

JULY 1937

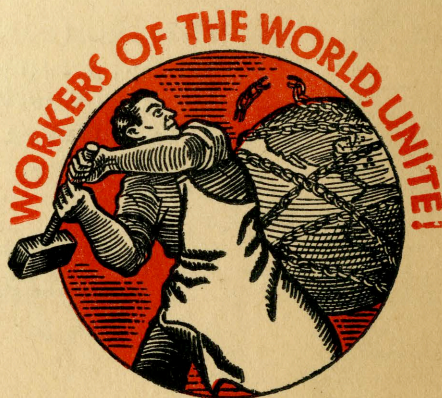
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Antonio Gramsci

ONE more crime has been added to the long list of crimes committed by fascism against the working class and against the whole of humanity. Slowly murdered by the police of fascist Italy, Antonio Gramsci, the leader of the working class and of the Communist Party of Italy, died in Rome on April 27.

Gramsci was arrested in November, 1926, by the fascists, and spent more than ten years in prison. His sentence expired on April 21, 1937, but in spite of this fact he was not released; he died in prison at the moment when his family, his comrades, all workers of Italy were hoping that, once restored to freedom, he would have the possibility of recovering his health which had been destroyed by ten years' imprisonment in the fascist jails.

Gramsci was murdered by fascism. He was tortured by the Italian fascism which had killed Matteotti and hundreds of the best sons of the working class of Italy. He was killed by fascists, who destroyed the freedom of the Italian people, and today threaten the whole world by kindling a war of aggression. Gramsci was killed by criminals whose bombers annihilate and cripple the peaceful population of Spain.

The Italian working class and the workers of the world have lost one of their best leaders, one of the most devoted fighters for the liberation of mankind from capitalist exploitation and oppression, for the cause of freedom and peace, for the cause of socialism.

A son of the people, closely connected with the working class, one of the leaders of the revolutionary wing of the Italian labor movement before and dur-

ing the world war, thoroughly acquainted with the history of his people and of Marxism, Antonio Gramsci was one of the founders of the Communist Party of Italy. He was the first in Italy to realize the historical importance of the great Socialist October revolution for the whole of the world. He was the first who made popular among the masses of Italy the principles of the victorious October revolution, the teachings of Lenin. Immediately after the war he placed himself at the head of the revolutionary vanguard of the Italian proletariat, and endeavored to lead the struggle onto the path pursued by the October revolution and by Lenin, onto the path of the seizure of power by the Soviets and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Having learned from the defeat of the revolutionary movement in Italy in 1920 and devoting himself in the ranks of the Communist International to studies in the school of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, Comrade Gramsci exerted all his energies in order to create a mass party of the working class by advocating the driving of the lackeys of the bourgeoisie from the ranks of the working class. Under the leadership of the Communist International, he fought for the liquidation of opportunism and sectarianism in the ranks of the Communist Party of Italy in order to transform it into a real Bolshevik Party.

After the rise of the fascist movement, Comrade Gramsci was at the head of the struggle of the Italian toilers for the defense of their class interests and democratic liberties. Profoundly hated by the reactionary bourgeoisie, he endeavored

to show the proletariat the path which will lead it, in alliance with the great masses of the peasantry and the progressive petty bourgeoisie, to the victorious struggle and the overthrow of the bloody regime of the Blackshirts.

Closely allied with the masses, capable of learning from them, capable of understanding all phenomena of social life, an unshakable revolutionary, faithful to his last breath to the Communist International and his Party, Comrade Gramsci will be remembered by us as one of the best representatives of that generation of Bolsheviks who were educated in the ranks of the Communist International, in the spirit of the great teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, in the spirit of Bolshevism.

The hangmen of the Italian people, the men who for ten years kept the physically weak person in prison, confident that at the end of the ten years they would deliver up to the Italian workers only the

corpse of Gramsci, shall answer to the world proletariat.

The name of Gramsci will be written in gold lettering on the banners of the working class and the toilers who in Italy, Spain, France, and throughout the world, are fighting to repulse the fascist regime and wipe it off the face of the earth.

The name of Gramsci will be enshrined in the hearts of all those who love freedom and peace. The example of his life and his struggle will inspire millions of men in their struggle for the invincible cause of the working class and of socialism.

DIMITROFF, ERCOLI, MANUILSKY,
PIECK, KUUSINEN, MARTY, GOTT-
WALD, MOSKVIN, FLORIN, WANG
MING, KOLAROV, OKANO, BRONKOV-
SKI, KAN SIN, LOZOVSKY, RAYMOND
GUYOT AND TUOMINEN.

Moscow, April 28, 1937.

The Slogan of Mastering Bolshevism and the Study of History by the Sections of the Comintern

IN *"Left Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, "an experimental popular talk on Marxian strategy and tactics," Lenin wrote:

“. . . having arisen on this granite theoretical foundation, Bolshevism passed through fifteen years (1903-1917) of practical history which, in wealth of experience, has had no equal anywhere else in the world. For no other country during these fifteen years had anything even approximating this revolutionary experience, this rapid and varied succession of different forms of the movement—legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, open and underground, small circles and mass movements, parliamentary and terrorist. In no other country was there concentrated during so short a period of time such a wealth of forms, shades and methods of struggle involving all classes of modern society, and, moreover, of a struggle which, owing to the backwardness of the country and the heavy yoke of tsarism, was maturing with exceptional rapidity and assimilating most eagerly and successfully the corresponding 'last word' of American and European political experience.”*

To these fifteen years (1903-1917) of the "practical history" of Bolshevism, there have been added twenty additional years (1917-1937) of history which, to an even greater degree than they, have no parallel in the world as regards wealth of experience. It is clear that the history

of Bolshevism, the history of the party of Lenin and Stalin constitutes an inexhaustible store of invaluable experience for the Communist Parties in all countries. It is equally clear that as these parties accumulate their own experience, as new, ever more complicated and varied strategical, tactical and organizational problems are advanced in these countries in the process of the struggle, the interest felt toward the experience of the Bolshevik Party, the desire to make a careful study and skilful use of it, are growing and will continue to grow. It is natural that all the sections of the Communist International consider that every congress, every plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, is an event which makes them ponder again and again over their own problems, and endeavor to draw practical lessons for themselves as well as from the experiences of their great brother party.

Among the slogans launched by the last historic plenary session of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. and developed by Comrade Stalin in his report, an especially lively response was called forth in the majority of the more important sections of the Communist International by the slogan regarding the political training of cadres, the mastery of Bolshevism and the liquidation of political credulity in the ranks of the Communist Parties. The slogan of mastering Bolshevism, of politically training cadres and liquidating political carelessness, has today become one of the chief, key slogans of the Bolshevik Party vitally connected with the peculiar features of

* Lenin, *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, pp. 11-12. Little Lenin Library.

the period through which we are passing. The essence, role and function of this slogan are determined by the vital requirements of the party precisely at this present period. It is just this nature of the slogan of mastering Bolshevism, as a *new* slogan, which was particularly clearly emphasized by Comrade Stalin in his report, when he said:

"To the old slogan of the mastery of technique which corresponded to the Shakhty period there must be added the new slogan calling for the political training of cadres, the mastery of Bolshevism and the liquidation of our political trustfulness, a slogan which fully corresponds to the present period we are now passing through.

"The question may be asked: Was it not possible ten years ago, at the time of the Shakhty period, to advance both slogans simultaneously, *i.e.*, the first slogan regarding the mastery of technique and the second slogan regarding the political training of cadres? No, it was not possible. Things are not done that way in the Bolshevik Party. At the turning points of the revolutionary movement, some basic slogan is always advanced as the key slogan in order, by catching on to it, to draw in the whole chain. . . . The history of the revolutionary movement shows that this is the only correct tactic.

"In the Shakhty period, the weakness of our people lay in their technical backwardness. Technical questions and not political ones were our weak spots at that time. . . .

"The weakness from which our people suffer now is not technical backwardness, but political carelessness. . . ."

It is no accident that the slogan of mastering Bolshevism met with an immediate response among several of the most important sections of the Communist International, the majority of which are faced today with the task of solving the most complicated, new, and varied problems. It is upon the correct solution of these problems that the further trend of historical events, the fate of the working

class, of the working people at large, of whole peoples, depend to a considerable degree. The solution of these burning questions requires that all the resources at the disposal of the theory and practice of the proletarian class struggle be mobilized, that Bolshevism be *mastered* as a guide to action.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International, which assembled on the threshold of a new period of great battles, and armed the sections of the Comintern for a counter-attack against the fascist offensive, declared war, through Comrade Dimitroff, upon "self-satisfied sectarianism" which, in its carelessness, "*will not and cannot* understand that the leadership of the working class by the Communist Party cannot be attained by a process of spontaneous development," declared war upon "mental laziness" which substitutes "general, non-committal formulas for a careful and concrete study of the actual situation and the relationship of class forces."* Comrade Dimitroff was insistent in calling on the Communists of Germany and Italy to appreciate that

"... special methods and means of approach suited to the concrete conditions prevailing in these countries must be learned, mastered and applied, so as to facilitate the rapid disintegration of the mass basis of fascism and to prepare the way for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship."**

As a passionate call to master Bolshevism there rang out that part of Comrade Dimitroff's speech in reply to the discussion when he gave expression, in a concentrated form, to the most important conclusions to be drawn from his report and the discussion which followed it.

"Revolutionary theory is the generalized, *summarized experience* of the revolutionary movement. Communists must carefully utilize in their countries not only the experience of the past but also

* Joseph Stalin, *Mastering Bolshevism*, pp. 27-28, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 5 cents.

* G. Dimitroff, *The United Front Against War and Fascism*, pp. 83-101, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 75 cents.

** *Ibid.*, p. 46.

the experience of the present struggle of other detachments of the international labor movement. However, correct utilization of experience does not by any means denote *mechanical transposition* of ready-made forms and methods of struggle from one set of conditions to another set, from one country to another, as so often happens in our parties. . . . It is precisely from the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks that we must learn to apply effectually, to the specific conditions of life in each country, the *single international line*; in the struggle against capitalism we must learn pitilessly to cast aside, pillory and hold up to general ridicule all *phrasemongering, use of hackneyed formulas, pedantry and doctrinairism*.

"It is necessary to learn, comrades, to learn always, at every step, in the course of the struggle, at liberty and in jail. To learn and to fight, to fight and to learn. We must be able to combine the great teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin *with Stalin's firmness at work and in struggle, with Stalin's irreconcilability, on matters of principle, toward the class enemy and deviators from the Bolshevik line, with Stalin's fearlessness in face of difficulties, with Stalin's revolutionary realism.*"*

Almost two years have passed since the Seventh Congress. In the capitalist countries these have been not only years of continued fascist offensive and feverish preparations for new wars of plunder, but also years of growing resistance to the offensive of fascism. In the organization of this resistance a decisive role has been played by the slogan of the united proletarian front and the slogan of rallying as wide masses as possible of the working people of town and country to the anti-fascist People's Front. Everywhere, the Communist Parties have been the initiators, the organizers, the heart and soul of the struggle for united action by the working class, of the struggle to overcome the split rending its ranks, and to unite the masses of the people against reaction and fascism. Step by step, overcoming all the many varied difficulties, and operating the decisions and instructions of the Seventh Congress, the Com-

munist Parties became active factors in the political life of their respective countries, and won the confidence of the workers.

All the sections of the Communist International without exception have made progress during these years, although not in equal degree; they have grown in numbers and, in particular, have improved in quality. This refers not only to parties like the Communist Party of France and the Communist Party of Spain, which have already become powerful driving forces in the movement of the masses of the people, but also to parties like the Communist Parties of the U.S.A., of England, Belgium, and Austria, which only yesterday were still extremely weak, and the activities of which are endowing them with a big and responsible role in the big class battles which are approaching in those countries.

The rise of the political influence and membership of the Communist Parties, the triple increase in the membership of the Communist Party of France during the year 1936, and the still more stormy growth of the Communist Party of Spain in the fire of battle against the fascist rebellion and fascist invasion—achieved thanks to the application in their practical activities by these parties of the principles of Bolshevism which ensure them closer contacts with the masses—this rise at the same time puts forward the task of *mastering Bolshevism*, as one of the most important tasks of the inner life of the parties. Only by mastering Bolshevism will these parties be guaranteed against the illusions connected with successes already achieved, against loss of perspective; only by mastering Bolshevism will they be able to make a sober estimate of the new difficulties and new tasks, to overcome weakness in their own camp and in the camp of their allies, to meet the counter-attacks and maneuvers of the class enemy fully prepared. As Comrade Stalin explained at the Plenum of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U., the dark side of the gigantic successes of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., which is surrounded by hostile capitalist states, was

* *Ibid*, p. 127.

revealed in the carelessness and complacency displayed in the ranks of the C.P. S.U.; this it was that made it essential to launch, precisely at this moment, the slogan of mastering Bolshevism and of the political training of cadres as the key slogan of the present period. All the stronger is the need for this slogan to be launched by the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries, which are advancing toward great and difficult class battles.

As the struggle of the working class and of the working people at large becomes more intense against fascism, which is steadily preparing to set alight the flames of new wars, there is and will continue to be a corresponding increase in the provocative work of fascism's agents, who try to introduce schisms and disintegration into the ranks of the working class, advocate action of an adventurist character, and organize terrorist acts against the leaders of the movement. The ringleaders and executors of these wrecking, bandit operations of fascism are the Trotskyists disguised as "Lefts."

Only by mastering Bolshevism, by assimilating the principles of Marxism-Leninism and the entire experience of the C.P.S.U., by studying their own experiences and applying the principles and methods of Bolshevism to their own specific circumstances, will the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries be in a position to display the necessary vigilance in respect to the penetration of hostile influences into their ranks and into the ranks of the working class movement generally, only then will they be able to guard themselves against the devastating action of all kinds of provocation, only then will it be possible for them opportunely to recognize, expose and root out the Trotskyist agents of fascism.

Bolshevism cannot be mastered unless a profound study is made of the history of the Bolshevik Party, the history of the C.P.S.U. Therefore it is no accident that immediately after the decisions of the Plenary Session of the C.C., which launched the slogan of mastering Bolshevism as the key slogan for the present period, a letter of Comrade Stalin was

published, in which he pointed out the shortcomings in all the existing textbooks on the history of the party and demanded a radical improvement in the methods of studying the history of the party. The fault that Comrade Stalin finds with the existing textbooks is, first and foremost, that they "limit themselves to the narration, the simple description of the events and facts of the struggle among the currents in the party, without giving them the necessary Marxian explanation."

To eliminate these shortcomings, Comrade Stalin puts forward a number of demands to the compilers of the new textbook of the history of the C.P.S.U.

First, he asks that "each chapter (or section) of the textbook be prefaced with a short historical note about the economic and political situation in the country." "Without this, the history of the C.P.S.U. will appear not as a history, but as a light and incomprehensible story of past events." Second, "not only must the facts be given which demonstrate the abundance of currents and factions inside the Party and in the working class during the period of capitalism in the U.S.S.R., but these facts have to be given a Marxian explanation."

In order to give this Marxian explanation, it is essential to point to "(a) the existence in pre-revolutionary Russia of classes which were new and modern from the viewpoint of capitalism, and also of the old, pre-capitalist classes; (b) the petty-bourgeois nature of the country, (c) the heterogeneous composition of the working class, as conditions favoring the existence of a multitude of currents and factions in the party and in the working class." Without this, "the abundance of factions and currents remains incomprehensible." Third, "not only have the facts of the fierce struggle of currents and factions to be described as a simple story, but a Marxian explanation of these facts must also be given."

In order to give this Marxian explanation it is essential to point out "that the struggle of the Bolsheviks against the anti-Bolshevik currents and factions was a struggle for Leninism based on *prin-*

principles, that under the conditions of capitalism, and in general under conditions where antagonistic classes exist, inner-party contradictions and disagreements are inevitable, that the development and consolidation of the proletarian parties in the conditions indicated can take place only by overcoming these contradictions, that had a struggle based on principles not been carried on against anti-Leninist currents and groups, and had they not been overcome, our party would inevitably have degenerated, just as the Social-Democratic Parties of the Second International which did not undertake such a struggle degenerated. . . . Unless such explanations are given, the struggle of the factions and currents in the history of the C.P.S.U. will look like an incomprehensible squabble, and the Bolsheviks like incorrigible and insatiable squabblers and scuffers."

If the criticism made by Comrade Stalin of the serious shortcomings in the existing textbooks of the history of the C.P.S.U., and his directions as to the line to follow and the steps to be taken to remove these shortcomings, are of tremendous importance for members of the C.P.S.U. and the millions of citizens of the Soviet Union engaged in the study of the history of the great party which is leading their country, then this criticism and these directions are, perhaps, of still greater importance for the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries.

The Communists of the capitalist countries study and should study the history of the C.P.S.U.—“Practical history which, in wealth of experience, has had no equal anywhere else in the world” (Lenin)—for an immediate *practical* purpose as well. They find in it a tremendous abundance of examples of the solution of the most difficult problems of proletarian strategy and tactics, of historical “precedents,” which may be of invaluable aid to them in solving the problems which confront them today. But in order to make correct use of this experience, to avoid mechanically transplanting it, what is needed is that while taking account of what is general and a matter of prin-

ciple, to take full note of all the original and peculiar aspects of the historical situation in which the Bolshevik Party developed and carried on its fight. It is essential that the economic and political situation of the country at each period of the party’s activities be known with the greatest concreteness and in strong relief. It is essential to see clearly the connection between the history of the party and the general history of the country, as well as the history of the struggle of classes developing therein, one of the active factors of which struggle, in the long run the *decisive* factor, was the Bolshevik Party itself.

Of no less importance to all the sections of the Comintern are Comrade Stalin’s remarks as to the need for giving a Marxian explanation of the existence of the currents and factions that existed in the C.P.S.U.

Hitherto, the Communists in the capitalist countries have been able to study the history of the C.P.S.U. only on the basis of the Russian textbooks which have been translated into a number of foreign languages, apart from utilizing the works of Lenin and Stalin for this purpose. It would be wise, in connection with the preparations for the new textbook in Russian which will answer the strict Marxian requirements formulated by Comrade Stalin, if preparations were undertaken for an edition of this textbook which takes into special consideration the requirements and interests of readers in capitalist countries.

But, for the sections of the Comintern, the importance of Comrade Stalin’s directions concerning the Marxian method of treating the history of the party is not exhausted by the direct application of these remarks to the history of the C.P.S.U. The majority of the sections of the Comintern are faced with the task of working on their own histories, as an actual political question.

Comrade Stalin’s directions are of extremely great importance in the fulfilment of this task.

It is not, of course, a question of immediately proceeding to draw up text-

books on the history of each Communist Party. To start with, that would mean starting from the most difficult point. But for the majority of the most important sections of the Comintern there is an actual political need for elaborating various important and key problems in the history of the respective Communist Parties in connection with the history of the working class movement and with the general history of the class struggle in the given country, and to make this the basis for elaborating a general conception of the history of the given party.

A careful and profound study of the period during which the Communist Parties came into being, of the immediate and more distant history preceding it and the point from which the parties took their origin is also one of the questions to be considered. Not so long ago the Communist Party of France celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of the Tours Congress, at which the majority declared in favor of affiliation to the Comintern, and constituted themselves the Communist Party, while the minority refused to submit to the majority and left the party, brought about a split, and subsequently passed through the ephemeral "Second and a Half International" into the ranks of the Second International. In connection with this celebration, a number of brief articles appeared in the party press which, incidentally, defeated the attempts of the Socialists to set this allegedly "schismatic" act of the Communists against their present tactics which are directed toward establishing real proletarian unity on the basis of the class struggle. But these anniversary articles exhausted the event. The task of making a more profound study of this period on the background of the then economic and political situation in France, and of the struggle of the working class, still remains unsolved.

