumph of the Red Army at Stalingrad marked the passing of the initiative from the hands of the Fascist Powers to those of the United Nations. It was followed by the great victory in North Africa.

These victories, together with the sustained bombing, the growth of resistance in the occupied countries, the mounting successes over the U-boat, the closer political relations between all the United Nations—all demonstrate that a position now exists in which, with full exploitation and with speedy organisation of the Second Front in Europe, the danger of a prolonged war can be averted.

We appreciate the effects of the tremendous aerial bombardment of Hitlerite Germany and Fascist Italy, but we believe that only the combined use of all land, sea, and air forces of the United Nations, striking at the same time in Europe from the West as well as the East, can permanently destroy the whole bestial might and terror of the Fascist Powers.

Any other conception can lead only to a serious prolonging of the war, to political disappointments, and to lowering of vigilance and morale through false expectations of an easy way to victory.

It may be useful to give some vital facts in regard to the immediate strength of the forces at the disposal of the United Nations. This may help to place the resources of Nazi Germany and its vassal States in their correct perspective.

Official sources in Britain and America make it clear that they now possess armies numbering approximately between 13 and 14 million men, of whom four to five millions can be sent to invade the European Continent.

The facts about production of the most vital war materials are equally formidable and impressive. Britain and America, it is now officially stated, are in a position to produce 6,000 tanks per month against 3,000 tanks by Hitler and Mussolini.

Britain and America can produce 10,000 artillery guns per month, against 4,000 by Hitler and Mussolini.

Britain and America can produce 10,000 aircraft per month, compared with the Fascists' 4,000; and the present great air offensive shows how marked is the air superiority of the United Nations at this stage of the war.

Britain and America, despite the U-boat campaign, are undoubtedly in a much more favourable position for the production of all types of naval and merchant vessels than Hitler or Mussolini, and the fact that May this year marked a definite turning-point in the methods of combating the U-boats serves to increase the immediate and potential disparity between the United Nations and the Fascist Powers.

There is no doubt that all the pre-requisites now exist for the opening of the Second Front in Europe.

Why has the Communist Party always placed such importance on the necessity for the Second Front?

Because we are convinced that it is the only means by which the war can be shortened and decisively won, with the least possible casualties among the fighting forces of the United Nations.

But, it is said, there are already many fighting fronts. There are, and they are all very important, but they do not as yet represent the principal fighting front. That is to say, there is not yet in existence another land front that will compel Hitler to divide his main forces now concentrated on the Eastern Front, and give the Allies superiority both in the East and the West of Europe so that these joint blows bring speedy victory.

We fully realise that the Second Front on the Continent of Europe demands the most brilliant organisation, the most daring planning and execution, the most tremendous valour, courage and firmness; but we also believe that all these qualities are possessed by the United Nations, as the experiences in the Soviet Union, in North Africa, in combating the U-boat menace and organising the air offensives have already proved.

What immediate conclusions, therefore, have we now to draw? *First*, that it is not enough to possess resources, but that everything depends upon how and when these resources are used. Not enough attention has been paid in this country to the conclusions reached by the Soviet Information Bureau in Moscow on the

occasion of the Second Anniversary of the invasion of the Soviet Union by Hitler. It is worth quoting time and time again :—

“ The absence of the Second Front in Europe saved Hitler from defeat in 1942. As is well known, the Hitlerites used their breathing space for another large scale offensive against the Soviet Union in the summer and autumn of last year. To miss the present favourable opportunities for the opening of a second front in Europe against Fascist Germany would result in dragging out the war and consequently in an enormous increase in sacrifice.

“ On the other hand, the organisation of a Second Front in Europe this year would result in an early termination of the war, and consequently in an enormous reduction of the sacrifices of the anti-Hitlerite coalition.”

Secondly, we must appreciate fully the importance of the time factor. The longer the decisive battles are delayed, the more time the Fascists have gained for intensifying their political manoeuvres to split the United Nations and work for a spurious form of peace by negotiation.

We must not under-estimate what a peace based on coming to terms with Hitler or his representative would mean. It would simply give the Nazis a breathing space to prepare for a resumption of the conflict under circumstances more favourable to them than exist at the present time. It would mean that all the tremendous sacrifices the peoples of the world have made since 1939 had been in vain. It would be a betrayal of the living and the dead. It would make World War No. 3 a certainty, in a shorter space of time than elapsed between 1918 and 1939.

The whole future progress of civilisation demands the complete extermination of every vestige of Fascist thought, power, and organisation. To prevent this, Hitler and the friends of Fascism in Britain and America will play for time, will try and prolong the war, with the aim of achieving a compromise peace.

That aim the Second Front in Europe alone can destroy. If it was true, and Churchill and Roosevelt admitted, that the creation of a Second Front in Europe in 1942 was an urgent task, it is doubly true and urgent that it must be organised in 1943.