Of tremendous importance also is the elaboration of the question of the origin of the Communist Party of Germany. And on this point, despite the fact that there is in existence an abundance of material, articles, reminiscences, etc., relating to

this period, in spite of the existence of numerous invaluable statements by Lenin, the study of the history of the party during this period in connection with the history of the first weeks and months of the German revolution of 1918, and in particular with the history of the German Soviets of workers' deputies, has still to be undertaken.

In the history of the Communist Party and of the working class movement of each country there are a number of concrete problems either relating to definite big events (the years 1923 and 1933 in Germany, the general strike and miners' lockout in England in 1926, the September uprising in Bulgaria in the year 1923, the Pilsudski coup d'état in Poland in 1926, the uprising in Vienna in 1927), or connected with the inner-party struggle, which should become the prime subjects of scientific Marxian research. Of great importance also would be works dealing with the development of the attitude adopted by the given party in regard to such important problems as the trade union question, the peasant question, the national question, and others. The main thing in undertaking this research is to apply the Marxian method, the use of which Comrade Stalin insists upon with such force in his letter.

The history of the C.P.S.U. embraces the pre-revolutionary and pre-war periods as well as the post-October period. The other sections of the Communist International were formed only after the world war. Therefore, side by side with the study of their own histories, as independent parties, each party is faced with the task of making a Marxian-Leninist study of the entire history of the working class and Socialist movement, especially during the period of the Second International and imperialist war, of giving a critical estimation of it, the task of making a concrete study and giving a Marxian explanation of the struggle of currents and tendencies inside the working class movement, as Comrade Stalin insists in regard to the history of the C.P.S.U. The struggle of tendencies in the working class movement runs right through the whole of its

history. The task is not only to give a picture of the process of the crystallization of these currents, to point to the general sources of the struggle among them and to follow the way in which they show themselves, but also to reveal the concrete connection between each current and the social essence of the groups of the working population on which they were based, the forms and ways in which the influence of hostile classes was exerted upon the different sections of the working class, and the class essence of the tactics pursued by each current. Only this will make it possible to study the weaknesses and inconsistency of the Left revolutionary wing of the working class movement in the past, and to explain the preponderance of opportunism in the Second International, which led to its downfall in the period of the imperialist war.

Not one of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries, especially in the old capitalist countries, grew out of virgin soil. Side by side with the glorious traditions of past battles, the working class of each country possessed (*and still possesses*) traditions, force of habit, survivals of different currents, schools, sects, which have their roots also in different strata of the working class, in their petty-bourgeois environment, in the onslaught of bourgeois ideology. The struggle for Leninist principles now going on, the

struggle to unite the whole of the working class within the framework of a single revolutionary proletarian party, requires a careful study of all these currents and survivals.

In particular, counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, which has long ceased to be a current in the working class movement and has become the direct agency of fascism, clings hard in all the capitalist countries to the survivals of all kinds of sects and groups (as, for example, the Proud-honists in France), and worms its way into the particularly indefinite, undisciplined groups of the working class movement (some of the anarchists in Catalonia, the Marceau-Pivert group in France, etc.).

For the sections of the Communist International in the capitalist countries, the study of their own history and of the history of the working class movement of their respective countries is an essential and component part of the task of mastering Bolshevism.

Thanks to the concrete directions given by Comrade Stalin, the treatment of the history of the C.P.S.U. will now be raised to a very high level. This should considerably facilitate the forthcoming, urgent and difficult work of studying the history of the Communist Parties and of the working class movement in the capitalist countries.

The Lessons of Almeria

BY GEORGI DIMITROFF

THE unparalleled act of provocation by German warships in the Spanish ports of Ivis and Almeria, accompanied by the bombardment of the port of Almeria on May 31, cannot be regarded as other than an open and brazen act of war by the Hitler government against the Spanish Republic. On the same day the German and Italian governments announced their exit from the so-called Non-Intervention Committee, and gave the order for the dispatch to Spanish waters of new warships, and declared that henceforth they would act "according to their own discretion" in relation to the Spanish Republic. In this connection Blomberg, German War Minister, flew to Rome.

The provocatory character of the whole behavior of the German and Italian fascists is obvious.

During the last few months, especially since the Italian troops were crushed at Guadalajara, it has become clear that in spite of the help being afforded to General Franco by fascist Germany and Italy, he cannot avoid defeat. But the defeat of Franco would signify the collapse of the whole of the fascist intervention in Spain. To avoid this defeat and its heavy consequences for fascism, the infamous heroes of the burning of the Reichstag are resorting to new acts of provocation, in the effort completely to free their hands for further military action against the Spanish people, and for the robber seizure of Spain. No inventions and evasions of the fascists will succeed in covering up this fact.

The allegation made by the Hitler government that Spanish republican airplanes attacked a German warship engaged in the fulfilment of its "controlling obligations" is a lie through and through. First, it is clearly shown by authentic information that the fascist cruiser *Deutschland* was not attacked, but itself attacked airplanes of republican Spain. It was only after this that it was bombarded by republican airplanes. Second, the German warship had no business at all in a port occupied by the rebels. As is well known the fulfilment of control over this sector was the task placed on French ships, and consequently the *Deutschland* could not fulfil any functions of international control in these waters.

If none the less, the cruiser was there, this only goes to prove that it was helping the rebels. It is therefore the height of fascist cynicism for the fascist warships, which allegedly should have ensured non-intervention, themselves to bombard a Spanish town, and for the fascists now to picture themselves as victims who have been subjected to an onslaught and to insult.

As is well known, the attack on Almeria is not the first case of the barbarian behavior of the fascists. The last few weeks have been producing ever new facts of fascist sadism, ferocity and the wiping out of thousands of peaceful citizens and the destruction of peaceful towns. Not so long ago the ancient town of Guernica, the traditional object of worship of the freedom-loving Basque people, was destroyed by fascist aviation.

For several months the fascist rebels and interventionists have been trying to destroy heroic Madrid, and wish to wipe Bilbao from the face of the earth.

By bombarding Almeria and undertaking further military measures, the Hitler government desires once again to face world public opinion with an "accomplished fact." Those who wield power in Berlin and Rome are again speculating on the non-fascist states and progressive public opinion allowing themselves to be scared into yielding to fascist extortion.

It is no secret to anybody that the helplessness of the League of Nations in the face of the seizure of Ethiopia, and the constant concessions made by the biggest Western states to the German and Italian interventionists in Spain, encouraged and still encourage the brazen aggressiveness of the governments of Berlin and Rome. And what the fascist bosses in Berlin and Rome are counting on is that the international working class movement will not be in a position to muster its scattered forces for victorious struggle against fascist aggression. It is well known that the cowardly and hysterical—as they actually are—fascist beasts fear nothing more than that their aggression and acts of provocation meet with courageous and resolute resistance from the united working class and the whole of progressive mankind.

The destruction of Almeria and the murder of peaceful inhabitants, women and children, by the fascist interventionists have called forth a storm of popular indignation in all countries. Public opinion is arising, millions of working people are being brought into movement. But the task is to organize these forces for effective resistance to the fascist violators.

In connection with the situation created by the bombardment of Almeria, the Socialist Party, Communist Party and the General Workers' Union of Spain have issued a call to the Labor and Socialist International, the Communist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions, to take measures to organize joint action in defense of the Spanish people. The fullest support

should be given to this initiative of the Spanish workers' organizations, which responds to the feelings, thoughts and interests of millions of working people; it should be realized in all countries. *Never before has it been so necessary as precisely now.* The Spanish workers' organizations are absolutely correct in calling on the world proletariat "to take the most energetic *joint* action to mobilize the proletarian solidarity of all the people who have firmly decided to prevent the designs of fascism being fulfilled."

The many million forces of the international labor movement must be immediately mobilized against the bandit military action of German and Italian fascism.

Everybody understands that there must be no delay now. In a situation as serious as this, it is absolutely clear that the Socialist, Communist and trade union internationals ought to call a joint conference, to establish a permanent contact committee to indicate all the necessary measures and immediately to proceed to put them into operation, *i.e.*, to do what is being demanded by the Spanish Socialists, Communists and members of trade unions who are fighting side by side and shedding their blood in the struggle against the fascist violators.

The brazen attack on Almeria may become the beginning of events pregnant with serious consequences for all peoples, if the forces are not mobilized in time to curb the fascist interventionists. The Spanish comrades are perfectly correct in stressing in their appeal to the international proletariat the point that in this struggle against German and Italian intervention, it is not only a question of the liberty and independence of Spain, but also of the maintenance of universal peace, of the struggle against fascism, "which designs to set alight a world conflagration." This is a fact about which there can be no doubt whatsoever. Therefore, it is all the more urgent a duty of all working class organizations immediately to declare for the establishment of *international* united action, and also for united action by the working people in the various countries. Only the

united forces of the whole of the international labor movement, and of all honest friends of peace, can ensure that the criminal designs of the fascist barbarians and instigators of war are finally destroyed.

One must really be politically blind to fail to see what tremendous significance and what consequences would follow on *joint* action by the working class and its organizations in each country and throughout the whole world. By undertaking such action it would be possible to rouse and rally the widest masses of the people.

The British conservatives who are patronizing the machinations of Hitler and Mussolini would be driven into a corner. The British and French governments would be compelled to adopt energetic measures against the intervention of German and Italian fascism. It would be possible to achieve the withdrawal of the armed forces of Germany and Italy from Spain, and the recall of the warships of the interventionists from Spanish waters. It would be possible to secure the operation of international law in relation to the Spanish republic. It would be possible to achieve a situation where the fascist interventionists and conquerors would be regarded, as they deserve to be, as aggressors, bandits and pirates. Joint action by the working class throughout the world would provide the Spanish republic and its heroic fighters with not only immeasurable moral aid, but also with colossal material aid. All this would undoubtedly speed up the victory of the Spanish people. Finally, a joint onslaught by the progressive forces of the whole world would enable the instigators of war to be curbed.

A tremendous historic responsibility lies on those on whom the decision of the Labor and Socialist International, and of the International Federation of Trade Unions, now depends. Nothing can justify the fact that attempts at organizing joint action by the international prole-

ariat in defense of the Spanish people have hitherto fallen through. This *should not* and *cannot* continue.

The whole situation is such that it demands that an absolutely clear position be taken up by every working class organization, by every leader of the working class movement on the questions of united action by the world proletariat in defense of the Spanish people. *One cannot sit between two stools.* Every worker, every honest Socialist, is necessarily faced with the question: what sort of a *workers'* international is it if it turns down united front proposals when millions of workers affiliated to it imperatively demand united action?

What sort of a *Socialist* International is it if it turns down demands which come from its own sections, and even from such a one of its sections as the Socialist Party of Spain, which stands together with the Communist Party in the front line of the struggle against fascism?

What sort of *working class, Socialist* leaders are they who disrupt united action by the international proletariat when it is precisely this unity which is the *decisive means* of curbing the fascist violators?

What sort of bearers of international working class solidarity are they who, by disrupting united action of the international proletariat, help fascism to crush the working class movement and enslave the peoples one after the other?

The fate of the Spanish people and the cause of universal peace urgently demand united action of all international working class organizations. The bombardment of Almeria is a serious lesson to all working people, irrespective of their political views and of the organizations to which they belong. It is a serious warning against the further division of the forces of the labor movement.

United action of the international proletariat must and will be established.

Correspondence Between the Communist International and the Labor and Socialist International

RADIOGRAM FROM VALENCIA
TO GEORGI DIMITROFF

Valencia, June 1, 1 A.M.

Georgi Dimitroff,
Communist International,
Moscow.

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

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

to strengthen your solidarity with the Spanish people whose homes and unarmed children are once again subjected to criminal attack.

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

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

Forward, together with the people of Spain.

Forward for peace and freedom throughout the world.

On behalf of the Workers' Socialist
Party of Spain,

Ramon Lamonedá, Secretary.

On behalf of the Communist Party
of Spain,

Jose Diaz, General Secretary.

On behalf of the Executive Com-
mittee of the General Confedera-
tion of Labor,

Felipe Pretel, Acting General
Secretary.

REPLY BY GEORGI DIMITROFF

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

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

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

Taking account of the seriousness of the position which has arisen after the bombardment of Almeria, and on the basis of your appeal, we are taking corresponding steps to establish contact with the Labor and Socialist International.

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

We shall do everything we possibly can to ensure that the international proletariat finally achieves the unity so ur-

gently required in respect to the defense of the Spanish people against the fascist barbarians and to maintain international peace.

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,
Georgi Dimitroff, General Secretary.

DIMITROFF'S TELEGRAM TO
LOUIS DE BROUCKERE

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

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

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

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,
G. Dimitroff, General Secretary.

REPLY OF LOUIS DE BROUCKERE

Georgi Dimitroff,
Communist International,
Moscow.

Have received similar appeal from Valencia. Fully realize necessity of ener-

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

De Brouckere

REPLY OF DIMITROFF TO
DE BROUCKERE

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

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

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

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

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

common cause of aiding the Spanish people nevertheless demand that you, on your part, make other concrete proposals for the achievement of this aim.

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

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

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

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,

Georgi Dimitroff, General Secretary.

TELEGRAM FROM GEORGI DIMITROFF TO
LAMONEDA, DIAZ AND PRETEL

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

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

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

On behalf of the Executive Committee
of the Communist International,
Georgi Dimitroff, General Secretary.

TELEGRAM FROM LOUIS DE BROUCKERE
TO GEORGI DIMITROFF

G. Dimitroff,
Communist International,
Moscow.

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

De Brouckere

DIMITROFF'S REPLY TO DE BROUCKERE

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

In reply to your telegram we wish to inform you that the Presidium of the

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

In the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,
Georgi Dimitroff, General Secretary.

FELIPE PRETEL'S RADIOGRAM TO
GEORGI DIMITROFF

G. Dimitroff,
Communist International,
Moscow.

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

Felipe Pretel, Acting General Secretary,
General Workers Union
of Spain.

The War of Independence of the Spanish People

BY ANDRE MARTY

FOR ten months now the people of Spain have been waging a struggle in defense of the independence of their country, for land and liberty, for bread, work and peace. For six and a half months Madrid has been holding out as the invincible citadel of anti-fascism. Meanwhile, in spite of the difficulties with supplies, in spite of bombs and bullets, the people of Madrid are fighting today with the same courage as during the terrible days of November, 1936.

Throughout the whole of Spain, among all sections of the population, there is an unparalleled spirit of self-abnegation and self-sacrifice which is keeping back the barbarous hordes of fascism.

In the face of such heroism (and in order to find anything to compare with it, we have to rise to the heights of the Paris Commune and the years 1917-19 in Russia), why is the outcome, that is to say, the crushing of the fascists, so long delayed? This question has been raised throughout the world by millions of factory workers, of working people generally who are following with anxiety and hope the great struggle that is taking place in Spain. They fully understand that "the liberation of Spain from the aggression of the fascist reactionaries is not the private affair of the Spanish people, but the common cause of all advanced and progressive mankind" (Stalin).

I.

WHAT IS THE PRESENT SITUATION IN SPAIN?

At the end of April, there was a considerable improvement in the military situation as a whole. The month of February saw the fascists, who had taken Malaga, held back at Motril. But above all their great offensive against Jarama not only failed to cut Madrid off from Valencia, but resulted in a crushing defeat and seriously exhausted their best troops.

March brought the republican forces a great victory at Guadalajara, their first since the beginning of the war. The defeat of the Italian fascist divisions had such military and political consequences in Spain, such political consequences in Italy and throughout the whole world, that certain "well-intentioned" spirits from London and Paris, who refused to move a finger so long as the republican forces were being beaten, or when the women and children were being massacred, were immediately moved to talk about *mediation*, and to demand that an armistice be concluded. Then there was the difficult republican counter-offensive of March and April on the Southern front, the reoccupation of the mercury mines of Almaden, the success at Pozoblanco and the taking of the Cabeza monastery.

Everything goes to show that the months of March and April marked the beginning of a change in the entire military situation in favor of the republicans, the beginning of the passage of the initiative into their hands. The frenzied offensive of the fascists against Bilbao, despite the partial successes gained by them, has not changed the general situation.

Whence these favorable changes in the situation? The causes must be cleared up if we are to establish the methods and the line to be adopted to win as quickly as possible the war started by the reactionary and fascist rebels in Spain, and their instigators, the German and Italian fascist invaders.

1. *The victories at Guadalajara, on the Madrid front and on the Southern front are incontestably due to the appearance on the scene of the great republican people's army.* They are due to the formation of an army built up on modern lines of numerous "columns," and the entry into this army of new forces of volunteers and recruits.

The Guadalajara victory was a very difficult one from all points of view, and was won because the forces of the central front had been under the united command of General Miaja and his General Staff since the early days of November. Guadalajara could only happen because General Miaja as the President of the Committee for the Defense of Madrid, which embraced all parties, unions and anti-fascist organizations of the Madrid area, effectively coordinated all the forces, political, economic and moral.

The secret of the effective resistance and then of the victory on the Madrid front lies in the *united army, united command, and the concentration of all political, economic and moral forces to help the war.*

Certainly everything is not perfect on the central front; that is understood. Enormous efforts have yet to be made there in all spheres: military, industrial production, transport (roads and rolling

stock), supplies, and the mobilization of the whole of the population. But those who saw Madrid in November could no longer recognize it in March.

One felt everywhere a desire for organization, for order, for the elimination of all the talk about revolution, in favor of achieving positive results. Therein lies the secret of the effective defense and later of the victorious counter-attack by the central army. And this decisive experience clearly shows the ways and means to be put into operation in all countries in order to obtain decisive victories.

2. *The new Spanish people's republican army, to a considerable degree, already constitutes a united political bloc.* The republican army is the armed people's front; it is an army animated by a clear understanding of the causes of the war and the aims to be achieved. It is not a "non-political" army, to use the notorious lying formula which serves to keep armies in the service of the interests of the capitalist class; on the contrary, it is an army with a high level of political understanding, definitely aimed against fascism. It is an army which knows what it is fighting for, the aims and objects it expects to achieve.

This political unification of the army is due above all to the enormous work accomplished by the political commissars under the direction of Commissar-General Alvarez del Vayo and his leading committee composed of representatives of all parties and trade union centers. It is they who on all the Spanish fronts have hammered out the people's army; it is they who ever since the first days of the fascist rebellion, as agitators and organizers, have become at one and the same time the men most loved by the soldiers. It is they who have sacrificed their lives and given their blood to cement the former isolated and undisciplined militia units into squads, sections, companies, battalions, brigades and divisions. It is they who have built up discipline by explaining incessantly to

each fighter the aims and reasons of the great liberation struggle of the Spanish people. It is they who have been able to discover the best commanders, sons of the people; it is they who have advanced them to their posts, helped them during every hour of the battle and assisted in making them what they are today, namely, popular leaders, beloved and obeyed.

The presence of political commissars, commissars of the People's Front, in all the army units has been the effective and indispensable guarantee against betrayals by officers of the former army who were undermining the forces of the militia during the months of August, September and October. The political commissars transformed the "columns" and militia battalions which met defeat during the whole of the summer of 1936 into brigades, divisions and army corps of a victorious army, the army of Madrid, of Guadalajara and the Southern front.

3. *The months of March and April saw the first real turn in the development of an active campaign of enlightenment and propaganda among the enemy troops and the people still under the bloody dictatorship of the rebels.* This policy originated in particular in the great speech delivered by Alvarez del Vayo, Commissar for War and Minister of Foreign Affairs, entitled "To the Spaniards in the Rebel Zone" (Valencia, April 14). This appeal, addressed to that section of the Spanish people who are groaning under the heel of Franco and the German and Italian invaders, has already brought forth fruits.