The Unity of the United Nations

How deadly the menace of Fascism is to all that is decent, humane, and cultured in the civilised world, is shown in the way the various countries making up the United Nations have been brought together in a common alliance of Unity and friendship to withstand the common danger.

Differences of social system and rivalries of different Imperialist nations have all been submerged to meet a common menace.

When Hitler and his bandits started their fight for world domination, it was not only the unreadiness of other nations and their own colossal armed might that they relied upon to bring quick success and world power, but the belief that they could play upon political, social and religious differences, and defeat their selected victims one by one. In this respect, Hitlerite Germany has suffered political defeats as serious as the military defeats of Stalingrad and North Africa.

That is not to say that the Nazis do not still count upon the Fifth Column (which can still be found in every capitalist country) to do everything possible to assist them in averting annihilation. Early this spring, Nazi Germany, smarting over its defeats on the Eastern Front, thought to frighten the world with the strength and alleged aims of the Soviet Union, and raised once again the hoary old bogey of "the menace of Bolshevism."

This manoeuvre failed. In no small measure it failed because of the timeliness with which the Executive Committee of the Communist International put before its sections its proposal that "the Communist International, as the directing centre of the international working class movement, shall be dissolved." It took Hitler's last trump card right from under his nose. It struck as powerful a political blow against the Nazi propaganda dam as the Royal Air Force did in their epoch making devastation of the Mohne Dam.

While we can welcome any development in the unity of the United Nations, this should not blind us to certain weaknesses that still exist and which need to be overcome as we enter on the decisive battles of the war.

An end needs to be made by our own Government to the intrigues and machinations carried out by foreign residents in Britain, whether in their private capacity or in connection with the Allied Governments to which they are attached. We saw during a certain stage of the Soviet-Polish crisis just recently how dangerous such elements can become. We see even now how strongly the Fifth Column works to delay the coming together of elements standing for Free France, not in superficial unity, but on a basis which absolutely precludes any toleration of Vichy influences.

Our Government's attitude could be all the stronger if it put its own house in order so far as India and other countries under its rule are concerned. The sooner these nations in particular are assured of the same democratic rights as we claim for our-

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selves, the sooner it is known that the Atlantic Charter applies to them without any reservations, then the sooner will they be won for whole-hearted and absolute support for the common cause. Such a policy would at the same time have a profound effect throughout the countries in the Far East and the Pacific at present under the temporary domination of Japan.

The unity of all nations now engaged in the life and death struggle against Fascism would be immeasurably increased. A new spirit would prevail in France, Poland, and the Balkans, worth many armed divisions to the common cause. New allies would be won in India and other parts of the world under British rule. Hitler would receive another deadly blow, and the unity he hopes to destroy would take on a stronger character and open out magnificent prospects for fruitful co-operation between the United Nations after the war against Fascism has been won.

Strengthen National Unity

It is a matter for great satisfaction that, just as all efforts to break the unity of the United Nations have failed, so have they failed in reference to National Unity. Britain has at last learnt the chief lesson of a decade of Fascism—that only a United Nation can hope to defeat Fascism.

After almost four years of war—four years of strain, air raids, sacrifice of hard-won working-class conditions, restrictions on food, clothing, and travel, and the casualties inflicted on our armed forces—the defeatist and disruptive propaganda put forward by various cliques has failed to destroy national unity or make any serious impression upon the nation.

At the same time, it is necessary to take much stronger measures against the Fifth Column in Britain. The urgency of this is proved by recent events in America. The Fifth Column never gives up. It finds all forms of expression, from the Duke of Bedford type of propaganda, to the organisation of anti-Semitism and race hatred, the repetition of anti-Soviet slanders by certain reactionary clerical circles, and the secret activities of the British Union of Fascists.

It is necessary to crush all those who are in any way associated or connected with the Fifth Column, no matter what their social, political and business connections may be.

The present Government also needs to be strengthened by bringing more representatives of the working class into key positions. The Tories must be made to realise that we are not living in 1935, when the last General Election took place, or in

1938 when Munich occurred, but in 1943, when the working class is the main force upon which both production and manpower for the army, navy, and air force depend, and upon whose fighting power, resilience and leadership the fate of Britain depends.

Such a measure will guarantee to the nation that a relentless struggle will be carried out against all vested interests, that our resources will be used to the uttermost, that there will be equal sacrifice and equal effort from every section of the people, and that all pro-Fascists shall be removed from any position in the Government service.

Real National Unity demands, too, an immediate revision of the electoral truce in its present form. At present it is based on purely Party considerations, without any regard to the changed situation or the wishes of the people. As it stands, it is a gift to all disruptive elements, who are not slow to seize their opportunities.

There can be no question that some of the candidates put forward by the Tory Party constitute a provocation to the working class. Labour, too, is not putting forward the most capable of the younger men and women in its ranks. In a fight for vital democracy, it is necessary that Parliament shall also be representative of the best and most fearless representatives democracy can produce.

For this reason, while we support the principle of the electoral truce, the Communist Party demands that in every coming by-election there shall be democratic conferences convened jointly by the Labour, Tory, Liberal and Communist Parties, at which the best anti-Fascist representatives from all parties and democratic organisations, standing on the platform of anti-Fascism, shall have the right to nominate candidates; and when the final selection is made, it is done without consideration of the Party to which the candidate belongs. Once the selection is made, the candidate shall then receive the full and active support of all Parties concerned, instead of relying, as at present, upon pious appeals from the leaders of the Tory, Labour and Liberal Parties to support such and such a candidate.

The voting and experience in all recent by-elections reveal how urgent it is that such a policy shall be carried out.

It needs also to be stated now, if the full support of the working class is to be consolidated, that whenever a general election takes place, it shall be absolutely free from and devoid of any suggestion of coupon corruption. The masses who will have won the war, will not be inclined to forget the coupon election of 1918, one of

the most corrupt and unprincipled in our history. The masses are not fighting to win the war and lose the peace; they are working, fighting and dying to win both war and peace, and will rightly insist upon no fetters or political opportunism being placed upon their right to elect freely a government of their own choice.

The Home Front

Whenever any issue comes before the nation, any urgent demand of particular interest to the working class, a barrage of propaganda is let loose that it cannot be done until after the war.

Bitter experience by the workers in the past has led to deep suspicion of the bosses now, tending to overshadow the urgency of the war crisis and the heavy sacrifice that will be called for. The Government has the responsibility, by its attitude to the legitimate immediate demands of the workers, of removing their fears about post-war conditions.

The Communist Party, while making it perfectly clear that it will support every measure and willingly call for every sacrifice necessary to win the war, at the same time rejects the theory that nothing can be done during the war to improve the position of the workers on a series of vital social issues. On the contrary, we believe nothing is more calculated to evoke from the people a free and proud response to the demands victory will make, than the fact that the Government is already proving in deeds that the interests of the people come first.

At another stage in the Congress proceedings, full consideration will be given to many aspects of what we will call the Home Front, as well as to some of the problems Britain will face after the war, and how they should be solved. Now I only want to emphasise the main line of the approach we have to make to Home Front issues in general, and to bring out sharply three questions which brook no further delay by the Government.

An anti-Fascist war can only be won when the whole resources of the nation are fully utilised and the common people drawn more directly into the whole conduct of the war, alongside with essential measures for social and economic betterment.

That is why it is now so necessary to strengthen all existing State controls, build up Production Committees, and make full use of the practical experience of scientists and technicians and the skill and initiative of the masses. Only in this way can all vested interests, both in industry and agriculture, be swept boldly

away, ensuring maximum production of all war materials and food supplies.

This also demands that everything possible shall be done to ensure real equality of sacrifice throughout the country, abolishing many of the glaring and indefensible contrasts still existing between rich and poor. Particularly is it necessary for the wage levels of lower-paid workers of both sexes to be raised in all industries.

The whole question of working hours needs to be thoroughly examined, especially in the case of young people, so that production and health do not suffer from working unnecessary hours, which in fact tend to decrease and not increase production.

The treatment of all old, crippled, and blind people is at present a blot on the honour of Britain. These sections of the population should be removed from all want and insecurity.

The members of the Armed Forces have the right to expect far better treatment from the country they are defending than they receive at present. Pay, allowances, pensions, medical tribunals which command full confidence—these are urgently demanding improvement. Alongside this should go also a far more democratic attitude to all questions of promotion and training, and a complete overhaul of the system operating in Detention Camps.

There is not a single argument to prove that any interference with the conduct of the winning of the war would result from the operation of the Beveridge Report ; from the adoption of a new Education Act abolishing dual control and developing a real conception of knowledge, training and citizenship in line with other developments in modern society ; and from the immediate building of urgently needed houses, as the beginning of a large-scale housing programme.

Now to come to the three specially urgent measures I referred to a moment ago.

First, COAL. It is one of the contradictions of our time that Britain, richest coal-producing country in the world, should be experiencing such a grave coal crisis. It is the most eloquent testimony both to the inefficiency of the coal owners and to their treatment of the miners.

Never in our history has so much depended on the coal industry and the miners of Britain. The whole prospect of speedy victory depends on the ability of the coal industry to fulfil both the demands of industry at home and the needs of countries liberated from the yoke of Fascism by the advancing armies of the United Nations. We should have no illusions about the Scorched Earth

policy Hitler will adopt in France, Holland, Belgium and Norway, for example, and especially against the coal mines.