March and April saw the spectacle on all the fronts, for the first time, of squads, sections and even a whole company deserting fully armed from the ranks of the rebels to those of the republican army.

If these efforts are continued and extended, if more details and better arguments are given showing what lies behind the rebellion—the aims of German and Italian fascist intervention—and emphasizing what the Spanish republic has already given to the people, then a

more extensive movement will develop.

4. *The development of international solidarity action was of tremendous support to the Spanish fighters and all the people of Spain and increased their faith in victory.* In the face of the open, cynical entry of the two big fascist states into the war against the Spanish people, in the face of the "unique kind of neutrality" displayed by the European democracies, the working class and people of Spain have strongly appreciated the effective, powerful aid afforded to them by the international proletariat, by the peoples of all countries and above all by the proletariat and peoples of the Soviet Union.

The shouts of "Long live Russia," which greet the stranger, whoever he may be, in the most outlying villages of the republican zone, clearly and concisely indicate how great is the affection of the working people of Spain for the great Soviet Union, how much they appreciate the tremendous political and moral aid it has given them, and its supplies of food and medicines. The Spanish people have also been inexpressibly moved by the action of the thousands of volunteers who have come from all countries to fight by their side against fascism. More than ever before, the Spanish people are in need of this international aid which in all its many forms—political, moral and material—represents one of the most important conditions for victory.

How, then, can we fail to be indignant at the fact that many of the leaders of the Second International, who play a decisive role in determining its policy, take their stand against uniting the efforts of the working class of all countries in aid of the Spanish people, against such unity as would make this aid a thousand times more powerful? How, for example, can we fail to be indignant at Adler, Secretary of the Second International, who will not understand that

"... the achievement of united action by the international proletariat against the common enemy, fascism, the mortal enemy of all mankind, is the fundamental

and urgent task of working class organizations throughout the world; it is the supreme demand of the present moment." (Dimitroff.)

II.

THE EXISTING DIFFICULTIES

And yet, in spite of the lessons of the experience of ten months of warfare, the situation became difficult, at times even critical, at the end of April and in May. Why?

Because instead of creating, developing and strengthening the factors which would ensure victory, too little and, at times, nothing at all, was done in this direction by the Minister of War.

Here are some examples. The great battle of Jarama was a big setback for the fascists; not only did they fail to cut off the road to Valencia; not only was their offensive checked, but they suffered greater losses than any they had sustained since the beginning of the war. But this setback could have been made a complete disaster for them if there had been fresh republican troops in the vicinity ready to undertake a counter-attack. But there were no such reserves. They did not exist.

Guadalajara was a very heavy defeat for the Spanish and Italian fascists. It could have been made a disaster for them, had the republican divisions been relieved by bringing in fresh divisions. This was impossible; *there were no reserves.*

The Spanish people understand the need for building up reserves. But they are only being built up extremely slowly. Why? For one thing because over entire areas of the country, in Catalonia for example, the Trotskyists (including the P.O.U.M.), numerous anarchist leaders and organizations, for five months refused to apply the decree for the general mobilization of the five classes, renewed in February, and because Largo Caballero, President of the Council and Minister of War, did nothing to enforce its application. In addition, regional military authorities made the absence of bar-

racks for the recruits a pretext for sending them home, and the Minister of War did not intervene at all. Finally, in entire regions like Catalonia, the republican army is not yet organized as it is in the rest of Spain; on the Aragon front the armed forces are still divided up according to parties and trade union organizations. This is what led to the disasters suffered in August, September and October in the valley of Tago.

In his speech in Albacete on February 14, 1937, Citizen Martinez Barrio, President of the Chamber of Deputies, declared that the republic must demand of its military leaders that they "*enter into marriage with victory.*" This was the formula of the Great French Revolution in 1792-93. In spite of this, one great military chief, referred to in the press, and rightly so, as "the organizer of all the defeats," was able to remain for months at his post in the high command, and was not removed, except to have conferred upon him an equally important post.

No enquiry, no penalty followed the loss of Malaga, although everyone in Spain knew that this very important town could and should have been victoriously defended. One of the vital conditions for success is to purge the command of all those who nourish any sympathies in their hearts for the fascist enemies of the people, and who prove it by being incapable of fighting the enemy and defeating them. In spite of a big press campaign and of the acceptance in principle of this fact, no purging of the command was undertaken, because certain sectarian interests were put above the interests of the People's Front, above the interests of the victory over fascism.

Who can deny that an essential condition for speedy victory is the security of the rear, the clearing out of it of all suspicious elements, provocateurs and spies? Not only was this measure not adopted, but no sooner, for example, did Gasoria, member of the Madrid Defense Committee, arrest a gang of spies and provocateurs, and the governor of Mur-

cia proceed to undertake a serious drive against the fascists infecting the region, than the anarchist and Trotskyist press launched a most violent campaign against these two men because they happened to be Communists. Once again sectarian interests were put above the interests of the People's Front and of the anti-fascist struggle.

It is absolutely clear that the extremely strict blockade of Spain that followed on the application of the decisions of the London Non-Intervention Committee demands that an exceptional effort be made by the republican government rapidly to develop and unite the whole of the war industry. However, the output of munitions is too low, because each union wishes to run a factory or enterprise itself, etc., etc.

Why is such a situation possible?

Because in certain of the trade union organizations and in the mind of the former Minister of War himself, the victory at Guadalajara, the victorious advance of the republican troops on the Southern front, created the false impression of the situation, according to which all obstacles and difficulties have been overcome and surmounted.

These organizations and these people who were influenced by the first important, though not decisive, victories of the republican army have forgotten *that it is necessary now more than ever before to concentrate all forces against the chief enemy, against fascism; that it is necessary now more than ever before to concentrate all forces in order to win the war.* In forgetting this, these organizations, or rather certain elements in these organizations, and certain members of the government, influenced by the enemies of the united front, have engaged in a most violent attack against the supporters of unity who have built up the People's Front in Spain and whose forces are growing every day; and above all have undertaken a violent attack against the Communist Party. Here are a few examples.

The commissars constitute the veri-

table backbone, the heart and soul of the republican army. But Caballero, Minister of War, issued an unexpected circular restricting the powers of the political commissars and subjecting their nomination to strict rules, leaving the final decision to the Minister of War. The circular was an attempt to transform the appointment of the political commissars, these energetic, active and heroic men, into a simple bureaucratic business, to deprive them of all autonomy and initiative of their own and to place them entirely at the disposal of the Minister of War.

The Madrid Defense Committee, under the presidency of General Miaja, showed how it was possible to carry on successful defense and then to pass on to the counter-attack. Instead of being given assistance in correcting shortcomings, and, above all, instead of being imitated throughout the Spanish republic, it was suddenly dissolved on April 24 and replaced by the Municipal Council, which is far from expressing the strength of the different working class and democratic organizations of Madrid, and in particular the role and influence of the Communist Party. At a time when it is indispensable in all besieged towns like Madrid for the leadership to be thoroughly concentrated, the former President of the Council separated the two authorities, the military (General Miaja) and the civil (the Municipal Council) and thus very considerably weakened the defense of the town. In a word, for certain factions of the parties and organizations, for certain members of the former government, the enemy now is no longer fascism, but Communism. And it has to be admitted that the development of this violent offensive against unity coincided with the arrival in Spain of certain leaders of the Second International, and in particular of Citizen Fritz Adler, secretary of the Second International. This so-called working class leader not only remains a violent enemy of the united front, but is now striving to smash the

united front, to smash the united organizations of the people and of the Spanish working class.

The delegation of the Socialist Workers' Party of Spain and of the U.G.T. (trade union center of which Largo Caballero is the president) to the London Conference of the Second International and the Amsterdam International left the conference profoundly disappointed at not having succeeded in obtaining united action to aid Spain on an international scale. Citizen Fritz Adler responded to their appeals not only by not assisting the development of the united front, but by coming to Spain to justify and to try to apply the criminal anti-unity policy of Citrine and his like, agents of the British Conservatives. For it was Fritz Adler indeed who wrote the following on March 21, 1937, in the *Adelante*, the Socialist newspaper published in Valencia:

"Many among you Spanish comrades have a false idea of the situation in England. The Socialist and trade union organizations of England are completely on the side of the Spanish working class. Many think that these organizations can completely change the political situation in the country; this is not so, for this policy cannot be modified until there has been a complete change in the government."

As though by accident, the same number of the *Adelante* published three violent articles against the Communist Party! Fascism was forgotten!

By this abominable splitting work which Fritz Adler and his like are trying to achieve in Spain, they once more emphasize the justice of the words of Comrade Dimitroff that "as far as these leaders are concerned, the chief enemy is not fascism, but Communism. . . . The chief enemy is not Franco, but Dolores Ibarruri, heroine of the Spanish people."

III.

THE BARCELONA PUTSCH

In Catalonia the working class, the whole of the people, are animated with

a profound and irrepressible hatred of capitalist oppression, against semi-feudal oppression in the countryside. These people who have been so oppressed, these workers who have been martyred during the course of sixty years, are imbued with a splendid heroism. Unfortunately, under the influence of anarchist sectarianism, of which it has always been the center, Catalonia is now that part of Spain where the working class and the people are more divided than anywhere else. Three big organizations play a very important political role there: the Left Republican Party, which always obtains the vast majority of votes during elections and is closely connected with the Sharecroppers' Union, is the party of the republican bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie; the P.S.U.C. (United Socialist Party of Catalonia), which includes four small proletarian or popular parties, is affiliated to the Communist International and has influence over the U.G.T. of Catalonia, was formed after the fascist rebellion; and lastly the C.N.T. (anarcho-syndicalist trade union center), which is closely connected with the F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation).

Besides these three chief organizations, there are other organizations in Catalonia which are and remain violently hostile to the People's Front and unity. Since the fascist rebellion at the end of July, 1936, all the suspicious elements in Barcelona have naturally declared themselves members of some organization or another so as to protect themselves, to procure arms and to maintain them. Barcelona swarms with fascist spies. During the imperialist war one of the main centers of the Intelligence Service of the German General Staff was installed there. It is quite natural that Barcelona is therefore one of the chief operating centers of the Gestapo in the Mediterranean, and of the Italian fascist secret police as well. That is one of the reasons why Barcelona is the strongest hotbed of demoralization existing in

Spain, is one of the principal rallying centers of hostile elements.

The Trotskyist P.O.U.M., led by Nin and his collaborators, was the organization which grouped around itself all the criminal elements and provocateurs, and at the same time brought influence to bear upon what are known as the uncontrollable, upon a number of anarchist organizations and above all upon the organizations of the anarchist youth.

The decree requisitioning all arms, and unifying all the forces of the republican army was made on October 12. It was renewed on March 27, and immediately brought about the resignation of the Catalonian defense delegate (anarchist), who had refused to apply the mobilization decree issued in Valencia, and caused one of the crises of the Catalonian government. Unfortunately, Largo Caballero, Minister of War, accepted the fact that his decree had not been applied in practice.

At the end of April, at the time of the very powerful fascist attack on Bilbao, effective aid could have been extended to Biscay by the action of the Catalonian forces at Teruel and on the Aragon front. To this end, what was then required was the application of the decree for the requisition of arms and the establishment of a united regular army. Immediately it began to be applied, the anarchy-loving youth, uncontrollable elements, and overt and covert Trotskyists, in obedience to the Trotskyist slogans which had been advocated, propagated and discussed for several months by the P.O.U.M., replied by undertaking an armed putsch.

The launching of this putsch was facilitated by the attitude adopted by certain members of the late government whose heads had been turned by the first military successes; they permitted a violent discussion to be started in the newspapers and inside the organizations of the People's Front, with the result that anti-fascist unity was weakened. The Trotskyists then immediately began their attack. The following is what the

P.O.U.M. wrote in its appeal for May Day, published in the *Bataille*:

"It is two years already since the working masses awoke. Day and night the workers in the factories and mills are in anxiety about the outcome of the revolution which is endangered by the reformist policy. We will continue to be vigilant for we cannot tolerate the policy of the central government and the government of Catalonia, a policy directed against the working class, against the revolution, and towards the return to power of the bourgeoisie, a policy which has brought July 19 to ruin. . . . The government of Valencia, like the government of Catalonia, has created conditions which are weakening the working class movement and aim at crushing the proletariat."

The situation is clear. What order could Franco, or more exactly Hitler, have given his agents in republican Spain with a view to paralyzing the republican troops, the war industry and the whole life of the country? It could have been no other than this:

"Do everything possible to introduce schisms, to reduce confidence in the government, to effect acts of sabotage, to engage in assassination, and if possible in putsches, try all possible means to weaken the armed forces of the republic and the war industry."

"Do everything possible to divide the united forces of the republic, of the People's Front." The whole of the campaign conducted by the Trotskyists in Spain since July, 1936, aimed at dividing, disintegrating the rear, at weakening the whole of the anti-fascist struggle. The flight abroad of a number of Trotskyist "leaders" is yet another sign of their guilt.

To refuse to provide the front with rifles, to steal and hide machine guns and armored cars in Barcelona, are tantamount to disarming the men fighting at the front, to stabbing them in the back, to murdering them. To start an armed rebellion in the biggest proletarian and industrial town of Spain, in the biggest port of Spain, is, quite obviously,

to sabotage the arrival of foodstuffs and provisions, to sabotage the making of arms and munitions; it is the very best service they could possibly render to Franco.

It is for this reason that our Party has demanded over and over again that the most energetic and implacable measures be adopted against the Trotskyists, agents of Franco in Spain, and above all in Catalonia.

What has been their attitude during the last three years?

During the events in Asturias (October, 1934), the Communist International invited the Second International to conduct joint action in aid of the Spanish people in their struggle against reaction. Immediately the P.O.U.M. conducted a campaign of unprecedented violence, declaring that instead of united action, a Fourth International ought to be established in place of the Third and Second Internationals; in a word, it replied to the appeal for unity by engineering a split at a time when the guns of the legionnaires were shooting down the workers!

After October, 1934, thanks to the campaign for unity waged particularly by the Communist Party, the big unity campaign of the two trade union centers, the U.G.T. (General Workers' Union) and the C.N.T. (National Confederation of Labor), began to develop. The Communist Party which was the ideological leader of a trade union organization, the C.G.T.U., immediately dissolved it; its members were invited to join the U.G.T. The P.O.U.M. responded by creating the Trade Union Federation of Working Class Unity in Catalonia "to prevent the trade unions from falling into reformist hands," in other words, another maneuver to divide the movement in reply to the appeal for all the workers to join a united U.G.T., capable of barring the way against fascism and acting as a powerful working class force in the struggle for bread and liberty.

Immediately following the events in Asturias, a great unity campaign developed among the youth, especially the

Communist and Socialist youth. Immediately the Trotskyists violently attacked this campaign. They hurled insults at the leaders of the Communist and Socialist youth; at the same time they set about the establishment of a new organization, the so-called Iberian Communist Youth. Once again attempts at splitting in opposition to the drive for unity, and this in a period of reaction.

When a big campaign for the People's Front was launched at the end of 1935 and the beginning of 1936, the Trotskyists violently protested against it, asserting that the workers would lose their revolutionary outlook in such a bloc and would find themselves under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. At a time when all the democratic and progressive forces of Spain were entering the People's Front and preparing for the election victory of February 16, 1936, at a time when the anarchists themselves were asking their adherents to vote for the People's Front, in view of the struggle to be conducted against fascism, the Trotskyists were conducting the most violent splitting campaign to divide the ranks of the People's Front.

The fascist rebellion of July, 1936, came. At that time the slogan of the day was defense of the democratic republic, the only slogan capable of rallying all the anti-fascist forces, the only one capable of creating the conditions necessary for a struggle for the real liberation of the proletariat and all the people of Spain. The reply of the Trotskyists to this was to demand the immediate establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a slogan calculated to smash the People's Front by separating the middle classes from the proletariat and depriving the latter of their allies, thereby facilitating German and Italian fascist intervention.

On the international field the slogan of the Trotskyists for the immediate establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Spain could only serve to aggravate the lack of confidence of the European democracies in the Spanish republic, and consequently could only result

in a further restriction of the already limited aid being rendered to Spain. Thus the slogans of the Trotskyists aimed at smashing the People's Front in Spain and restricting or altogether putting a stop to international solidarity.

Against the international brigades made up of Communists, Socialists and anti-fascists of all countries, who have come to defend the people of Spain, the Spanish Trotskyists make the following slanderous statement: "Anarchist comrades, do not trust the brigades of the Communist International fighting beside us to crush fascism. They are the army corps which the Communists of Catalonia and Spain will send against you, as they did during the Russian revolution against the anarchists."

It was a criminal act of provocation designed to arouse the hatred of honest anarchist workers against the international brigades engaged in rendering such great aid to the Spanish people. Only an agent of Franco could express himself in these terms.

To sum up, Trotskyism in Spain has been fighting against everything that signifies unity and the strengthening of the People's Front. It has fought and is still fighting against the formation of the regular army, the powerful armed expression of the Spanish people. The Trotskyists oppose it in the following terms: "We do not want a regular army because it would mean that we recognize militarism, it would mean imposing the same methods and forms as those of the previous army; we want only the revolutionary militia."

The Trotskyists thus give exact expression to the thoughts of the agents of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. They rally together and organize all the "uncontrollable" elements and fascist provocateurs, and due to their "revolutionary" talk, they succeed in influencing the less conscious anarchist workers.

Since the putsch—that is to say, the crime—has been accomplished, energetic measures must be adopted; the republicans, the rank-and-file Socialists, the

Anarchists, the Communists insist upon this. It is demanded above all by those who have not had a single day's leave since the beginning of the battle for Madrid, who demand to be defended in the rear.

Thus, the Barcelona putsch has once more demonstrated the truth of Dimitroff's words that:

"What is needed is, while carrying on the struggle against fascism to be absolutely merciless in dealing blows at its Trotskyist agents, who are a gang of spies, diversionists, terrorists and police provocateurs, in the service of German fascism and the Japanese militarists. The Trotskyist degenerates, on instructions from the fascist intelligence services, are carrying on subversive work against the Land of Socialism, are doing everything possible to deepen the split in the working class movement and to prevent its unity, and are striving to disintegrate the People's Front movement from within. Everywhere their actions are those of wreckers of the working class movement and disorganizers of the struggle of the masses of the people against fascism. International proletarian unity against fascism and war is unthinkable and impossible unless a struggle is carried on against the Trotskyist agents of fascism."

And the Barcelona events once more confirm the words of Comrade Stalin at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., held in March this year:

"Present-day Trotskyism is not a political trend in the working class, but a gang without principle, without ideals, of wreckers, diversionists, intelligence service agents, spies, murderers, a gang of sworn enemies of the working class, working in the pay of the intelligence services of foreign states."*

In order to understand how great are the services rendered by the Trotskyist bandits to the fascist interventionists, it will be enough to quote the *Temps*, organ

* Stalin, *Mastering Bolshevism*, p. 17, Workers Library Publishers, New York. 5 cents.

of the big French bourgeoisie, of the Comite des Forges, dated May 9, 1937:

"It seems, on the other hand, that the appearance of the black banner in Catalonia has only served to facilitate the final alliance between Italy and Germany on the line to be followed in Spanish affairs, and on their common desire to continue in their efforts."

IV.

THE CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT

The changes which have taken place in the government began with the resignation of Largo Caballero, the President of the Council, and Minister for War.