The situation in the coal industry is the responsibility not of the miners alone, but of every section of the nation.

The Government, and particularly the Ministry of Fuel and Power, is called upon to make an entirely new approach to the problem. The coal industry is as important in the war armoury of Britain as the R.A.F., the Navy and the Army. It needs to be given the same careful and sustained attention in organisation and leadership as it is the custom to give the main armed forces fighting against Fascism.

The miners are the shock troops on the Home Front. They have the right to expect from the Government and the nation the kind of treatment which will prove in deeds that the importance of their industry is fully recognised.

In the resolution before Congress we outline some of the immediate measures that need to be taken in the coal industry ; but in addition we want to stress the burning importance of our Party conducting an active campaign to rouse the whole country to a realisation of the gravity of the problem, and the urgency of "combined operations" by the Government, the coal owners and managements, the people and the miners, jointly to ensure that coal in abundance shall be obtained to carry out the defeat of Fascism.

Next, THE HARVEST. It is said we can expect a bumper harvest. It is certainly true that within the limitations imposed upon them, the farmers and agricultural workers have made greater efforts than this country has ever before known, to produce such a harvest.

It will be a crime if any slackness now, or taking for granted that it will be got in somehow, prevents us from reaping the full fruits of all the hard work put in over the whole countryside.

Nothing can be left to chance. No more spasmodic and half-hearted appeals for voluntary labour to bring the harvest home ! The volunteers can and must be obtained, and their services organised efficiently.

Britain's own needs, the necessity to save shipping, so that every inch of space can be used for war materials and troops, the obligations that rest on us to relieve the food shortage in the Soviet Union, the need immediately the war is won to send foodstuffs of all kinds to the countries liberated from Fascism—all make it essential that all possible man-power is fully mobilised to gather in safely Britain's record harvest.

Thirdly, the **TRADE DISPUTE AND TRADE UNION ACT OF 1927**. Every worker knows how this pernicious measure was placed on the Statute Book in 1927 in revenge for the General Strike of the previous year. It has been the subject of more condemnation at all conferences of the Labour Movement since, than any other Act of Parliament. It is a standing barrier to the achievement of full national unity, as it is to full democratic rights of free association in the Labour Movement.

The Communist Party fully supports the efforts of the trade unions associated with the Civil Service in their attempts to obtain the right of being affiliated to the Trades Union Congress and to the local Trades Councils. We endorse the recommendation of the General Council to the Trades Union Congress in September to accept the application of such Trade Unions as apply for affiliation to the T.U.C. We call for the repeal of the Act as a whole, and in particular and as an immediate urgent measure, we demand the repeal of Clauses 5 and 6 of this Act.

At the same time, the Communist Party hopes that this question will not be allowed to develop to a point where tactical differences arise between the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, and that, as a means of guiding the Labour Movement, a joint statement should now be issued by the National Council of Labour, clearly setting out the issues at stake and the line of policy that the Movement as a whole should pursue.

Unity of the Labour Movement

A golden opportunity was provided at the Labour Party Conference to obtain unity and clarity on all the outstanding political issues that have arisen since the last Conference, which are so obviously troubling the minds of many Labour Party members.

Instead, there seemed to be an under-estimation of our life-and-death struggle against a still formidable enemy, and of the gigantic bitter battles the people have still to wage. The war as the dominant issue before the Conference was never brought out in a way that directly related every issue to it.

The Conference took a clear and positive line on the need for National Unity as expressed in the electoral truce, and the need for Labour to take a responsible part in the National Government. The firm support of the trade unions on this point was in no small degree due to the work of the Communist members of the trade unions.

The Conference made a great stand for the men and women in the Armed Forces on pay, allowances, and pensions. It adopted a comprehensive scheme for a National Medical Service, and made clear its determination to secure the operation of the Beveridge Report.

The Conference also gained a strong point in obtaining from the Executive Committee a declaration that the attitude of Labour to the question of the Government after the war should be the subject of a special conference, which alone would have the right to make the final decision on the policy to be adopted.

The negative sides of the Conference were the responsibility of a divided leadership, from which arises much of the confusion and inactivity of the local Labour Parties. If ever the Labour leaders had the duty of putting their own house in order, and saving the breath expended on lectures to the Communist Party on political morality and unity, that time is now.

It is the urgent duty now of every serious-minded man and woman in the Labour Movement—and by that I mean the Labour Party, the Communist Party, the Trade Unions and Co-operative Movement—to work as never before to close the ranks and to win agreement on a common policy, tactics and leadership, that can confound Labour's enemies at home and abroad.

In rejecting the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party, however, a splendid chance of unifying and strengthening the whole Labour Movement was lost.

Our fight for affiliation to the Labour Party has been a splendid political campaign. Every minute of it has been well worth while. It will have permanent results. To have won the miners, the engineers and locomen, and many other important trade unions, backed by the support of thousands of branches of the whole Labour Movement, is a splendid achievement.