The Caballero government, formed at the end of August, 1936, had to play and did play, an important and necessary role. It was the first government to unite all the forces of the People's Front, from the Communists to the moderate republicans and Basque Catholic Nationalists. It was enlarged at the end of October by including the C.N.T., (the Anarcho-Syndicalist Trade Unions), thus uniting in its ranks all the anti-fascist forces. Its leader, Largo Caballero, played an important role in the work accomplished, but he failed to understand that new tactics and efforts were required for the new situation.

The month of March brought about an intensification of the blockade of Spain at the same time as the victory at Guadalajara. At this moment it needed the exertion of every effort in all spheres, military, industrial, economic and political, in order to deliver a decisive blow against fascism. All the parties and the majority of the members of the trade unions of the U.G.T., and the C.N.T. insisted upon the adoption of resolute, energetic and immediate measures.

Our Communist Party which had grown considerably in prestige, influence, and membership, also insisted upon this. Our Communist Party, all the slogans of which, issued since July, have been proved by experience to be correct, our Communist Party, thousands of mem-

bers of which have fallen in the front line of battle under fascist machine-gun fire, and whose members working in the political, military and economic spheres are the pride of all the people, demanded this.

But the President of the Council and Minister of War did not understand that the relation of social forces inside the People's Front had completely changed. He paid heed rather to certain members of the Executive Committee of the U.G.T. who no longer represent the outlook of the trade unions and their members, for example, those in the Madrid region, in Catalonia, Asturias and Biscay. He would not pay heed to the voice of the workers, the soldiers and peasants. He did not adhere to the slogans of the February 14 demonstration which almost half a million demonstrators carried under the windows of his apartment. He did not see the new polarization of forces. And this breach between the demands of the workers and the people, on the one hand, and the leader of the government, on the other, forced him to resign.

There are several examples to show clearly that after having rendered good service to the anti-fascist cause, Largo Caballero was unable to understand the profound changes which have taken place among the people of Spain. For two months Catalonia refused to establish a regular army, which, had it been formed, would have immediately hindered and perhaps checked the formidable attack against Biscay.

For two months the Trotskyists and "uncontrollable" elements accumulated arms, including machine-guns and tanks, in Barcelona, instead of sending them to the Aragon front, where they were so much needed. A head of the government, who is at the same time Minister of War, and permits of such practices without adopting any measures, thereby cuts himself off from the masses. A head of the government who, when the situation especially demands it, fails to raise the productivity of the factories to the maximum, while there is a working

class ready to increase production three-fold and fourfold, as shown by the Stakhanov shifts in Madrid, thereby cuts himself off from the masses. A head of the government and Minister of the Interior, who fail or do not want to perceive the open preparations for a counter-revolutionary putsch, thereby cut themselves off from the militant anti-fascist masses at the front and in the rear.

It is to be regretted that the government was forced to reorganize itself at such a decisive moment of the war. It is still more to be regretted that certain members of the government allowed themselves to be influenced by the "pilgrims" who were not to be seen in Spain at a time when it appeared that everything was lost. I am referring, primarily, to Fritz Adler, Secretary of the Second International.

The visit of Fritz Adler and some of his friends immediately let loose a violent polemic in the Spanish press against the united forces of the People's Front and first and foremost against our Communist Party of whose 240,000 members, 135,000 or more than half, are fighting at the front; these discussions favored the Barcelona putsch. Fritz Adler took the liberty of defending Sir Walter Citrine before the Spanish workers, by identifying him with the trade union organizations in Great Britain, just as though Sir Walter has anything in common with the miners, dockers, metal workers and sailors of Great Britain. The truth is that by coming to defend Sir Walter before the Spanish workers, Fritz Adler came to defend the policy of the British conservatives which has the support of Sir Walter. It is a policy of strangling the Spanish republic, and has been in force ever since the first day of the rebellion, when the British government refused coal and oil to Spanish warships at Gibraltar, when it drove the republican fleet from Tangiers in order to permit Franco's troops to cross the straits. This policy has continued right up to the present day when it demands

mediation each time the fascist rebels and the interventionist troops are defeated by the republican army.

This is the policy that Fritz Adler, who never allows an occasion to pass wherein to declare himself violently opposed to the People's Front, came to defend and operate in Spain. It is infinitely regrettable that certain leaders of the Spanish Socialist Party allowed themselves to be influenced by this man whose arrival in Spain coincided with the frantic attacks of the Trotskyists, aimed at dividing the People's Front and arousing a violent campaign against our Communist Party.

Especially at the present moment, the men fighting in Spain have no time for these "tourists at the front." There is room for everybody in the Spanish republican army, but only for the purpose of fighting against fascism, and not for sowing germs of dissention.

One can only regret the tenacity and obstinacy of a number of the leaders of the Second International who oppose the creation of an extensive united front, of unity of action which in Europe would result in a tremendous wave of aid for the Spanish republic and would overcome all resistance.

All working people understand that the victory of the people of Spain must be hastened on by every possible means, by breaking down the abominable policy of what amounts to sanctions against the legally constituted government (not a quarter of these sanctions have been applied to Italy and Germany). They understand that all the forces of the working class need to be rallied to blockade the supplies and assistance arriving from all parts for the Spanish fascists, and to ensure aid to the great Spanish people in the shape of provisions, clothing, milk and medicaments of which they stand in such dire need, and to evacuate women and children en masse to places of safety away from the bombardments.

It is not behind the scenes in the government offices of Valencia, or in the ante-chambers of fictitious general staffs

that service can be rendered to the Spanish republic.

The place for those who are not fighting in Spain is in their own country. There it is that they should bring about the united front, and arouse the masses.

Dimitroff, quite rightly, reminded us recently that the Seventh Congress of the Communist International declared:

“Joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations not only does not preclude, but on the contrary renders still more necessary, the serious and well-founded criticism of reformism, of Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and the patient exposition of the principles and program of Communism to the Social-Democratic workers.”

Our Spanish brother Party was right, then, in criticizing the mistakes and shortcomings of the Largo Caballero government.

It is to be regretted that the attitude adopted by the former President of the Council and Minister of War and the former Minister of the Interior—an attitude contrary to the spirit of collective work—provoked the recent ministerial crisis because it refused to allow of any criticism whatsoever, criticism indispensable to the progress of the war, and leveled not only by the Communist ministers, but also by the Socialist and Republican ministers. But the criticism will have a salutary effect if it leads to more collective work, more real achievement, more energy and activity.

V.

FOR VICTORY OVER FASCISM

The Spanish people will be victorious. They will crush the rebels and traitors to the country, they will liberate themselves from the German and Italian fascist invaders.

1. The Spanish people will be victorious because our Communist Party has grown considerably in strength and prestige in the fire of the *struggle*, has

actually become the most important factor in the victory of the revolution and of the war of national independence.

Our glorious brother Party has increased from 35,000 members in February, 1936, to 249,000 members today, of whom more than half (135,000) are at the front, supported by 50,000 members of the United Socialist Party of Catalonia and 12,000 members of the Communist Party of Biscay, and has proved the correctness of all its proposals and directions. The “eight conditions for victory” in particular, which have been posted on all the walls of Spain since December, form a remarkable charter which, if applied, would mean a decisive step forward in the direction of success.

The prestige and influence of the Communist Party are high in the U.G.T. and are growing strong in the C.N.T.; its influence is considerable in the countryside, and is tremendous in the army.

Its political leaders, ministers, commanders of army corps, divisions, brigades, and battalions; its commissars, its men fighting at the front, its administrators, all are modest, serious-minded working people whose loyalty is unshakable. They serve as examples in the training and molding of new fighters.

Thanks to its activity and influence, the anti-fascist movement is growing broader and deeper with every day that passes. Our Communist Party is witnessing its first successes in the campaign to unite the two parties, Socialist and Communist. It continues to work incessantly for the fusion of the two great trade union centers, the U.G.T. and C.N.T. Finally it is the essential element in the rallying together of all the forces of the working class and all working people, of all democratic and progressive forces in the People's Front. We are proud that thanks to the activity of the Communist Party such important results have attended the Spanish people in their struggle against fascism.

2. The Spanish people will be victorious because ten months of warfare have created a *new Spain*. In blood and suffer-

ing there has been born a democratic, parliamentary republic of a *new type*, quite different from the French, Belgian and British democracies.

In Spain, the material basis of reaction and fascism has already been severely undermined and partially *destroyed*. And it is on these ruins that true democracy will grow up. The Communist Party of Spain constantly reminds all those who accuse it of forgetting the revolution, of just this point. What forms the basis of this new type of democracy which ensures victory?

A. The land is in the hands of the poor peasants and agricultural workers. The decree of October 7, 1936 "*expropriated* without compensation and in favor of the state all lands and agricultural enterprises which on July 18, 1936, belonged to persons who directly or indirectly participated in the insurrectionary movement against the republic." Thus there are no longer any big landed proprietors in the Spanish republic! Therefore, hundreds of thousands of people, exploited down the ages by the feudal lords and big landowners, are today the masters of the soil they cultivate!

B. The enterprises abandoned by the reactionaries and fascists, are, in the majority of cases, in the hands of the state and all are under the control of the workers. The proletarians are masters of production and are responsible for it.

C. The banks, the financial wealth of the country, are controlled by the state and the workers' organizations.

D. *Arms are in the hands of the people.* In republican Spain, there is no longer a caste army. The working people have seized arms and are using them to defend their rights, liberties and well-being. The people's army, with its commanders who have arisen from the people and have proved their loyalty to the people with their blood, with its heroic commissars, is firmly anti-fascist; it is also a politically united new type of army.

E. The economic and political power of the church has disappeared. The priests and bishops, who took up arms against

the people and are in the ranks of the rebels, have been dispossessed of the enormous wealth they had accumulated.

F. The republican army is the expression of the people's will. It is formed of all the parties in the People's Front, from the Communists to the Basque Catholics. The recent ministerial crisis partly originated in the healthy reaction of the vast majority of the members of the government against certain elements who tried to operate individually, above any control, and in an impermissibly dictatorial manner. In a short time, the Cortes will be called upon to sanction the alteration in the composition, that is to say, the policy, of the government.

Is there not the basis here for a revolution which will rid Spain of its semi-feudalism and its age-old obscurantism? Comrade Jose Diaz was quite right in reminding us on May 9 at Valencia, *that it is impossible to separate the revolution from the war. It is by making war against the fascists that this deep social transformation can develop and deepen.*

G. *The Spanish people will be victorious because on this solid basis the anti-fascist movement brings about the concentration and unification of all the forces of the people.*

When the Communist Party during the first days of the rebellion declared that the prime need was the defense of the democratic republic, many important Socialist leaders demanded, on the contrary, that a Socialist republic be immediately established, failing to understand that this would immediately smash the People's Front and lead to the victory of fascism. Today, thanks to the activities of the Communist Party, many of the leaders of the Socialist Party have changed their attitude and adopted the point of view of the Communist Party, which alone will make it possible, with victory and after it, to prepare the real march towards socialism.

The C.N.T. and the F.A.I. have recently declared that we must wait for the end of the war before trying to set up "*libertarian*" communism. In October

they raised the question of an insurrection to set up a dictatorial Council of Defense. Then they demanded a "revolutionary alliance" between the C.N.T. and U.G.T., with a view to setting up a "government on trade union lines," charged with the immediate accomplishment of the social revolution. What a tremendous change has taken place in these organizations!

At the beginning of the fascist rebellion, the republicans, while declaring it impossible to return to a republic of the April 14 type, nevertheless in the majority of cases were against the acceptance of a social program which could provide the republic with a new type of economic and political content. Today they are loyally supporting the viewpoint of the Communist Party and are helping to put it into practice.

To have successfully united these different trends, including the Basque Catholics, on the basis of the anti-fascist People's Front, to have succeeded in securing the acceptance of the principle of the creation of a united people's army, and the operation in Spain of a united army command, nationalization of the factories, and at the same time respect for the small and middle property-holders in town and country, are no small success. A year ago nobody would have believed that such a large anti-fascist and national force could be possible.

True, the difficulties facing the new government are tremendous. The most serious lies in a certain lack of trust on the part of the majority of the Executive Committee of the U.G.T. and of organizations of the C.N.T. towards the new government. It seems, however, that this resistance will not persist for long.

For example, the U.G.T. cannot forget that it has considerably increased in membership since July, 1936, and that three-quarters at least of the unions affiliated to it are strong supporters of unity and the People's Front. But the central councils of the trade unions and the Executive Committee of the U.G.T. have not been re-elected since October, 1934. They do not, thus, represent the

real feelings of the members which, moreover, vary in the different regions. For example, there is not a single Communist on the Executive Committee of the U.G.T., although the U.G.T. trade unions in Madrid and Catalonia are Communist in the majority of cases.

Moreover, the resolutions congratulating the new government adopted by the U.G.T. organizations in Madrid, Catalonia, Biscay and Asturias, are sufficient proof that the Executive Committee in Valencia does not reflect the opinion of the members.

On the other hand, faced with the actual realities of the war, the mass of the C.N.T. members have also evolved very considerably in the sense of unity and anti-fascism. For this reason many of the leaders, of whom Vasquez is the secretary of the National Committee, exerted all their efforts to put a stop to the Trotskyist-fascist putsch in Barcelona which has done so much harm to the Spanish people. All this leads us to hope that in a short time the two trade union centers will be, if not directly represented in the government, once more vigorous supporters of it in the anti-fascist struggle.

The Spanish Communist Party demands of the new government that the serious mistakes committed in the past be repaired as quickly as possible. It demands:

The final entry of the Catalanian armed forces into the Spanish people's army under a united command;

The purging of the army command of all those who have shown themselves to be inefficient;

The elimination of the chaos which reigns in industry, now entirely nationalized;

The purging of the rear of people belonging to the "Fifth Column," of spies, provocateurs, defeatists, *i.e.*, primarily the open and masked Trotskyist groups of the P.O.U.M. type. This requires that an unhesitating and energetic policy be pursued as is demanded by the people. All this must be done in order to win the war as quickly as possible.

It is true that the situation in Spain is still grave. The fascist enemy is strongly armed; in spite of the control, they have the support of two big fascist states, while the European democracies, and primarily England and France, against the will of the people of these countries, are helping to stifle the Spanish people.

The prohibition against the purchase of arms and ammunitions by the legally constituted government of Spain, the prohibition against the entry of international volunteers into Spain, the "control" which is really a blockade of the Spanish republic, while the warships and airplanes of the German and Italian fascists continue to supply Franco with all the aid he requires—all these "neutrality" measures are, in reality, only of advantage to the fascists.

International aid should not only be continued, but be considerably increased. It is necessary for foodstuffs, medicaments, ambulances, medical accessories, doctors and surgeons to go in a constant stream to Spain. The women and children must be saved by withdrawing them from the burning soil of Spain, bombarded as it is on all sides. The republican government must have the same rights as the other legal governments. Further, the action taken by the working people of the great Soviet Union must without delay be complemented by action on the part of the united front of the workers of all countries, of all those who love liberty. Thus, the sooner this is achieved and amplified, the sooner will the barriers erected by the reactionary leaders of the Second International be broken down; the stronger will this international aid be, the more will it consolidate and weld together the People's Front in Spain, the anti-fascist unity of the workers and peoples of the peninsula, and the sooner will it lead to victory.

THE CHARACTER OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

"A government is judged by its deeds, not by its words." Jesus Hernandez, Minister of Public Education, made this his

starting point when on May 28 he asked the working people of Spain to express their opinion as regards the Negrin government as well as the policy of our Communist Party. This government has been in existence only a few days, but it has already reorganized and concentrated the army high command. It has begun to incorporate the Catalanian forces in this army; in the heat of the struggle it is carrying out similar work in Biscay and Asturias, where the militia and armed units of parties and trade unions still exist. It has taken the first steps towards purging the country of spies, agent provocateurs, "uncontrollable elements," and has already suppressed the Trotskyist newspaper, *La Bataille*, which led the counter-revolutionary putsch in Barcelona. The generals who were responsible for the loss of Malaga, whether through treachery or inefficiency, are to be tried.

This is a good beginning. The enthusiastic approval of tremendous masses of working people and soldiers is a good indication that the Negrin government represents the will of the people, the will so clearly expressed in the great demonstrations in Valencia on February 14, and which the Caballero-Galarza group refused to satisfy.

The vote of the National Committee of the U.G.T., expressing its confidence in the new government in opposition to the contrary gesture of its Executive Committee, throws light upon the recent ministerial crisis. It should not be forgotten that the origin of this crisis was the opposition towards the Caballero-Galarza group of all the Communist, Socialist, and republican ministers, following on as the *Temps* declared, the interference of Del Vayo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, who on his return from Paris insisted on the need for the adoption of measures to prevent a repetition of acts like the Barcelona putsch, the repercussions of which were so grave abroad.

This group, as above explained, did not understand, nor wanted to understand, the profound changes effected during the last ten months among the masses of the workers and the people in general. This

was because the main base of the Caballero group is a narrow section of trade union functionaries in the U.G.T., who being thoroughly bureaucratic did not and do not want to see the changes taking place among the workers and the masses of the people who are ardently desirous of doing everything possible to win the war.

Caballero and Galarza are adding to this "association of interests" of certain trade union functionaries, the revolutionary talk of the Trotskyists and certain Anarchist elements who have not been capable of anything better than terrorizing the small peasants and launching the Barcelona putsch instead of acting energetically at the front and helping the production of munitions in the rear.

Unprecedented passivity and inertia hidden behind revolutionary talk were the policy of this group which stood so aloof from the sentiments of the workers and toilers of Spain and Catalonia. To those who pretend that the Negrin government is "less revolutionary than the one which preceded it," our Party has already replied by pointing out what can be the only revolutionary way out in the conditions prevailing in Spain today. The way out is to form a strong people's army, well armed and skilled in military technique, a single general staff purged of traitors and incompetents; it is to build up a big war industry and increase agricultural and industrial production; it is to ensure the security of the rear and the front against provocateurs and spies.

In short, the only revolutionary policy is to carry on the war, to win the war against the Spanish fascists and the Ger-

man and Italian invaders. *Because to win the war is to win the revolution.* This revolutionary policy is that which the new Negrin government has begun to carry out, composed as it is of Socialists and Communists (the proletarian conscience of the government), together with the republicans, representing the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, and the delegates of the peoples of Catalonia and Biscay, who are also striving to liberate themselves from imperialist and fascist slavery.

Berlin and Rome are under no illusions. Hardly had the Negrin government been formed when all the brutality of the fascists broke over it with unprecedented violence. The air raids over Barcelona and Valencia were begun again. Madrid is being systematically and savagely bombarded while Almeria has been devastated by Hitler's warships. And Italian and German pirate submarines are sinking Spanish merchant ships, without either British democracy or French democracy raising a finger in protest.

Hitler and Mussolini are aware that Franco is going to lose; he has met with a setback in Biscay. He is again retreating on the Sierra de Guadarrama front. And so they are also doubling their violent efforts.

And it is for this reason that there should be still greater, still more persistent united action of all the working people. It is for this reason that each Communist Party must double its efforts to obtain united action on an international scale, the strongest trump-card which guarantees the rapid success of the Spanish people against fascism.

At the Italian Pole of the "Rome-Berlin" Axis

BY M. ERCOLI

REMARKABLE things have been taking place for some time in the towns and villages of Italy. Detachments of police, bands of fascists, armed with clubs (as during the civil war and at the time of the Matteotti murder) rummage about everywhere, bursting into public places and private houses, searching every corner, threatening, terrorizing and thrashing everyone who falls into their hands. What do they want? What are they looking for?