The campaign has strengthened the war effort, given a new conception of unity in field, factory and workshop, and helped forward class consciousness and political understanding.

None appreciate better than those who opposed Communist affiliation the new life, knowledge and vision that our campaign has brought. The vehemence and nature of their opposition show that they understand what this new awakening means in the future for them and the policies they represent.

The narrow prejudices and calumnies will not last for ever. Experience and events will soon sweep them into the limbo of forgotten things. There will be increased co-operation between Labour and Communist Party members in the factories, localities and Labour organisations.

We are confident the supporters of working-class unity will fight in this spirit at the coming important Trade Union Conferences at which the question of Communist affiliation is on the agenda.

We shall continue our fight for working-class unity and the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party, in order to develop in the Labour Movement a united fighting policy against Fascism abroad and reaction at home, that will be a rallying point for the whole nation in pursuance of genuine democratic anti-Fascist aims.

We express our readiness to meet the Executive Committee of the Labour Party at any time they so desire, to discuss immediate forms of co-operation. We hope also that an end will now be made to actions that seek to prevent local co-operation between all sections of the Labour Movement on issues of common concern. It will be found in practice that wherever such local co-operation takes place, a lasting basis for more permanent co-operation can be gained, and the way opened for an all-round strengthening of the Labour Party, increasing its authority and influence in the leadership of Britain in war, and guaranteeing the solution of post-war problems in the interests of the common people.

And here let me emphasise one point. Gigantic problems will face the people of this country after the war, which will require all the strength of a united Labour Movement. There is a type of propaganda currently spread by some of the leadership of the Labour Movement, which seeks to suggest that a New Britain can be won without struggle, along the path of peaceful co-operation with the great monopoly capitalists, with Labour as a junior partner. Hence they are indifferent to the question of unity of the Labour Movement, and even oppose it, because they know that such a united Movement will never accept the permanent rule of monopoly capitalism. But every serious Socialist and Trade Unionist knows that the New Britain for which we strive can only be won at the expense of the interests of monopoly capital and in ceaseless struggle against the reactionary policies of monopoly capital. Therefore unity of the Labour Movement is more than ever essential.

The Communist Party

When the decision had been taken to dissolve the Communist International, we noted the immediate reaction of those who are so bitterly opposed to the affiliation of the Communist Party

to the Labour Party. It was to the effect that the Communist Party in Britain should also be dissolved. If ever there was a case of the wish being father to the thought, this is it.

The Communist Party is born out of the historical conditions of British capitalism in exactly the same way as the Labour Party. It is no foreign importation. Its principal leaders were all members of the Labour Party, I.L.P., Social Democratic Federation or the British Socialist Party before they merged to form the Communist Party.

The Communist Party is an integral part of the British Labour Movement, born out of British conditions and developing its work in them guided by the world outlook of Marxism and Communism. Since its formation in 1920 the Communist Party has ceaselessly fought to defend the interests of the workers, to defend the Soviet Union, to save peace, and to bring about the unity of the Labour Movement that is vital for the advance to Socialism.

We did not succeed in saving peace or establishing unity but we did help very considerably in preventing the bosses from lowering wages and increasing exploitation as much as they would have liked in 1921, 1926 and 1931. We did rally support for Spain. We did fight Munich, and launched the campaign: "Chamberlain Must Go."

The Communist Party was the first to warn of the dangers of Fascism, to try and achieve working-class unity and the People's Front. If we had succeeded, Fascism would have been defeated without war, and a heavy responsibility rests on those Labour leaders whose power and influence have always specialised in fighting Communism and not Capitalism.

Our political campaigns during the war have strengthened the morale of the people, drawn Britain and the Soviet Union closer together than ever before, helped to cement bonds of solidarity with the Chinese people, fought for the just demands of the Indian people, and defended the daily interests of the common people of Britain, exposed the Fifth Column and anti-Semitism, and helped improve production.

The Communist Party cannot be separated from the working-class movement by any calumnies or provocation. It is bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh. Because of this, everything to which the Communist Party sets its hand not only defends the present interests of the working class, but at the same time safeguards their future interests as well.

The Communist Party has always worked, and will continue to work, to preserve, develop and utilise to the fullest extent the

democratic rights of public speech, press, assembly, organisation, representation in Parliament, Local Government and other public bodies, in order to advance the best interests of the people and secure a Government truly representative of the majority of the nation.

When we declare at the same time that the working-class movement must be prepared to face the use of violent methods by reaction, the experience of many countries and especially the experience of Fascism has borne this out, and our viewpoint is shared by many representatives within the Labour Party. The one thing that can make possible the transfer of power to the working class with a minimum of resistance is a powerful and united Labour Movement with a strong and resolute leadership.

There is something unreal and hypocritical in the attitude of Labour leaders trying to make out that there cannot be any unity between the Labour Party and the Communist Party because one believes in "persuasion" and the other in "force," when for four years the world has been using force on a scale never before known, so that reaction can be prevented from triumphing over those who believe in democracy and the right of the popular will to prevail.

We are sure our Congress will endorse the recommendation to go ahead with our fight for Unity and Victory through a nationwide political campaign of the most imposing character this country has yet seen organised—a campaign that has for its object the winning of the war in the shortest space of time, the making of a peace which will guarantee that the dark forces of reaction shall never again foment war, the strengthening of working-class unity through mass recruitment to the Labour Party, Communist Party, Trade Unions and Co-operatives, the gaining of new adherents in the payment of the political levy, and the strengthening of workshop organisation.

The building of a mass Communist Party in Britain is the most decisive factor in achieving an all-round strengthening of the Labour, Trade Union and Co-operative Movement, and through this increasing the power of the working-class movement as a whole. It is the unity, determination, and organisation of the working class that provide the sole guarantee that, after the unconditional surrender of Fascism we can proceed along the road that leads to Socialism and a glorious future for the common people of our country.

That is why we must tighten up our Party organisation—ensure that all work is well planned and organised; make our

Party Branch meetings centres of local public interest ; formulate our policies in accordance with local circumstances and demands ; obtain the widest sales of all our literature, do everything in our power to support the *Daily Worker*, spread its message, fight to carry out its lead, build up its finances.

Let it be a matter of pride that we are all clear in the payment of our Party dues, that it is as much a matter of honour to have a clear Party card as it is to have a clear Trade Union card.

Have confidence and pride in the Party, because it is the one Party in the country that nothing can split or disunite, that no frame-up or provocation can destroy. Be proud to recruit to it, avoid all narrowness and sectarianism, and in this way build up that mighty Communist Party that can lead the way forward at every stage of the struggle.

Let us rejoice that we carry forward in our time the same deathless spirit and enthusiasm that prompted the old pioneers of the Labour Movement to take their stand at street corners amidst scorn and jeers in their propaganda for Socialism. Let their conception become the flaming message and inspiration which our Party, too, will blazon wherever men and women foregather.

For we stand for the most glorious principles that humanity has ever known—the principles of Socialism, that conception of society in which exploitation of man by man has been ended, in which the robbery of the poor by the rich is brought to an end, in which every industry and every acre of land is serving a useful constructive purpose in society, in which poverty, unemployment and war shall be unknown, and production have no limits : Socialism—that state of class-less society, in which human personality and dignity will reach their full stature, and the arts, crafts and sciences flourish as never before.

In short, we fight for that form of society in which all the resources of civilisation have only one aim—to serve the happiness and well-being of mankind.

TRADE UNION POLICY

Report by PETER KERRIGAN

It is absolutely vital for all trade unionists to understand the difference in this war from the last, and, therefore, the different attitude the workers should adopt.

The alternatives before us are either a victory of the United Nations, the re-emergence of the working-class-movement in Europe, the preservation of the Socialist sixth of the world, and the establishment of a firm basis for us going forward to

Socialism in this country ; or the triumph of Fascism, Lidices for South Wales, Durham, Yorkshire and Scotland, the destruction of the workers' movement in Britain, the destruction of the Socialist sixth of the world, and with that, the postponement of Socialism for generations.

Every trade unionist should understand clearly the New Order and the Nazi Labour Code.

We will be foolish if we think it can't happen here. There are those among the employers in this country who would like to apply these methods. Some do try to introduce them, but we have our workshop and T.U. organisation, which protects us fairly effectively against these people. It is necessary to strengthen that organisation.

There must be in the region of 20,000,000 who could be organised in trade unions or professional associations. Yet there are little over 8,000,000 Trade Unionists in Britain at this moment.

With less than 50 per cent. organised, we face the problem of strengthening the movement quickly and effectively.

Our whole aim should be to create trade unionists in the full sense, trade unionists accepting every responsibility for all the tasks of the union, and imbued with the highest desire to serve and make still more powerful this tremendous creation which was born over two centuries ago in these islands.

On wages policy, our aim is to prevent rises in prices, extending rationing and price control to all goods, and support for all measures that increase production of food and utility goods, subject to over-riding war needs.

Comrade Kerrigan then read out the points on Wages Policy from the Resolution.

Dealing with trade unions and production, I want to put the principal emphasis on the Factory and Pit Production Committees and efficiency on Site Committees. In other words, get the problem tackled on the job. The production idea is not merely one for mining or engineering, shipbuilding and steel. In this war it applies to all industries, i.e., docks, rails, passenger and road transport—in fact, all forms of land and sea transport, building, textiles, as well as the other so-called secondary industries.