In Genoa, as one correspondent writes to the Communist press, all public places where there are radio sets which could be used to listen in to stations other than the local ones have been raided and the sets smashed. In the evenings, groups of specialists set up special noise-creating apparatus around the towns so as to drown the voice of the mysterious radio station—the radio station of the Communist Party—which regularly, at a definite hour every evening, broadcasts to hundreds of thousands of attentive listeners that which the Italian population are seeking for and for which they are hungering as for bread, and more than bread—namely, the *truth*. The truth about what is taking place in Italy and throughout the world, the truth about the heroic struggle and the first victories of the Spanish people over the fascist invaders, the truth about the Popular Front in France, the truth about the Soviet Union.

But the feverish activity of the fascist authorities continues to be fruitless. Whispered from mouth to mouth, painted on the walls in indelible colors, passed on by every means from village to village, the call, the wave length and the hour of transmission of the mysterious station are becoming known to hundreds of thousands of people, and every evening new thousands of listeners await impatiently and listen greedily to the new voice, the voice of truth.

The fascist dictatorship has been in existence for fifteen years. For ten years the people of Italy have been prevented from reading legally anything but the fascist press, from listening to any but fascist propaganda. Every day the fascist press is full of articles lauding the "victories" and "achievements" of the blackshirt regime, the "fascist empire" and the theory and practice of fascism not only in Italy but throughout the world. Every day the fascist press and the speeches of the fascist leaders announce to the whole world that all the enemies of the fascist government have been caught and destroyed, that the Italian people have never been so united in their support for Mussolini as they are now, that they have become convinced of the justice and success of his policy and have resolutely decided to support this policy to the end.

But this government, which never

misses a single opportunity to announce that it is not afraid of anything or anybody, is afraid of a very simple thing—the *truth*. The mere fact that not merely do thousands of Communists and their sympathizers read the illegal Communist press, but that it has become possible for hundreds of thousands of Italians to compare the truth with the falsehoods which cram the official press, this fact alone is driving Mussolini and his general staff frantic, and is something which the fascist dictatorship cannot tolerate.

The present situation in Italy is characterized by two elements: on the one hand *by fear of the truth* on the part of the fascist leaders, and on the other *by the thirst for the truth* on the part of the masses, including even those who are under the influence of the fascists. This can be seen in the fascist party clubs and other fascist organizations where the masses sometimes gather to catch and listen to the voice of the Communist radio station. These two elements show that the state of affairs in Italy is not all that which official articles and the speeches of the fascists would like to show; that discontent is arising and developing there, that contradictions are maturing there, than unrest exists which is causing the fascist leaders and their regime tremendous difficulties.

I.

The fascist leaders are now trying to concentrate the attention of the Italian people on questions of international policy, in the endeavor to arouse a feeling of national pride, on the one hand by lauding the victory gained by the Italian army over the semi-armed Ethiopian people as a great "national" victory, as the beginning of a new era for Italy, and, on the other hand, by promising the Italian people new successes and new victories as the result of Mussolini's new foreign policy, *i.e.*, the alliance between Italian fascism and German National-Socialism.

This alliance which, according to the fascists, is based not only on a complete identity of interests but also on the ideo-

logical and political kinship of the two regimes will make the whole of Europe dependent on the "Rome-Berlin axis" and make it possible for Italian fascism to carry out its plans, correcting at last the "injustice" of the post-war treaties, and removing the "affronts" dealt to Italy by the big capitalist powers, which divided the world up among themselves, and left mere crumbs from their table for others. This is what the fascists say. But it is precisely in the sphere of international policy that Italian fascism is now faced with the most difficult problems. It is precisely here that difficulties are gathering; on the one hand, objective difficulties; and on the other hand, the difficulties which arise from the fact that Mussolini's new foreign policy, the policy of the "Rome-Berlin axis" is arousing strong distrust and growing alarm among a section of the Italian population.

Certain circles among the Italian people feel that this policy is against the interests of the country, that it is facing the Italian people with a tremendous risk, that it threatens to put Italy in a hopeless position and that it may lead to national disaster. These anxieties, which extend to quite big sections of the people, though as yet not in a clear form, are well founded.

The alliance with German National-Socialism is the logical result of the present European situation, of the policy of imperialist expansion, aggression and war provocation conducted by fascism for many years. But this alliance contains several new elements which cannot remain unnoticed by the Italian people.

In the first place, if it is true that Mussolini's political program was always a "revisionist" program, and that Italian fascism always set itself the aim of bringing about a new revision of the world by means of a new world war, it is also true that Mussolini at a certain period—possibly because he did not consider that favorable conditions existed in Europe for him to conduct an openly aggressive policy—tried to conceal his plans, not hesitating at times even to resort to pacifist demagoguery. For many

years his foreign policy has been a policy of intrigues and maneuvers, simply a continuation in post-war conditions of the traditional foreign policy of the Italian bourgeoisie, who systematically maneuvered between the competing imperialist powers and blocs with the aim of ensuring favorable conditions for their own expansion.

Just as before the first imperialist war, liberal and democratic Italy, though tied to the Central Powers by the Triple Alliance Pact, intrigued with France and Britain and thus secured the possibility of attacking Turkey and wrenching Tripolitania and Kirenaika from it during the war of 1911, so fascist Italy in post-war times, though a member of the League of Nations and formally bound by friendship to France and England, has in reality intrigued in all spheres of European policy and by inciting all tendencies, revisionist and hostile, to the League of Nations, has tried to create favorable conditions for the fulfilment of its aggressive and annexationist plans at the expense of members of this very League.

This system of foreign policy, based on cynicism and the basest intrigues, nevertheless creates the impression that the Italian bourgeoisie is comparatively independent of the great capitalist powers of Europe. It was by these very methods that the aggression against Ethiopia was prepared and carried out by Mussolini in the diplomatic field. On the one hand, by making an armed attack in defiance of all international law and destroying the independence of a country that was a member of the League of Nations, and dealing a mortal blow at the system on which the status quo rests in Europe and brandishing the torch of world war, Mussolini was confident of the sympathy and support of National-Socialist Germany, this chief incendiary of war in Europe. On the other hand, he was wary of having too close connections with Germany, and what is more, by tempting the French diplomats with the prospects of Italy adopting an anti-German policy in the future, he was able to secure the support of the French reactionary Laval government, and thus

to weaken the resistance of the League of Nations.

With the conclusion of the alliance with National-Socialist Germany, fascist Italy changed its foreign policy in the sense that it linked itself firmly with one of the big powers, and what is more, with the most aggressive power in Europe, one that is systematically preparing to attack neighboring countries and to unleash a new world conflict. The treaty concluded with Germany was followed by a series of political acts, from which it is evident that Italian fascism and German National-Socialism are linked in a life and death embrace, and that Mussolini today places this treaty above all other aims. And the Italian people are beginning to ask themselves in alarm where this policy is leading them.

II.

The starting point of Mussolini's foreign policy is clear to us. It should be sought not only in the play of international relations and in the desire for conquest by the most reactionary groups of the Italian bourgeoisie, but also in the internal situation of the fascist regime, in its internal difficulties and contradictions.

Fascism deprived the Italian people of their freedom and considerably cut down their daily bread, giving them promises in place of these. It promised them prosperity, "social justice," a future. Certain sections of the people, especially of the small and medium bourgeoisie, swallowed these promises with great credulity, and waited their fulfilment from year to year. Resorting to the most varied means whereby to satisfy certain urgent needs of certain sections of the population, and to maintain its influence over them, whether by trickery or corruption, fascism continually put off the fulfilment of its promises.

On the eve of the aggression directed against Ethiopia, the fascist leaders, in their anxiety at all costs to create a favorable attitude towards the war among at least part of the population, once more recapitulated and repeated all their old promises, connecting their fulfilment with

military victory. And again there were masses who believed in them. Some of the peasants really believed that at the end of the war they would receive land. There were farm laborers and workers who really believed that Ethiopia offered tremendous possibilities for applying their labor. There were students, members of the liberal professions, petty bourgeois elements, who dreamed of the conquest of Ethiopia making it possible at last for them to build a career for themselves. There were small and medium manufacturers, ruined by the crisis, who hoped to find a reliable market in the new colony. For a full year, the whole of Italy, it could be said, was waiting the solution of its problems from victory in Eastern Africa. All the greater was their disappointment, and all the more serious was the situation in which fascism found itself a few months after the end of the war.

At the present time there is no land in Africa for the Italian peasants. The number of workers who can be made use of in the new colony is not large and, in addition, the conditions of work there are of the vilest. It is not known at the present time whether Ethiopia contains large quantities of exploitable natural wealth, but as regards their working and exploitation the fascist government has already made an agreement with National-Socialist Germany which forms part of the notorious "Rome-Berlin axis," and which, in view of the fact that Germany is not now in a position to export capital to the new Italian colony, means that Germany will send there its young intellectuals, engineers and technicians to direct the pick-and-shovel work of the unfortunate Italian day-laborers. But this is not enough.

The fascist press has carried on a systematic campaign since the end of the war with the aim of letting everybody understand that the promises made are impossible of fulfilment and that there should be no self deception as to immediate advantages from the "victory." This same press is quoting facts and irrefutable figures to prove to its readers that the "empire" just won is not of any prac-

tical value either at the present moment as a market for the sale of Italian goods, and that no calculations must be made on establishing an intensive exchange of goods between Ethiopia and Italy, as Ethiopia has neither money nor products to pay for goods imported from Italy.

Then why was the war fought? Why the need to have undertaken such a business which cost the country thousands of millions and only enriched a handful of financiers and big manufacturers? Why was the war fought which ruined the country's finances, increased the national debt, led to a new increase in taxation, deprived Italian trade of so many markets and created economic difficulties of which the fascist press does not speak, and which the fascist government hopes to conceal by prohibiting the printing of statistical information, but the most elementary symptoms of which are being felt by the people in the shape of a steady increase in the cost of living and the beginning of the disappearance of prime necessities from the market?

Not being able to give a clear answer to this question, which was put not only by the duped masses but by a section of the fascist apparatus itself, fascism, which represents and fulfils the will of the most reactionary and chauvinistic sections of the bourgeoisie, who dream of new military gambles and new conquests, has still more resolutely taken the path of a policy of aggression and is once more trying to direct the discontent of the fascist masses and its own cadres against an imaginary foreign enemy, by setting new aims of war and conquest before its troops. To avoid post-war difficulties, Mussolini keeps the country on a war footing, proclaims the necessity for the permanent military mobilization of the whole people and throws himself into a new military gamble, sending his armies against the Spanish people and still further sharpening the aggressive and provocative tone of his entire foreign policy.

Having taken this path, Italian fascism had not and has not a single possible ally among the big capitalist countries except German National-Socialism. Those who

want to carry on a robber policy can only enter into alliance with robbers. The treaty made between the two robbers who want to give Europe up to fire and sword is, as far as concerns Italy, the logical result of the open policy of aggression conducted by Mussolini during the last two years.

III.

It should be added that there are social groups and political forces in Italy which are satisfied with the alliance with Germany, some of them because they find in it the satisfaction of their immediate interests, and others from motives of a general ideological and political character.

The former category includes the big industrialists engaged on armaments and war supplies, primarily the owners of metallurgical plants, and a considerable section of the owners of mechanical and chemical works. These individuals form the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic section of the Italian bourgeoisie. In agreement with the big landlords, they dictate to fascism a policy which, while diametrically opposed to all the interests of the Italian people, guarantees them a tremendous growth in their profits. The banks are in the hands of these elements, who in addition control the whole of the so-called "corporative" apparatus, *i.e.*, the apparatus which, according to the ideologists and propagandists of fascism, forms the backbone of the fascist "new state," the "new system" of managing the economic life of the country.

But there is less satisfaction with Mussolini's present foreign policy among the manufacturers engaged on export (owners of mechanical and textile factories). During the Ethiopian campaign they lost a considerable part of their markets, the majority of which, particularly in the Balkans, were seized precisely by Germany. In addition, they are coming up against growing difficulties in regard to the acquisition of raw material, because foreign currency is spent in Italy as in Germany, first and foremost on securing

supplies of raw materials for heavy industry.

The second category mainly includes a not unimportant section of the fascist cadres and primarily of the fascist youth and the Catholic Church.

Among the cadres of the fascist organizations and among the fascist youth, the disappointment at the results of the Ethiopian war proved to be extremely strong. In some circles, this disappointment has taken the form of dark despair, expressed in real moral disintegration. Fascist literature, mainly the works of the young fascists in which the leading figures were always insignificant people, degenerates and half-wits, is an astounding reflection of this disintegration. Other elements, at present in the minority, but worthy of close attention, are diligently seeking new paths, gradually moving away from fascism and its ideology. These people are turning their eyes abroad to the lands of democracy and socialism, and especially to the France of the People's Front and to the Soviet Union, and now to the Spanish democratic republic. They read foreign newspapers, try to establish contacts with the working class movement, with the great international political and social movements from which fascism has isolated them, and are beginning to criticize the fascist policy and present-day Italian society.

But, on the other hand, among some of the fascist cadres there is to be noted a swing in the opposite direction. While these elements recognize that the Mussolini dictatorship in the fourteen years of its existence has not solved a single one of the problems which it set itself, they draw the conclusion that this is because Mussolini has not been sufficiently consistent and energetic in his policy, especially in the sphere of international relations. They regard German National-Socialism and Hitler as models of the savage and brazen fascist dictatorship which satisfies them to the highest degree. Hitler on his part is trying to influence these elements in particular by organizing in the most varied ways close relations between his own cadres and those of Italian

fascism who in Italy preach the ideas of National-Socialism, its ideology and practice, who are the most convinced champions of the policy of the "Rome-Berlin axis," and who in effect are direct agents of a foreign power in our country.

Count Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law and present Minister of Home Affairs, who but yesterday was entirely unknown, an individual who had played no part even in the development of the fascist movement and whom the fascists themselves consider a person of limited capacity, is a typical representative of these elements. It is not without significance that it was he in particular who directly initiated the pact with Germany and is the most consistent champion of the "Rome-Berlin axis." Thanks to the efforts of these elements, a new theory is being spread among the fascist masses at the present time to the effect that the program and promises of fascism can be carried out only through the international expansion of fascism and its final victory throughout the world over the democratic regimes and over "Bolshevism." The policy of the aggression of Hitler and Mussolini is given the most profound justification in this ideology.

As for the Catholic church, the group which now directs its policy and guides the present Pope is not only very closely connected with Mussolini, whose responsibility it lightened to a great degree by affording unlimited support to fascism during the war of destruction against the Ethiopian people, but it regards the alliance of the two fascist dictatorships as an effective means of building a dam against the extension of the movement of the popular front. With the aid of the international policy of Mussolini and Italian fascism, the Vatican is trying to consolidate its position internationally. It is not impossible that it is calculating on arriving at a compromise with German National-Socialism along this path.

IV.

Armed intervention in Spain by Italy and Germany in support of the fascist generals who have rebelled against the

legitimate government of the country is the first concrete expression of the policy of the "Rome-Berlin axis." Armed intervention in Spain is aggression directed not against a backward African state but against a European nation fighting in the front ranks of the political and social emancipation movement of the working masses, aggression against a people that wants no truck with fascism, that desires to be free and independent, to cast off the yoke of feudal oppression, and once and for all to put an end to the power of the big landlords, the rich and corrupt priesthood, the bankers and the big capitalists.

What is there in common between the interests of the Italian people and fascist intervention in Spain?

It is absolutely clear that armed intervention against the Spanish republic is in the interests of the supreme prelates of the Vatican, who received considerable tribute from Spain by exploiting the unfortunate peasants there. The capitalists and bankers of Britain, who have vast sums invested in Spain and who squeezed part of their profits out of the Spanish proletariat, look on with approval at the armed intervention against the Spanish republic. They do so because they calculate that in the long run it is they who will reap the harvest. But why have the sons of the Italian people to die on foreign soil for the sake of defending the direct material interests of the aristocracy of the Catholic church and the bankers of the city of London?

Armed intervention against the Spanish republic is in the interests of the big manufacturers and bankers of Hitler Germany, who, thanks to their agreements with General Franco, have secured for themselves big economic advantages and have already begun to send their specialists to Spain to lay hands on the mines and the other wealth of the country, while the Italian "volunteers" are dying in the trenches. As far as concerns German National-Socialism, the struggle against the Spanish people is part of the general plan of attack on the democratic countries of Europe. By destroying the independence of the Spanish people, Hitler

wants to complete the encirclement of democratic France and thus to create favorable conditions for launching a war of aggression and for conquests in the heart of Europe.

But have the Italian people any interest in Hitler carrying out his plan? It goes without saying that the Italian people have not and cannot have any interest whatsoever in the launching of a European war. In particular they are not in the least interested in the weakening of the democratic countries or even in their being handed over to the tender mercies of German National-Socialism, for should this take place, Italy itself would on that very day be entirely at the mercy of German imperialism.

Today Mussolini is trying to conceal this fundamental contradiction in his policy, by letting it be understood that a special division of labor and of "spheres of influence" could be established in Europe between the two fascist dictatorships. German imperialism would be given the Danube and the Balkan countries, while Italian imperialism would have the Mediterranean countries. This is how he tries to justify the concessions made by himself to Hitler and Goering at their last diplomatic meetings, the fact that he resigned to German National-Socialism part of the positions of Italian imperialism in the Balkans and that he has taken the first step in the direction of giving freedom of action to National-Socialism in respect to Austria.

But it is quite clear that in such a division of spheres of influence, Italy would play the role of Simple Simon, while the Italian people would be driven into an impasse. The more farsighted Italian bourgeois politicians understand that whereas in the countries of the Danube and in the Balkans Hitler's aggressive policy may achieve serious success with the support of fascist Italy, in the Mediterranean Sea Italian imperialism could not advance without coming up against the mighty force of the British Empire and France and risking war at every step, and moreover a war in which Italy, in spite of all, in spite of the posi-

tions it has temporarily won in Spain, on the Balearic Islands, etc., would prove to be in a disastrously worse situation.

Besides, the number of Italy's enemies is being multiplied by the alliance with Germany and the armed intervention in Spain because they arouse against it all the democratic countries, all the peoples which have good reason to be afraid of Hitlerite aggression, and are more and more clearly realizing with every day that passes the need for uniting against the aggressor. The alliance with Germany is isolating Italy from the rest of the world and subjecting her to the terrible risk of finding German imperialism menacing her tomorrow on the Brenner, and of being defeated at sea.

The fascist leaders speak of the treaty with Yugoslavia as being a big success. It is now clear that an agreement between the peoples of Italy and Yugoslavia is desirable, for both of these people are mutually interested in the defense of peace. But the agreement concluded with Yugoslavia by Mussolini is not aimed at the defense of peace. On the contrary. It is directed towards weakening the Little Entente, towards weakening and destroying a force which is fighting for peace, a political association which acts as a barrier against the expansion and aggression of German imperialism.

Are the Italian people interested in the disappearance of this barrier? No, because this would hasten the outbreak of a new war, while Italy, according to its geographical situation, the structure of its economy, which is poor in raw materials and needs international collaboration, belongs, judging by the poverty of its people, to those European countries which need peace most of all, which are most interested in the wrecking of the plans of conquest of German fascism against the collective resistance of all peoples who champion peace. Mussolini's present policy runs directly counter to these basic interests of our country.

The Italian people are beginning to get a hazy idea of all these things at present. The thing they feel clearly and directly is that the sons of the Italian people have

no business to be in Spain. In Italy, the battles in which our people won their independence and brought about the unity of the country have not been forgotten. These battles were fought primarily against foreign invaders (and for the smaller folk, the invader over a considerable part of Italy, was the "German") and against the Vatican. During the bourgeois revolution, the functions of the Vatican were anti-national. The "priests" were allies of the "Germans." The revolution was drowned in blood several times by troops brought into Italy by the Pope and princes of foreign origin.