It is important to face the facts. Everything is not well. Even the existing machinery is not being utilised as it should. Major Lloyd George's statement that only one in four of pit production committees is operating satisfactorily is serious, especially when we consider the coal situation today.

We demand from the Government immediate coal rationing. That will keep the war industry going while supplying domestic

coal for the war workers. Make no mistake about the desperate need for coal that the creation of a Second Front would at once demand.

Here I would issue a word of warning. It will be a tragedy if, owing to the incompetence of the Government and coal owners, the long overdue compensation to the miners in regard to compensation for silicosis and pneumoniosis leads to any fall in coal production. This is why we have put forward our Communist policy for the mining industry. Some of these proposals I mention now.

Comrade Kerrigan then went over the points on Mining from the Resolution.

The main thing the trade unions require to concentrate upon is the development of the initiative of the workers at all stages in the productive process. That is why we put as our first proposition day to day co-operation on production questions at all levels within the enterprise. This will also overcome the tendency to isolation of the Factory J.P.C.s which has occurred in a number of cases.

Continuous reporting back to the worker is of great importance. It is a very much neglected question.

On the District Production Machinery, particularly from the T.U.C. side, I would say that the main problem in many cases is to *create* the machinery. Even in engineering, the District Trade Union Production Committees have not been set up in all cases. What is required is that the positive steps already taken in engineering for the co-ordination of the J.P.C.s under District Trade Union Production Committees should be followed first in shipbuilding by the Confederation Unions applying the same methods to the co-ordination of the Yard Committees, this to be extended to all other vital war industries.

Sir Walter Citrine, writing in the press some months ago, made a very realistic estimate of the growing importance of the Shop Stewards. This approach has been forced on Sir Walter because all hackneyed allegations about the disruptive role of the Shop Stewards and Factory Committees have been falsified in practice.

They have proved in deeds that whenever the workers exercise their initiative, unity and power, the goods are produced. The Shop Stewards can be proud that, despite all obstacles, they are chiefly responsible for the kind of speeches that are now being made by Mr. Ernest Bevin and Mr. Lyttelton in regard to the favourable production position.

There are certain disruptive elements who try to prove that it has all led to a worsening of the workers' conditions. Where can

a single fact be brought forward to prove this ? If it is said it will lead in post-war years to a worsening of the workers' conditions, I reply that this is sheer defeatism, a lack of confidence in the working class, and the doctrine of those who shout loud when we are in a life and death struggle against Fascism but are the first to capitulate in ordinary peace-time conditions.

That is why we say, if the union executives got together, they could make proposals that in an enlightened way would overcome constitutional difficulties and create the closest and most authoritative association of the workshop representatives of the unions.

The main thing to note with regard to building union organisation is the need to win the great mass of workers, to concentrate specially on consolidating the position in the newly organised industries, some of which, like radio and the motor car industry, have only been effectively organised for the first time since the war.

The women of Britain have done a magnificent job in industry since this war has begun. It represents a revolution in British industry, carried through in the face of terrific obstacles, and our Communist Party can be proud of the contribution its members have made to this magnificent achievement. Yet much more requires to be done so that the full glorious contribution of the women can be made in industry to speedy victory.

The tragedy of the present position in respect to the trade unions is that they appear to be more concerned with financial membership than the part women can play in industry. The organisation of the mass of new women entrants into industry, especially the war industries, will be greatly facilitated if the main Unions concerned—T. & G.W.U., Municipal and General Workers, A.E.U., B.I.S.A.K.T.A.—not only get together with the T.U.C., but agree on a common policy and together undertake the job in a co-operative way.

There are many problems to be tackled in respect to women in industry, and all must be tackled. The principal one in my opinion is wages.

If the trade unions are really serious—and it is surely our intention they should be so—then, in order to establish the rate for the job in Engineering, they require to *start by getting an agreement that gives to every woman entering the industry the same wage for starting as is paid to the male labourers.*

In looking to the future, the trade union movement will have to fight for a new era of modern apprenticeship and training. In the building, cotton, engineering and mining industries, schemes of one kind or another have either been proposed or

actually adopted. Only the clearest policy, and strongest pressure of the trade unions will guarantee the adoption of such schemes for each and every industry.

But parallel with this, the trade unions need a new conception of youth trades unionism. The future strength of the unions, their role in the country's life, depend upon the extent to which the rising generation of workers can be attracted to and organised in the unions.

Let every trade union re-examine this problem, establish the necessary machinery make a bold appeal to young workers and the results would astound us.

The fable of high wages among the youth has been effectively debunked again by the figures for earnings issued yesterday in the Ministry of Labour Survey for January, 1943. Average weekly earnings, including overtime and bonus, of £2 5s. 1d. for boys, and of £1 12s. 1d. for girls, underline our demand for a wage for age scale for all youth as a minimum.

There is a most important problem affecting the unions at the moment, when they are expanding in membership. It is the staffing of the branches by local officials. In some, such as the A.E.U., there is such a dearth of members able and willing to take on jobs as branch secretaries, etc., that the formation of new branches and the recruitment of new members are definitely being impeded. Existing branches have more than their stipulated quota of members, and the service to those inside these branches is naturally affected as well.

It would repay the unions a thousandfold if they set up machinery designed to produce these officials from the thousands of young enthusiastic members at present in the unions and joining every day. Such action would be one of the finest investments ever made by the trade union movement in this country.

This brings up another matter that cannot be glossed over. The existing branch life was never at a lower ebb. After meeting all allowances for long hours, travelling, war time strain, etc., it has to be recognised that we are faced with a critical position.

There is a very high degree of trade union activity in the factories, pits, jobs, rail, or transport depots, yet much of this is not reflected in the branches. Union branches with 500-1,000 members are attended by anything from 6 to 30 members. It is an exceptional branch that has more than 50 turning up regularly. Some unions, like the Boilermakers, have branches that go from month to month and year to year without a meeting, and only collect union contributions. What is necessary is to win the shop and job stewards to a realisation of the importance

of the branch, and to bring the factory and pit problems into the branch. Most unions stipulate expressly that all policy questions have in any case to be taken up first through branch and district organisations of the union. Wages, policy, hours, and all political issues go via these channels, and the election to policy-making bodies of the union, T.U.C. or Labour Party in the same way. An understanding of this, plus the drive from above, with steps to improve the conduct of meetings, enhancing their educational value, and giving the members a pride in their union, can transform this situation.

Out of the last war came a whole spate of amalgamations. Two typical examples are the amalgamations out of which emerged the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Transport and General Workers Union in their present forms. These are now the two largest unions in Britain.

During this war there is a general feeling towards amalgamation. The most important step in this direction has been the decision of the Miners' Federation to create one mining union for the whole of Great Britain.

The steps of the three Railway Unions on joint wages policy, and the association of the A.E.U. and Foundry Workers with the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions are welcome first steps. They are *but* first steps. That amalgamation is possible between kindred unions with a common purpose is further shown by the recent merger of the Scottish Monumental Masons and the Amalgamated Union of Brass Trade Workers, and the very welcome steps under way between the National Union of Foundry Workers, the Scottish Brassmoulders and the Central Iron Dressers. The method of tackling the job by these last three is a model to be studied by all of us.

The role of the trade councils as local co-ordinating bodies requires continuous attention from the trade union movement. In the drive for production and the co-ordination of production efforts locally they can occupy a unique place. Recently Glasgow Trades Council's Production Conference focussed the attention of the movement in Scotland on the things required to improve matters. No campaign for 100 per cent. trade unionism, or on the special problems of women and youth trade unionists, or, for that matter, improvements in the E.W.O., can be effective without full use of the trades councils. In England and Wales the ending of Circular 16 can be the means of giving a big and fresh impetus to all trades council work on behalf of the trade union movement.

Comrade Kerrigan then dealt with sections of the Resolution on Co-ordination of Trade Union Policy, Post-War Legislation and Trade Unions, and the Labour Party. He continued :—

The unions are handicapped by the shackles imposed by the Trades Disputes Act, which must be repealed. But part of the fight against this iniquitous measure is the effort to get a 100 per cent payment of the political levy. The disproportion between total numbers in the various unions and those paying the political levy is most marked in the A.E.U. and the Craft unions. Any serious campaign to overcome this position should include a close examination of the means by which such unions as the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers and the National Union of Railwaymen have achieved their present good position in this respect.

Naturally, unity of the working class demands the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party and full rights for all affiliated trade unionists inside the Labour Party. The Labour Party could not but be stronger with men like Arthur Horner, Abe Moffat, Wal Hannington, Joe Scott, Sam Henderson, Bert Papworth, Tim Burns coming in fully into the Councils of the Party.

Comrades, this is our policy. It is based on the concept that actuates our Party, namely that we have no other interests than those of our class.

The trade union movement of this country can be transformed as a result of the operation of this policy now and for the post-war period. We have confidence in our class. Never in our history in Britain have the workers so clearly proved their capacity to organise industry. Let us fight now for the policy in this resolution and in our Trade Union Policy Memorandum, and no one will be in the position to drive the working class back to pre-war conditions.

United within this country, we can strengthen the bonds of international trade union unity, in the first instance based on the work of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Unions Committee, but embracing the unions of the U.S.A., China, the Dominions and Colonies, as well as the trade unions that will re-emerge from the prison house of Europe after the defeat of Fascism.

It is with this objective that we demand from all our members their utmost selfless effort to help the trade union movement of Britain to achieve this pre-eminent objective.