The traditions of Garibaldi, which have by no means been effaced from the minds of the people, and on which fascism is also trying to rest, are traditions of struggle against foreign intervention and the reactionary policy of the Vatican. Furthermore, they are traditions of active and noble intervention in favor of all peoples who have risen in revolt against tyranny and injustice, in defense of their liberty and independence.

Mussolini is now repudiating and grossly destroying this tradition by sending Italian soldiers to Spain to perform the odious part played in the last century in Italy by the Cossacks of Suvorov, the Croats of Franz Josef, and the sailors of Admiral Nelson. The banner of the best national and revolutionary traditions of the Italian people has once more been raised by the anti-fascists, who, in the name of Garibaldi, have entered the people's army of the Spanish republic and shed their blood in defense of the freedom and independence of the Spanish people.

The revolutionary traditions of the Italian people are alive in the Italian soldiers who refuse to "volunteer" to fight against the Spanish republic, who, when enlisted by trickery, mutiny as soon as they are told in open sea that they are bound for one of the Spanish ports, and force their return to Italy. The revolutionary traditions of the Italian people are alive in the Italian soldiers who, at Guadalajara, refused to fight and surrendered, fraternizing with the soldiers of the Garibaldi Battalion.

At Guadalajara on March 23, 1937, fascism suffered its first defeat. The policy of the "Rome-Berlin axis," the policy of aggression against the liberty and independence of the peoples, was dealt its first heavy blow. It was proved at Guadalajara that the fascist aggressors could and would be beaten every time the forces of the working people, the forces of liberty and peace, succeeded in uniting and organizing their ranks, and are ready for defense and for attack.

Guadalajara showed the inner weakness of fascism, for the moment is coming when the masses whom it has succeeded in tricking will open their eyes, when the masses, hitherto inert and passive, will understand that fascism is drawing them into a criminal and insane gamble in which not only are the interests of the people being endangered but the honor of the country and the most elementary principles of justice and humanitarianism are shamefully trampled underfoot.

Therefore the name of Guadalajara has now become extremely popular in Italy, not only among the anti-fascists but among the broad masses of the people who are still passive but profoundly discontented and anxious about the future. These masses are beginning to understand that fascism *can* be defeated, and this consciousness will inevitably become the beginning of a revival of anti-fascist activity.

v.

At Guadalajara, Italian fascism was defeated in open battle by the people's army of republican Spain, and by the foremost elements of Italian anti-fascists united in the ranks of the Garibaldi Battalion. In Italy, the defeat of fascism in open battle is as yet impossible because the working masses are still disorganized to too great a degree and are under the surveillance of fascism, because the Communist leadership of the working class and the anti-fascist movement is still too weak, and anti-fascist activity is still not on an extensive scale. But in Italy discontent with the fascist policy is showing itself in various indirect forms

and is growing in the fascist ranks.

The most interesting of these forms is the resistance to, and open polemic against, the attempts to import into Italy the ideology of the German National-Socialists. The fascist cadres under the influence of Hitler have become ardent champions of this import. They have begun the propaganda of anti-Semitism, which is a new thing in Italy, where the anti-Semitic movement never existed and where fascism itself never undertook an open and serious struggle against the Jews. These cadres are trying to spread the racial theories of German National-Socialism, which is also a new thing for Italy because Italian fascism has always boasted that it stood for "nationalism" and not racism, and always ridiculed racial doctrines.

Finally, they have developed a new campaign against Bolshevism, on this occasion with the open support of the government. With this end in view the Italian press publishes the most idiotic lies about the Soviet Union, every day spreading the foulest and silliest slander manufactured by the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists, and also publishes fantastic information about the countries where the People's Front movement is developing. In accordance with the slogan launched by Hitler in Nuremberg, Bolshevism and democracy are regarded as one whole, and a struggle is carried on against them as against one and the same disease. But for the first time since fascism crushed all freedom of the press, these campaigns are now not developing smoothly.

Not only are anti-Semitism and racism not accepted without discussion, but on the contrary many fascist journals openly express the opinion that these doctrines are repugnant to the "spirit of the Italian people," and here and there the arguments of liberalism may be met with in the criticism of the National-Socialist ideology and its overweening pretensions.

Resistance to the anti-Bolshevik crusade assumes two forms. On the one hand, there are fascists who, of course, call themselves anti-Bolsheviks, but who de-

clare that Communism is a social and political trend which "deserves attention," and that its arguments must be thoroughly refuted if it is to be beaten. But their refutation of the Communist theory is by no means convincing. This shows that in face of the breakdown of the fascist plans for the reconstruction of society, banal anti-Bolshevik propaganda arguments are of little weight. It shows that these "enemies of Communism" are in fact very much astonished at the victories of socialism in the Soviet Union and that the poison of doubt is beginning to penetrate into their fascist consciousness.

On the other hand, there are those who object and protest against the anti-Bolshevik and anti-Communist campaign from the point of view of international policy, as they consider that Italy has no interest in interfering in the affairs of the Soviet Union and the big democratic countries of Europe. Thus in a confused, embryonic and uncertain form, an anti-Hitler trend is appearing even among the fascist cadres. It cannot be said that this trend has now its leaders, has its people giving clear expression to it, or a program of its own, but there can be no doubt that it reflects the discontent existing among groups of the bourgeoisie at a policy which they consider to be a policy of adventures, a policy which menaces the fate, the reputation and the honor of the country.

Discontent is being aroused among the masses by the economic situation and, above all, by the rise in the cost of living and in taxes, as well as by the appearance of the food difficulties with which Germany has been acquainted for two years already. Shortly after the war, the situation in the factories and in the fascist trade unions, where a section of the officials were sympathetic towards the demands advanced by the workers regarding increased wages, became so tense that concessions had to be made in this regard. This took place immediately after the strikes of June, 1936, in France, and the victories of the People's Front undoubtedly had a strong influence in arousing unrest among the Italian workers.

But the economic concessions made to the workers in July were reduced to naught by the devaluation of the lira which was followed by another sharp rise in the cost of living. The 10 per cent wage increase given by fascism at the end of April compensated only to an insignificant degree for this rise in prices and was a concession by fascism after the defeat in Spain, with a view to averting economic movements in the factories and avoiding a struggle in the fascist trade unions.

An ever-growing section of the Italian working class and the working people generally are watching with concealed attention the struggle that is taking place between fascism and the workers. Their gaze is turned to Spain, to France, to the United States, to the Soviet Union. *They are thirsting for the truth.* They want to know the facts which fascism is trying to hide. They are grateful to those who are succeeding in giving them the truth about the tremendous struggle developing

throughout the world against fascist reaction by the forces of peace, liberty and progress. This thirst for the truth, which fascism fears so much, is the first manifestation of the awakening of class consciousness among the Italian workers. It is sure to be followed by the awakening of their fighting power, by a renewal of systematic activity of the masses against the enemy that is enslaving them.

The difficulties and contradictions which Mussolini's policy is encountering at the present moment, and first and foremost the fundamental contradictions between the interests of the Italian people and the policy of insane war provocations being carried on by Italian fascism in conjunction with German National-Socialism, create favorable conditions for this awakening, conditions which the anti-fascists, and first and foremost the Communists, must be able to utilize to better advantage than hitherto.

The People's Front and Working Class Unity in France

BY G. COGNIOT

TWO essential features are characteristic of the political situation in France today. On the one hand, there is the unswerving loyalty of the working masses to the People's Front, their desire to apply its program without fail, their devotion to unity and the desire of the working class to hasten on the establishment of the united proletarian party which is capable of bringing victory to the workers in their struggle for socialism, and of vanquishing fascism, once and for all, of putting an end to capitalist exploitation. On the other hand, fascist reaction has redoubled its efforts to change the political situation through economic and financial pressure and the menace of its armed bands, and to deprive the working class of the gains won by them last year. A tendency in the direction of the concentration of the organized fascist forces, and also the demagogic campaign carried on by the fascists, above all among the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie, are becoming more and more clearly visible. Hence, there arises the imperative necessity of the People's Front not only maintaining the confidence of the working masses already grouped in its ranks, while resolutely continuing to adhere to its political engagements and to apply its program, but also to make the maximum efforts without delay to convince those of the masses who have not yet rallied to its banner.

THE PEOPLE'S FRONT AT THE PRESENT STAGE

The May Day celebrations in France were a considerable success. The extent of the First of May strikes which covered some 1,000,000 workers in Paris, and tens of thousands in other big centers, the organized power of the united demonstrations of the working class, have proved the devotion of the working people to the People's Front and its work at a time when the capitalist oligarchy is redoubling its fury against it. The further realization of the program of the People's Front, above all as expressed in the introduction of pensions for aged workers; the organization of big public works to combat unemployment; solidarity with republican Spain; and the demand for the withdrawal of the fascist invaders from Spain—these are the principal slogans that resounded loudly from millions of people demonstrating on May Day, from the capital of France right out into the far-distant towns of the provinces.

The increased importance of the working class in the political life of the country was strong enough to influence the decisions of the government in the direction of closing down public offices and schools on May Day. Particular importance attaches to the presence in the ranks of the workers' demonstrations, of official delegates from all the organizations

of the People's Front, including the Radical Socialist Party. The trade union unity of the working class as realized in the General Confederation of Labor showed itself to be a firm and living reality against which all the maneuvers of monopolist capital to divide the workers were of no avail. In the eyes of the whole of the population the united General Confederation of Labor has been confirmed in its role of authorized representative of the economic interests of millions of wage-workers who have everywhere followed its banners.

The attempts of the employers to undermine its strength proved to be lacking in any mass support in the country. The stupendous numerical superiority of the forces of the People's Front over those of fascist reaction was yet again most clearly demonstrated. The demonstrations and meetings held on May Day, which stressed the solidarity of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, consolidated the People's Front throughout the whole of the country.

The solidarity of the People's Front is also to be seen in the results of the bye-elections which took place immediately after May Day in a number of towns. Everywhere the working people made use of the election meetings to express their confidence in the People's Front. Where necessary they unmasked the maneuvers of the reactionaries who tried to make use of base intrigues and petty jealousies in order to hamper the Communist candidates, wherever they were found to be the more favored among the different candidates of the People's Front. In the elections the People's Front continues to be victorious. The fascists, on the contrary, receive quite heavy blows. Even in a constituency traditionally held by the Right in the agricultural district of Normandy, the candidate of the French Social Party, the party of Colonel de la Rocque, which is actually a camouflaged edition of the dissolved League of the fascist Croix de Feu, was defeated, much to everybody's surprise. And in the election which took place in the department of Herault, which is universally recognized as significant,

the unfortunate candidate of the French Popular Party—the organization of the Hitler renegade, Doriot—failed even to win the usual number of votes polled by the reactionary candidates. These election results have contributed to making the parliamentary majority more solid, as proved in the political debates which took place at the beginning of May, and have produced upon the fascists and their supporters what their own newspapers of the Right refer to as an “inexpressibly alarming” impression; they feel “hurt” as the reactionary *Echo de Paris* says, by the “election climate,” at the same time declaring that the working masses “find everything all right,” and that “the People's Front is exulting on all sides.” Even if this alarm is deliberately exaggerated for the purpose of rendering more active the mobilization of the fascist forces, it has to be recognized that it is not devoid of foundation.

In the factories, the working class is guarding its gains of last year, at the same time rallying together against big capital, which is conducting a struggle, without a break, to destroy the working class piecemeal. The workers are displaying unremitting vigor in defending the strict observance of collective agreements and legislation for the protection of labor, the right of shop stewards and union officials to carry on their activities, and the increase of wages to correspond with the high cost of living, against the attacks of the employers. The attempts of the reactionaries to set up in the factories so-called “professional trade unions” which are in fact fascist pseudo-unions, are being indignantly resisted by the masses, whose energy and effectiveness never diminish. The workers are continuing and developing the struggle for the strict observance of trade union rights, for the extension of their legal rights against the arbitrary decisions of the employers in dismissing workers, against the illegal interference by fascist bands in the employment of workers, for the respect of the rights of trade union workers to employment, for the supervision by the workers themselves of the employment

and the dismissal of workers, etc.

Having been solicited by the President of the Council of Ministers on May 4 to extend for an additional six months the collective agreements now in existence and which should normally expire in June, the General Confederation of Labor replied, agreeing, on condition that consideration be given to the demands for revision of wages to correspond with the high cost of living and also to the passage of legislation guaranteeing to the workers the right to work against the arbitrariness of the employers. The working class will not allow any form of provocation adopted by the employers to lead them astray either from the struggle for their daily demands or from their activities for the consistent application of the program of the People's Front.

Together with the rest of the working people, the working class lays special stress upon two demands in the People's Front program which are of burning importance today, pensions for aged workers, a demand which concerns about two million people belonging not only to the proletariat, but also to the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie; and a plan of big public works to combat unemployment, at a cost of ten billion francs, the greater part of which should be utilized immediately. The strenuous efforts of the Communist Party have not failed to advance the solution of these questions. On its part, the National Committee of the General Confederation of Labor, which met in the middle of April, passed a resolution emphasizing the urgent nature of these two great demands; on April 23, it organized a National Day for the struggle to organize public works on a big scale in the building industry, and called for all these public works to be financed at the expense of the rich capitalists.

The plan of the Communist Party for the democratic reform of the system of taxation renders the solution of this problem very exact, and makes it a practical reality. In the same way the Communist Party has firmly decided to obtain the observance of that article in the program of the People's Front which calls for

"young people to be drawn into industry through the introduction of suitable pensions for all aged workers."

L'Humanité, central organ of the Communist Party, organized a large-scale investigation into the extent of the distress among the aged; an illustrated poster issued by the Party on this question was placarded throughout the country, even in the smallest villages; a series of big meetings for aged working people held during April in Paris and the provinces heard and approved proposals made by Maurice Thorez, General Secretary of the Party, for the alleviation of their distress. The plan for pensions for the aged had already been the subject of discussion at the National Conference of the Party in January and at the March session of the Central Committee. This plan, which contains nothing utopian in it, has become a powerful lever in the struggle of the proletarian and petty-bourgeois masses united in the People's Front against the financial oligarchy.

The struggle that has begun for the realization of this demand which is one of the most popular and concerns the most varied sections of the working people, including workers, artisans, peasants, etc., should be an effective contribution toward ensuring the solidarity and fortifying the unity of the People's Front, and drawing towards it the sympathy of sections of the people who still hesitate or are even hostile.

THE QUESTION OF A UNITED WORKING CLASS PARTY

The prerequisite and conditions of the success of the People's Front, the alliance between the middle classes and the working class, were the united front between the Socialist and Communist Parties. It is not surprising that the consolidation of the People's Front was accompanied by an increase in the class consciousness of the French proletariat, notably expressed in the ever-growing desire to prepare for and establish a united working class party in France. The workers who support the Socialist Party have been fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Communist

workers against fascism for over three years. They have become convinced of the necessity of consolidating this unity organizationally, bearing in mind the entire experience of the struggle both in France and abroad. The months that have passed since the spring of 1936 have revealed not only a considerable accumulation of working class energy, but also the growth in the working class of a strong sense of its own unity, and an increasing support for the idea of a united working class party.

As for the bases for organizational unity, a large number of Socialist workers, and certain leading officials, as Maurice Thorez reported to the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of France, resolutely repudiate the idea that the party of the proletariat must be dependent upon the bourgeoisie; they recognize the struggle for the power of the Soviets, declare themselves in favor of democratic centralism, and devoted to the Soviet Union and consistent internationalism.

It was on November 24, 1934, that the Central Committee of the Communist Party put the question to the National Council of the Socialist Party of forming a united party. Since then, the Coordination Committee of the Socialist and Communist Parties, then the "Entente" Committee and, lastly, the unity commission, proceeded to study the question. The Communist delegates persistently insisted upon the need for giving a speedy reply to the unanimous hope of the members of both parties and of the workers in general, who desire political unity of the proletariat. The tangible results obtained from the realization of trade union unity are increasing the desires of the workers for political unity.

It is to be regretted that the work of the "Entente Committee" on the problem of unity is not advancing very rapidly. Without the slightest doubt, the recent decision of the National Council of the Socialist Party which, according to the explanation given by the party journal, permits joint meetings of an informative character between the local organizations

of the two parties, will help to hasten on the study of the question and to pave the way for its solution. The Communist Party has been suggesting since March, 1935, that joint meetings be held of the lower organizations of the two parties. The rapprochement which is taking place between the local officials of the two parties, the common action undertaken by the members of both parties for unity, the adoption of joint resolutions which are emanating from many parts, constitute the road which is at the same time the most democratic and the most effective.

The bourgeoisie are perfectly aware of the danger which threatens them if political unity of the working class is achieved, and so they are trying to find a bogey with which to scare the Socialists away from unity. This "bogey" is the demand of the Communists for democratic centralism, a demand which signifies the independence of the party of the proletariat, the right and the duty of this party to exclude, through its statutes, all possibilities of factions which open the door to agents of the fascist reactionaries. Frossard, a former Minister of the "decret-lois" ("exceptional laws") governments, wrote, for example:

"I have the impression that agreement will not be reached so easily, not so much on principle, but as regards the organization of the new party. The S.F.I.O. (the Socialist Party) is a party with a democratic constitution. I am inclined to believe that it will not be ready to renounce that. On the contrary, the Communist Party is based on very strict centralization. The very nature of these two organizations is therefore conflicting and, in these circumstances, I do not think that we shall see a fusion of these two parties so soon."

Here there can be recognized the old, worn-out argument which consists in caricaturing the democratic centralism of the Communist Party as a sort of mechanical dictatorship which does not allow its Party members any kind of initiative or any kind of control. At a time when the Communist Parties of the

capitalist countries are studying the lessons for them as well arising out of the historic report of Comrade Stalin to the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., the slanders of Frossard have very little chance of being believed by the French working class. Moreover, the system of currents and factions which Frossard depicts as being so dear to the Socialist Party, the recognition of indiscipline among groups as a statutory rule, have ended in such "brilliant" results in that party that its National Council held in April of this year found itself obliged to dissolve the so-called extreme Left faction of Marceau Pivert, which was under the influence of the Trotskyists who urged it on to undertake undermining work.

The working class, and in particular the Socialist workers, have a perfectly good idea of the worth of the suggestions made by Frossard. They remember full well that at the time when he was a member of their party he acted in a factional manner at the National Council meeting held on March 3, 1935. At this session, utilizing the support he enjoyed among certain influential party officials, he proposed no more nor less than to abandon the pact for united action with the Communists.

"All who have followed the history of Bolshevism since 1903," said he, "know that the conception of the Communist Party contradicts the realization of organizational unity as our militant members understand it. For we are the party of real democracy . . . while the Communist Party is a sort of professional, revolutionary vanguard."

It is difficult really to see where the contradiction lies between the revolutionary role of the party and its genuinely democratic nature. But we had a perfect demonstration of what Frossard's "real democracy" is on the day he deserted the Socialist Party in order to receive a ministerial portfolio from the hands of reaction! On another occasion, July 15, 1934, Frossard defended a motion against united action in the National Council of the Socialist Party and he did so by bringing forward one after another four

"weighty" arguments: (1) unity of action by no means leads to organizational unity; (2) united action will create a dangerous conflict in the minds of the trade unionists holding Socialist opinions, in so far that as Socialists they will be tied by a pact to the Communists and as members of anti-Communist trade unions will be obliged to fight against the Communists; (3) united action with the Communists will force the Socialist Party to "isolate itself from democracy"; (4) unity of action "will double the difficulties" as regards electoral tactics. To recall all these trenchant arguments today is nothing if not comic. On all these points, everything has turned out exactly contrary to what was predicted by our far too prejudiced Casandre; trade union unity is an accomplished fact and a sound reality; united action has brought a great election victory to the working class and democratic parties; "democracy" has been successfully defended by the united action of the working class and by the People's Front; and, finally, the question of organizational unity of the parties of the working class has met with great success among the workers.

In search of new methods of exerting pressure, the bourgeoisie set the Trotskyist hounds against the idea of a united party of the working class. Among them, Ferrat, the latest of the Trotskyist traitors, an individual who mimics the Hitler renegade Doriot who in his turn also began his struggle against Communism in the beginning of 1934 as the "knight in arms of democracy within the party," has become the zealous propagandist of bourgeois slander about the organizational life of the Communist Party. He makes the foul assertion that the "internal regime of the Party is characterized by the abandonment of all democratic centralism," and that the "leadership of the Party avoids all control from below." At the same time, the Trotskyists are striving to undermine the trade union unity of the working class by setting up their own groups inside these trade unions, for the organization of disruptive work.

In order to hinder the possibility of the political unity of the working class, the whole of the reactionary press has set up a howl. The prospect of political unity between the Socialist and Communist Parties on an organizational basis such as will permit of the conduct of a consistent struggle against the capitalist oligarchy is causing serious alarm among the magnates of the trusts and banks, the adherents of fascism in France, and for several weeks their newspapers have been conducting a most violent and desperate campaign to safeguard finance capital against this cup of bitterness.

The newspapers and politicians of fascist reaction display a touching care for the leaders of the Socialist Party and those of the Radical Party, in charitably warning them of the risks they will face if political unity is established in the ranks of the working class. The fascists are trying to depict this unity as a new fact which justifies and renders necessary the breakdown of the People's Front. In reality such unity will only go to strengthen the chances of democracy and, consequently, will bring victory to the People's Front as a whole over fascist reaction. By forming a united working class party, the proletariat, which has been fighting at the head of the people as a whole for their rights, and which will now no longer consent to drag at the heels of the movement, has no other object in view but to draw all working people into the struggle, and the better to prepare the struggle for their liberation.

We have already shown that certain people who have left the Socialist camp are especially distinguishing themselves in the campaign of slander against the political unity of the working class. One of the most zealous of these, an individual who was also a minister in the "decrets-lois" and reactionary governments, Marcel Deat, wrote on April 20 that "unity will at one blow transform the nature of the Socialists themselves and bring about a revision of the initial agreement" which forms the basis of the People's Front. These declarations are an echo of the lying campaign carried on by

the reactionary newspaper *L'Echo de Paris*, the same newspaper which presented swords of honor to the fascist rebel generals in Spain. This paper calls on "good radicals" in the name of their democratic principles, not to tolerate any unification of the political forces of the working class. Just as though such unification would not be a decisive contribution to the strengthening of democracy in France! Just as though it would not help the workers to smash all the enemies of liberty most effectively and the better to guarantee this liberty both to their own class and to the petty bourgeoisie!

Le Temps, the powerful organ of the Comite des Forges (Federation of Employers in Heavy Industry), in its turn solemnly warns the Radicals against the "asphyxiation" and "suffocation" which is alleged to menace them. Without fear of ridicule, *Le Temps* indulges in a gross simplification of the evolution of class relations in France, and tries to scare the Radical Party with the bogey of being immediately transformed into "a straw in the gale of the new party of the revolution"!

However, the defenders of fascist reaction and their friends are themselves afraid that this exaggerated argument will meet with but meager success among the democratic masses who are inclined to adopt a favorable attitude to the fighting unity of the working class as the best guarantee of victory for democracy over fascism. Hence the fascists are not hesitating to make use of every effective means which they draw from international relations. The representatives of fascist reaction are trying to spread the perfidious and insulting idea that the responsible leaders of the French Socialist Party can be made to act as a brake on the profound desire of the Socialist workers for unity, under the pressure of certain forces of reaction capable of exercising influence upon the international position of the Blum government and also upon the relations existing between its Ministry of Finance and certain important markets of capital. Marcel Deat in particular makes an almost unveiled reference to the pos-

sibility of unfavorable repercussions which the political unity of the French working class may have "in the Anglo-Saxon world and even among the Labor leaders." More than this, he has no scruples about using an even stranger argument in order to try to wreck the political unity of the working class in France. He writes:

"Can one imagine the President of the Council to be deprived of political sense to such a degree as to give nourishment to the campaigns conducted by the totalitarian states so eagerly waging their crusade against Bolshevism wherever it seems to be taking root?"

The workers of France and, in particular, those who are members of the Socialist Party, will consider these threats of interference by Hitler in the domestic political problems of the working class of France as an intolerable attempt at blackmail. Up to the present the political divisions in the working class in France have only served to give strength to the Hitlerites at home and abroad. The political unity of the working class will be established on the basis of a consistent struggle against the capitalist system and against fascism, which is striving to establish in France the dictatorship of the most reactionary and most chauvinistic elements of capitalism, and on the basis of the struggle for peace and democracy.

FASCISM, ITS EFFORTS AT ORGANIZATION AND ITS DEMAGOGY

Side by side with the campaign which fascist reaction is conducting against the political unity of the working class, as a factor in strengthening the People's Front, fascist reaction has for a number of weeks been carrying on a new and intensive campaign directed towards concentrating the forces of fascism, uniting its gangs, leagues and so-called parties into one single "front." Slogans such as "the total union of national forces," the "united National Front," the "front of liberty" (*sic!*) are filling the air, and corresponding measures are in course of preparation. The republican National and

Social Party of Taittinger (the ex-Jeunesses Patriotes [Young Patriots]), the French Social Party of Count de la Rocque (the ex-Croix de Feu [Fiery Crosses]), the French Popular Party of the Hitler renegade Doriot, and other bodies as well, are trying to overcome their individual and group differences so as to form a federation and organize a united "front." It must be stressed that the initiative in bringing about this grouping of forces comes from the traitor Doriot, who is the author of the following exceptionally "sober" and cynical words:

"There is one dominant reason for making us unite, and that is that if one party or one person alone were capable of putting a stop to Communist dictatorship (!) it would have been done already. . . . Nobody can boast of being so powerful, strong, and authoritative as to smash the rising tide of Bolshevism (!)."

It is useless to insist upon the universally recognized fact that there is neither a "Communist dictatorship" nor a dictatorship of the proletariat in France. In reality the union of the fascist forces, of which Doriot is the promoter, aims at robbing the working class of their recent gains and, first and foremost, of the 40-hour week, at smashing the power and unity of the working class trade unions, at strengthening the dictatorship of the employers in the factories and at establishing the undivided rule of the trusts over the whole of the economic and political life of the country. It cannot be said that the attempts at uniting the fascist forces are without success. On May 7, Doriot was able to announce, without being contradicted, that the National and Social Republican Party, the Agrarian Party, which is steering a course towards the introduction of fascism into the countryside, and such traditional leaders of the parliamentary Right as Louis Marin, had given their adherence to the "Front of Liberty."*

* In the last few days it has become known that Doriot has "acquired" (*i.e.*, a group of reactionary financiers have bought for him) that daily paper *La*

It is no accident that the renegade Doriot has now become the main organizer of the fascist forces in France. All the Trotskyist traitors to the French working class movement are operating in the same camp as he is; many of them have been appointed to the "high" post of members of the "brain trust" and supply the blackest of arguments to reaction. Thus, on May 3, the well-known renegade Henri Guilbeaux unblushingly contributed a whole column of slander against Communism, the U.S.S.R. and the People's Front, on the front page of the *Action Francaise*, the daily royalist paper published in Paris which has the honor of being "the organ of integral nationalism." This vile individual, who strives to pretend that reaction is only an imaginary danger, displays all the hatred of a real Trotskyist towards the working people who, as he says, "allow themselves to be driven into the assault against the windmills of fascism." In the periodicals of the bourgeoisie a handful of Trotskyist degenerate and declassed intellectuals, who recognize the adventurer Victor Serge as their leader, are trying to concoct a poison for use by the working class out of the remnants of Proudhonist and anarcho-syndicalist fallacies, plus anti-Marxist spiritualism and the "cult of the individual" propagated by these petty creatures, together with the abominations of the activities of the Trotskyists in Catalonia.

It is well worth observing the zeal and unanimity with which the reactionary and fascist press have been organizing publicity during the last few weeks for these groups of disorganizers of and traitors to the working class movement. *Le Temps* has been creating a hullabaloo by devoting a noisy investigation to them which has lasted for six weeks, designed to introduce the Trotskyists to us again as

Liberte, which has hitherto had the reputation of being a police rag. Doriot is to make it an organ of fascism engaged in uniting its forces in France. One of the chief editors of this paper is the renegade Paul Marion, ex-Communist, then member of the Socialist Party and now fascist.

"the genuine revolutionaries" to whom the future belongs! The oldest of the fascist dailies in Paris, *L'Ami du Peuple*, triumphantly announced, on May 6, the advent of a new factor in international politics "in the shape of the Fourth International." The fortnightly *Vendémiaire* proclaims "the might of Trotskyism." The leading Catholic journal in Paris, *La Croix*, joined this campaign on May 8. It is extremely doubtful whether all this will have any effect upon the masses, who expect nothing good either from the soiled goods so much advertized or from gutter journalists who have achieved an all too painful notoriety.

Still another maneuver of fascist reaction has to be noted in connection with its resolute attempts at re-grouping its organized forces. This re-grouping is proceeding under the demagogic slogan of "defense of the middle classes." For several weeks a real bacchanalia has been going on in France among all the political and journalistic hirelings of finance capital, who are in demagogic fashion calling for aid on behalf of the middle classes. The press of the trusts and banks which ruin, rob and squeeze the blood out of the petty bourgeoisie has suddenly began to display the most profound feelings of pity and solidarity for the sufferers and the struggle of the millions of artisans, small peasant proprietors, petty traders, and the hundreds of thousands of members of the free professions, and intellectuals. A maneuver on a grand scale is being undertaken in order to win away the peasants and traders, artisans and office employees, engineers and technicians, from the alliance with the working class, and thereby to undermine the People's Front, to sow disillusionment and discontent among the petty bourgeoisie, and to win them over to the side of fascism by deceit. A press campaign and meetings are being organized at tremendous expense in order to call the artisans and peasants, the traders and petty employers to undertake a struggle "against the General Confederation of Labor and against Communism." Certain difficulties inevitably connected with the application of the 40-hour working

week in the small trading establishments are magnified beyond measure and used as a starting point for the agitation against the working class movement and the working class.

It is no exaggeration to say that side by side with the pressure brought to bear by the financial forces on the government which is facing certain financial difficulties, it is this campaign for winning the petty bourgeoisie which fascist reaction at the present moment considers to be the lever which can be used to change the political situation. This change, from the viewpoint of reaction, is to consist not merely in preventing new steps being taken in the application of the program of the People's Front and maintaining the action of democracy against fascism at its present level, but in isolating the working class from the middle classes and compelling it to retreat and abandon the positions already gained by it in the economic field as well as in the struggle in defense of liberty.

THE CONDITIONS FOR NEW SUCCESSES

Of the gains won by the working class there is one which the capitalists feel especially intolerable, namely, the 40-hour working week, generally applied in the shape of five days of eight hours' work, and called the "five-eight."

Referring to declarations of the President of the Senate Commission on Finance, J. Caillaux wrote in the chief newspaper of big capital, *Le Temps*, on May 5 that:

"... first of all it is necessary to make certain social legislation more elastic . . . which is being applied too sharply and too extensively."

Le Temps demands that "there be a revision for example, at least partially, of this folly of the five-eight," promising the government that should this demand be satisfied the "perspectives will not be so grim."

For capital, the problem is to deprive the working class of the benefits of the

40-hour week, paid holidays, collective agreements, etc. The problem is to hamper the realization of the political unity of the working class and to undermine trade union unity in order to have more chances of plundering the workers. The problem is how to unite the forces of fascism while at the same time proceeding to arm them and to disintegrate the forces of the People's Front by winning over certain sections at least of the petty bourgeoisie.

Pensions for aged workers, big public works to combat unemployment, the passage of legislation to protect the small traders, artisans and peasants—this is what the People's Front must put into operation, in conformity with its program, if it wants to frustrate the maneuvers and intrigues of the financial oligarchy. The material means of fulfilling this policy practically, and of overcoming the difficulties of the State Treasury can be obtained through taxation reform, by making the rich pay. This reform is also provided for in the program of the People's Front, and the technical possibility of operating it is not disputed by the Minister of Finance himself. The political conditions for it lie in strengthening the bonds between the government and the movement of the masses, in active preparation for the political unity of the working class, in strengthening its alliance with the petty bourgeoisie in town and country. In its turn, the measures above mentioned, once realized, cannot but strengthen currents favorably inclined towards the unity of the working class and its organizations, as well as at the same time consolidating the People's Front and rendering it invincible.

The mass influence of fascism has not grown yet, but fascist reaction is in a hurry to undertake a counter-attack against the proletariat and the People's Front along the whole line. The People's Front is preserving its forces, but it is not enough merely to preserve them. It is necessary for the People's Front in the light of its activities and achievements to attempt to convince that section of the working people which is still hesitant, and more and more to reduce the reserves

fascist reaction has among the masses.

Strong in its 315,000 members, the Communist Party of France is at the head of the struggle to consolidate the People's Front, just as, quite recently, it was its initiator.

The economic gains of the working class of France, especially the 40-hour week, and the defense of political liber-

ties by the People's Front of France, are to an ever-growing extent assisting in bringing about a rise of the working class movement and the rallying together of all the democratic forces of the capitalist countries. This makes the responsibility of the Communist Party of France before the working people of the whole world a very heavy one.

The Economic Situation in the United States

BY E. VARGA

THE economic situation has been rapidly improving in the United States since the spring of 1933. The rate of increase of output was particularly high in 1936. In December, 1936, output for the first time exceeded the average industrial output of 1929. Taking 1929 as 100, the December, 1936, output amounted to 101.7. In some branches of industry, such as iron and steel, non-ferrous metals and textiles, production reached or approximated the peak output of 1929. The cyclical improvement in the economic situation is accompanied by a steep rise in prices. Prices increased particularly on agricultural products owing to the poor harvest of 1936.

The most important economic results of the revival are:

a. A temporary elimination of the scissors.*

b. Less participation of the state in industrial and banking enterprises.**

c. Migration of labor within the country, which normally moves from the farms to industrial areas, and which

during the crisis showed an opposite tendency of moving from the cities to the land, as unemployed workers were seeking refuge with their relatives on the farms, has again become normal. The country is again supplying labor to the cities.*

The most important immediate *political results* of the improvement of the economic situation were on the one hand the strengthening of the position of the Roosevelt government and on the other hand increasing resistance by the big bourgeoisie (particularly through the Supreme Court), to state interference in industry which in the spring of 1933, when the credit system of the country was shattered, was hailed as a savior.

Finally huge wage movements and

000 credit guaranteed by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, a total of \$4,350,000,000, has been refunded by the beginning of 1937. The banks had refunded about 90 per cent of their credit, and the participation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in American banking capital had been reduced by 40 per cent.

* *People migrating to farms*
(in thousands)

1931	.....	214
1932	.....	533

People leaving farms for cities
(in thousands)

1933	.....	227
1934	.....	211
1935	.....	386

*The co-relation of prices on farm produce and manufactured goods, taking 1909-1914 as 100, was:

	Dec. 1936	1935	1934	1933
Prices received by farmers	126	108	90	70
Prices paid by farmers	127	125	123	109
Purchasing power of farm products	99	86	73	64

** Sixty per cent of the \$6,330,000,-

strikes, rapid growth of the industrial unions, recognition of the industrial unions by General Motors in consequence of a strike, a fact which may become a turning point in the history of the American labor movement.

The prospects of further economic development appear to us to be as follows:

The present level of industrial output in America has by no means as yet reached the peak in the present industrial cycle. An analysis of the figures of production shows that although orders placed for machinery and equipment are larger than ever before in the history of the United States (nearly three times as high as in 1929), this is for the time being only the renewal of machinery in the existing factories, while the expansion of fixed capital in the form of the construction of new industrial establishments is only beginning. This is seen from the relatively small extent of industrial construction.

Development of the production of means of production still lags far behind the production of means of consumption. Taking 1929 as 100, the December, 1936, index for means of production was 97.6 and for means of consumption 107.1. Such a proportion does not harmonize with the present phase of the cycle—a further increase in the production of means of production is surely to be expected. In addition the construction of houses is beginning to increase considerably only this year; the increase in armaments is artificially expanding the market; considering also that there is an increased demand for iron and steel and non-ferrous metals on the foreign market, *we assume it probable that industrial output will continue to rise for another year or two.*

However, despite very good business there is a depressed feeling among the American big bourgeoisie. The great crisis of 1929 left a very deep impression upon them. Although business is still rapidly increasing, the possibility of another crisis is spoken of. The ideology of “permanent prosperity,” characteristic

of the period prior to 1929, is now forgotten. Various American economists, including also the President of the National City Bank, who expressed a similar view in a report to a stockholders’ meeting in the beginning of 1937, are pointing to the necessity of taking timely measures against the danger of a “boom.”

The press of the American big bourgeoisie is constantly scaring its readers about the swelling national debts incurred by the Roosevelt administration. The national debt has increased from \$19,500,000,000 in the middle of 1932 to about \$35,000,000,000 at the present time. Considering, however, that the value of the dollar has depreciated about 40 per cent, the national debt has actually increased only to \$21,000,000,000 in terms of the previous value of the dollar.

Compared with national debts in European countries, the national debt of the United States government is still very small. Thirty-five billion dollars is approximately seven billion pounds sterling, which is less than the British national debt, although the population of Great Britain is only a little more than one-third of the U.S.A. The cry about the swelling national debt is directed primarily against the extension of social reforms, against subsidizing the farmers, etc.

The depressed mood of the American bourgeoisie despite the great increase in industrial output and profits is first of all caused by the situation on the labor market and in the labor movement. *Chronic mass unemployment* has remained despite the rise of production in excess of the level of 1929. According to the National Industrial Conference Board,* an institution of the big bourgeoisie, the situation on the labor market in November, 1936, was as follows:

Gainfully occupied . . .	43,900,000
Unemployed	9,000,000
Total	52,900,000

* Conference Board Service Letters, January, 1937.

The figure of 9,000,000 unemployed, which is undoubtedly an underestimation, includes the workers employed on public works provided by the government. According to the Department of Labor statistics there were 6,800,000 workers seeking employment at the time. According to American Federation of Labor statistics 11 per cent of the trade union membership were unemployed towards the end of 1936, and this did *not* include workers engaged on public work provided by the government.

Thus, although the volume of industrial output has exceeded the level of 1929, approximately one-sixth of the workers of the United States have as yet no normal employment.

The reason for this is to be found in the greatly increased productivity of labor brought about in recent years as a result of rationalization during the crisis, in other words in the tremendous intensification of labor. The following figures will illustrate this as applied to the whole of American large-scale industry.

In December, 1936, the volume of industrial output was 1.7 per cent higher than in 1929, while the number of employed workers was 6.7 per cent less, and the average number of hours put in per week had also considerably diminished. According to estimates of the American Federation of Labor, productivity per hour increased 40 per cent as compared with 1929.*

The fact that in spite of the permanent mass unemployment the trade union organizations and strikes could grow on such an enormous scale, and that the system of sit-down strikes was resorted to in many instances and did not lead to government violence against the workers, greatly disquiet the American big bourgeoisie.

The American working class has lost one of its specific features of the past; it has begun more closely to resemble the proletariat of European industrial coun-

tries. This is the outcome of two factors:

a. Discontinuance of immigration.

b. Disappearance of the possibility of settling on free land.

During the five years before the war 3,700,000 people immigrated to America and in the five years of 1930-34 only 90,000 immigrants entered the United States.*

The stoppage of immigration, the disappearance of free land and the rapid concentration of capital which has almost completely eliminated the opportunity for the individual worker to become independent, have profoundly changed the character of the American working class. The constant development of mass production and especially the use of the conveyor have the tendency to diminish the difference between skilled and unskilled labor (except for a small stratum of highly skilled workers).

These features make the American working class of today resemble more closely the workers of the old industrial countries of Europe: more homogeneous in composition and more accessible for trade union and political organization than in the past.

Along with the changes in the structure of the American working class, the change in the attitude of the state apparatus to the struggle of the working class is of great importance in understanding the American situation of today. Strikes, such as the General Motors strike, in the past always led to armed government interference. Toleration of trade union organization shows perhaps most clearly the difference existing between the Roosevelt and the Hoover administrations. The Roosevelt government

* As known, immigration has now been restricted to 2 per cent of the number of immigrants from the various countries now living in the United States. The European quota for 1934 was 134,000. However, only a fraction of this number actually immigrated; the quota for Great Britain was 66,000, but only 1,600 immigrated; the German quota was 26,000, but only 3,500 immigrated.

* *American Federationist*, December, 1936, p. 1244.

is undoubtedly a government of the bourgeoisie. In the spring of 1933, when the credit system of the United States collapsed, when there were 15,000,000 unemployed, when the farmers were in revolutionary ferment, it was the measures taken by Roosevelt that saved the situation for the bourgeoisie. At that time the financial oligarchy supported him fully.

Yet there is a considerable difference between Hoover and Roosevelt. The financial plutocracy was decidedly behind Hoover. Roosevelt stands for certain concessions to labor, especially on the question of recognizing the unions and in the sphere of social reform. All this, as the example of Great Britain shows, can well be coordinated with the rule of the financial oligarchy.

The change in structure of the American working class, on the basis of which it has become possible to build broad trade union organizations, the changed attitude of the state machinery towards the working class, create much more favorable conditions for the establishment of a Farmer-Labor Party than had ever existed before.

Profound changes are taking place in the conditions of the farmers as a result of the process of class differentiation which has been going on in the course of decades and was accelerated after the war. The "central figure" in American agriculture is no longer the farmer who together with his family cultivates his own piece of land, as was the case before the war, but the tenant, *i.e.*, the farmer who formally cultivates his own land but is actually deep in debt.

*The Number of Tenants Out of Each
100 Farmers**

1880	1900	1920	1930	1936
30	35.3	38.1	42.8	50

More than 80 per cent of the Negro farmers in the South are tenants, sharecroppers, semi-slaves.

* Figures for 1880-1930 taken from the census, the 1936 figures issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, Wallace.

The land of half of the American farmers has been expropriated! The land is rapidly falling into the hands of capitalists. The agreement to reduce the production of corn and breeding of pigs in 1935 revealed that: *

67,302 farms belonged to 111 insurance companies.

21,447 farms belonged to 170 banks.

18,830 farms belonged to 3491 owners (so-called "multiple farms").

Apart from the insurance companies and banks, the various states have become large owners of the farm land.

"In Mississippi alone, 60,000 farms were expropriated for non-payment of taxes in the first three-quarters of 1932. In Michigan the state owns 3,000,000 acres of land that has been offered for sale for taxes and retained in the absence of private bidders. In Florida nearly 2,000,000 acres have reverted to the state through tax delinquency. Nearly all the states have experienced a severe shrinkage in rural property taxes and have become burdened with a bewildering volume of land which they cannot sell or even give away." **

In the years of 1933-36, 800,000 farms became the property of the states owing to the inability of the farmers to pay their taxes.

Simultaneously the concentration of farm enterprises is proceeding at a rapid rate. The percentage to the total land of farms over 1,000 acres was as follows:

1910	1920	1930	Present Estimate
19%	23.1%	28%	over 30%

Additional hundreds of thousands of farmers only appear to be in possession of their land. These farmers are completely in the hands of finance capital which, together with the agricultural cooperatives, has converted the "owners" into poorly paid workers. The farm man-

* *The New York Times*, June 20, 1936.

** Wayne Gard, "American Desolate Acres," *Current History*, June, 1935.

agers of banks dictate to the indebted farmers what to cultivate, their budgets, etc. The cooperatives linked up with the banks take the produce from these farmers and dictate prices. The bank delivers machines, fertilizers, etc.

The reason for this wholesale ruin of the farmers is the post-war agrarian crisis, the sharp drop in prices of farm products which made it impossible for the farmers to bear the burden of interest, rent and taxes, while monopoly prices of goods bought by the farmers were artificially kept high, which resulted in what is known as the "scissors." The part taken by finance capital as an intermediary between the farmer-producer and urban-consumer was constantly growing.

From the price paid by the city-consumer for farm produce, the farmer received as follows:

1913	1929	1932	1933	1934
56.5%	50.1%	34.9%	36.8%	38.5%

The measures of the Roosevelt administration, the increase in prices through the purchase and destruction of surplus produce and curtailment of production with the aid of state subsidies, have raised prices (which were stimulated by the bad harvest of 1934 and 1936), eliminated the "scissors," improved the situation in agriculture.* These measures were so adapted as to help the upper and middle farmers. Their aid to the small and tenant farmers was negligible, and could not stop the disintegration of their farms. They have become classified as "lazy"; they have become surplus, unnecessary farmers.

The improvement in the situation of American agriculture, especially the elimination of the "scissors," is temporary. Last autumn the area sown to wheat increased by 20 per cent as a result of the high prices, and is now bigger

than it ever was in the history of the United States. With normal crops, agriculture will again suffer from an over-production within two years.

The wholesale ruin of the farmers brings us sharply before the question of the political attitude of the American toiling farmers.

The oppression of the farmers by finance capital as described above, the burden of taxes and interest, the oppression by the monopolies which wedge themselves in between the farmer and the urban-consumer and appropriate more than half of the prices paid by the latter, constitute very favorable ground for winning over the majority of farmers to the struggle against finance capital.

In a situation equally as bad as that of the farmers are the so-called middle classes in the American cities. First of all there are the several millions of artisans, small tradesmen and employers, etc., small businessmen, who, like the farmers, have been very much reduced to the position of poorly paid agents of capital. Another section consists of the so-called professional people—doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, etc., who were particularly hard hit by the crisis. The third section consists of salaried people, among whom are the civil servants, the technical staffs in industry, millions of office employees, and finally several millions of salesmen and store clerks.

The position of all these strata seriously deteriorated during the crisis. At the present time most of the small businessmen eke out a proletarian existence.

Among the large army of salaried workers, unemployment is just as great as among the workers. Under the pressure of mass unemployment, salaries have rapidly declined in the last few years, most of the salaried people undoubtedly leading a proletarian life and earning less than the skilled worker.

As is known, the United States has always had a favorable balance of trade and as a result of its receipts from

	1932	1935	1936
	<i>Billions of dollars</i>		
* Gross income of the farmers	5.3	8.5	9.5
Receipts for produce sold	4.4	7.2	8.1

capital invested abroad has enjoyed an even more favorable balance of payments. But owing to the virtual discontinuation of the export of capital in the last few years, the favorable balance of payments has been balanced by colossal imports of gold.* Such a state of affairs cannot last very long. The gold reserve of the United States is far too big for the economic needs of the country today.** The alternative that arises is either an unfavorable balance of trade or the export of capital. In view of the relatively inadequate home market, American capital cannot afford to waive its exports and will also sharply combat an extension of the imports of goods to balance the payments. Hence there is only one way

* The pure import of gold to the United States has averaged about one billion devaluated dollars annually in the last few years.

** The bourgeoisie fears that as a result of the great influx of gold there will be an inflation of credit, hence the decision to "sterilize" the gold, *i.e.*, to eliminate by legal means the new gold influx as a basis for extending credit.

open, that of capital exports. But the attempt to export capital on a big scale during and after the war, before the crisis of 1929, led to such colossal losses (inter-allied debts, bankruptcy of various states) that the American bourgeoisie is so far refraining from a renewal of its exports of capital.

This dilemma will eventually force the big American bourgeoisie to adopt a policy of colonial expansion so as *to establish for itself politically safe territory for the export of capital*. The economic and political penetration by the U.S.A. of Central and South America in a struggle against Great Britain is in progress even now. So far the tendency to restrict expansion on the American continent and to keep the United States out of European affairs, still seems to have the upper hand in the United States and will probably continue to do so until the outbreak of the next cyclical economic crisis. In the long run, however, the same causes which operate in other countries under the rule of monopoly capital will also force the United States to enter the path of imperialist expansion.

Women in the Struggle Against Fascism and War

“Communists, above all our women Communists, must remember that there cannot be a successful fight against fascism and war unless the broad masses of women are drawn into it. . . . We must spare no pains to see that the women workers and toilers fight shoulder to shoulder with their class brothers in the ranks of the united . . . front.”*

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

DURING the last two years and more, a women's movement has grown up on quite a large scale in a number of countries, as the result of the initiative of a group of advanced women who convened the International Women's Congress against War and Fascism in Paris in August, 1934. Almost all the big countries and the most varied women's organizations responded to the call of the initiatory group. The congress set itself the task of organizing in each country and throughout the world a wide movement of women in defense of peace and women's rights, against fascism. The congress elected an International Women's Committee, which included representatives of various countries and various organizations.

The international women's movement against war and fascism at the present

* Georgi Dimitroff, *Working Class Unity—Bulwark Against Fascism*, pp. 67-68, Workers Library Publishers. 10 cents.

time is directly or indirectly influencing millions of women, and has established a mass women's magazine called *Woman* which it issues in various countries and languages, in twenty editions.

Appreciating the full importance of the experience gained in this movement, the Editorial Board of *The Communist International* asked a number of leading officials of the international and national women's committees of various countries to reply to certain questions as to the work of these committees and to give us the benefit of their experience. In reply, the Editorial Board received the following material which we print below. The Editorial Board will gladly devote part of the columns of the magazine to further materials on this question.

* * *

IF FULL use is to be made of the experience which is being accumulated by the growing women's movement, it is necessary to declare war on the weaknesses and prejudices which exist in regard to the women's movement in our own ranks, and in the labor movement in general.

If a successful struggle is to be carried on by the masses of the people against fascism, if victory is to be won by the working class against capitalism, and socialism established, it is absolutely essential that millions and millions of women—working women, peasant women, housewives, intellectuals, etc.—be drawn into the common struggle.

This truth is universally recognized in the ranks of the Communists. Nevertheless, right up to the present day, the practical work done among women has still lagged very far behind the needs and possibilities of the movement. What is the cause of this? And what should be done to bring about a radical change, the necessity for which is imperatively demanded by all the circumstances of the struggle today of the masses against fascism and war?

Even in the ranks of the Communist Parties there are still to be found strong remnants of a philistine, narrow-minded, condescending attitude towards women. According to this outlook, men can develop, organize, lead, struggle, they can do everything; women, on the other hand, can only do so in exceptional cases, if they are particularly energetic, gifted, talented. If women are sometimes promoted in the Party and in the workers' organizations, this is done in a formal and mechanical fashion, and not by virtue of a deep conviction that women can and should participate on a really mass scale in the struggle against the common class enemy.

And there are also quite a number of Communist women who share this disbelief in their sisters. To these Communist women, equality between men and women means forgetting the need for special work among women, means to neglect all movements among women under the pretext that women are formally given the opportunity of marching alongside the men, of participating in the political, trade union and social movement. A Communist woman who does not take pains to see that her sisters make progress is a poor Communist. Just as the prime duty of Communists in the trade unions is to take an active part in the trade union movement, to recruit workers to the union, so is it the prime duty of Communist women to do everything in their power to secure the drawing in of masses of women to support Communism, to prevent fascism utilizing them against the working class.

The mechanical transference to the capitalist countries of the forms of activity in the women's movement now practised in the Soviet Union is also one of the reasons why work among women is not up to the mark at present in the capitalist countries. The great socialist October Revolution gave real freedom to women. The Communist Party and the Soviet government provide tremendous possibilities for the development of women, for their active participation in the construction of socialism and in the administration of the state. The formation of separate women's organizations or special bodies of the women's movement attached to the Communist Party and the trade unions in the Soviet Union is a bygone stage. The Communist Parties of capitalist countries have mechanically transferred the experience of this work in the Soviet Union to their own countries, their attitude being that since separate women's organizations have been abolished in the Soviet Union, they are not needed in the capitalist countries either. But as it happens, even in the Soviet Union, various forms are arising such as conferences of wives of leaders of heavy industry, the Red Army, etc., for attracting women who are not trade union members, who do not work in industry, into the general front of the construction of socialism.

Among the causes of the serious weakness of the Communist Parties in regard to work among women, the main one is the fact that the women themselves not infrequently regard themselves as inferior personalities, as second or third rate people, do not believe in their own strength, do not display sufficient initiative, do not try to make the Communist Parties do all that is necessary in this sphere. The women themselves must fight for the fulfilment of the tasks which face the Communist Parties and the working class in regard to women. A struggle is needed against the heritage of the past, against the relics of feudalism.

The public opinion of the working

people must be mobilized against medieval remnants, against a philistine attitude towards women. Those Communists whose attitude towards women is not that of comrades in the struggle must be denounced, and this relic of the past must be ruthlessly uprooted. Wide masses of working women, peasant women, housewives and women intellectuals must be drawn into the work, into the anti-fascist movement, the trade unions, the cooperative societies, the committees of the peace movement and other social and cultural organizations, must be drawn into active participation in the general movement. Ways and forms of developing the independent women's movement must be found without being afraid of women's separatism. Account must be taken of the special position of women, of their special psychology, their special approach to life and to various questions; account must also be taken of the situation of girls and mothers, invalids, and old women, not forgetting at the same time that they are all to some degree housewives.

Women, for instance, have a greater interest than men in the question of the price of food, because it is the women who spend the family income. Women have to bring up the children, and they are interested in questions affecting the kitchen, the house, the creche, the school, the hospital, social insurance, etc. A tremendous number of women are under the influence of religion and the church; they are very prone to give way to all kinds of prejudices, which renders a special approach to women necessary.

The need for an independent mass women's movement in the shape of movements of working women in defense of their own interests and demands against disfranchisement and inequality, and against the oppression of women, arises from the present situation of women in the capitalist countries, where a double slavery for women exists in various forms and degrees.

The development of this movement is not only the affair of women, but of the whole of the working class and above

all of the entire Communist Party as the vanguard of the working class.

One of the central problems which unite women of all races, nations, religions and political views is the maintenance of peace. And the struggle for peace, strong action in favor of peace, will give the necessary impulse to the development of the mass women's movement. From this point of view it is especially important to study the experience of the international women's movement against war and fascism as reflected in the reports of the leaders of this movement.

* * *

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM

THE example of Spain shows how great can be the role of women at a moment of keen struggle. And in other countries it is also necessary to have cadres of women capable of rising to the occasion in similar cases.

The example of Spain shows that women are needed not so much at the front as in the rear, where they have specific tasks, to work in the factories, to organize supplies, medical aid, to look after the children, care for the wounded, etc.

Women's organizations are now being formed in Spain in the process of the work. The struggle of the Spanish people against the rebels and the German-Italian interventionists has united very wide masses of anti-fascist women of the most varied parties and trends. Tens of thousands of women are united in committees, and it is difficult even now to calculate how many women are participating in this movement. The national women's committee is exerting all possible energy and employing all means in support of the government of the Popular Front in the struggle against the enemies of the people.

At the present time, for example, the women's committee in Madrid is the government's mainstay in organizing aid behind the lines for the people's army.

Committees have organized the recruiting of women for the factories and of men for the front; have organized tailoring shops, carried through the requisition of equipment and material for them, helped to establish hospitals, and taught women how to look after the wounded. Many of the members of the committees have gone to serve as sisters and nurses at the front and in the hospitals behind the lines. The committees have organized public dining rooms and children's homes, and have helped to organize the evacuation of the population. Members of the committees established regular connections with the families of the fighters in the people's militia and the regular troops, informing the men about their relatives and bringing their families news from the front.

According to the opinions expressed by the leaders of the anti-fascist parties and the government, the members of the committee, such as Dolores Ibarruri, Margarita Nelquen, Maria Theresa Leon, Matilda Juichi, etc., have played a big role in keeping up the morale of the people's army. In Asturias and the Basque Provinces and also in Catalonia, the International women's committee has helped to form a wide united front movement among the women, covering anti-fascist, Catholic, liberal, Socialist and Communist women, as well as various trade unions and a number of other women's organizations, including Anarchist organizations.

In Catalonia, the Trotskyites tried to set the women against the People's Front in connection with food difficulties, and organized demonstrations aimed at discrediting the Commissar of Food, Comoro. The maneuvers of the Trotskyites were very soon shown up. The women of Catalonia are now organized in a single "Women's Alliance of Struggle for the Independence and Defense of the Country."

Anti-fascist women's movements exist in a number of countries—France, Belgium, Spain, Great Britain, Holland, Greece, Yugoslavia, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Italy, China, the

Latin American countries and in the U.S.A. In some of these countries there are committees, and the international women's committee maintains contact with the other countries in various ways, but chiefly through its magazine. But there are still many countries where the peace movement among women has not been organized at all.

The international women's committee has made the first attempts to organize the women's peace movement in the colonies.

Certain experience of work in Syria, Algiers, etc., renders it possible for the women's international committee to find the necessary forms and methods of work for drawing the masses of native women into the movement.

The international women's movement against war and fascism has achieved considerable success in the last three years. The significance of this work is tremendous, for women form 53 per cent of the world population. Wide masses of women are burdened by centuries of tradition and prejudice. From their childhood days, boys and girls are educated differently, and this must be taken into account in all our work. A mass women's movement can only successfully develop if account is taken of the special position of women, of their special approach to life and to the various problems. It is precisely in this way, by appealing to the hearts of the women, that we shall win them and draw them to our side.

BERNADETTO CATTANEO

*Secretary of the International
Women's Committee Against
War and Fascism*

* * *

A FEW EXAMPLES OF WORK AMONG WOMEN IN FRANCE

THE women's movement against war and fascism in France has achieved marked successes in recent years. At the present time the French women's committee has about 200,000 members organized in approximately 2,000 local committees. To coordinate the work of the

local committees in one and the same counties, county committees were formed. On January 1, 1936, there was only one county committee but by February, 1937, there were seventeen.

This growth of the women's movement is mainly to be explained by the practical everyday work of the women's committees, their participation in the chief political events. Here are some examples of the participation of the women's committees in the economic struggles of the French proletariat.

In connection with the July (1936) strike movement in France, the women's committees together with the trade unions and strike committees did a great amount of work in giving regular aid to the strikers. The trade unions gave credentials to our active members entitling them to enter the factories where the strike was going on. The women on strike were very much disturbed at the thought that their children would be uncared for when they came home from school. Some of our committees organized children's rooms and kindergartens, where the children came after school, and so their mothers were able quietly to remain in the factory or stores till late in the evening. The women's committees also collected money for the strikers, organized the supply of food and books, and free theatrical performances at the factories where the strikes were taking place.

As a result of this work, the women's committees won the confidence of many working women and office employees; in Paris and the provinces new committees were formed in the factories, and the women often come to them to ask for advice on general political or trade union questions or even questions of a personal character.

This aid given to the strikers strengthened the contacts of the women's committees with the trade unions. For instance, at the Hispano Suiza automobile plant, the women's committee organized a meeting with the full endorsement and support of the local trade union; in Grenoble, the trade union called a meet-

ing of 800-900 working women, at which a delegate of the women's committee spoke.

Both during the election campaign and during the strikes, the women's committees mainly advanced slogans dealing with the improvement of the economic conditions of the women and children.

We took account of the fact that women are reluctant to gather in cafes, public halls or clubs. Women do not feel at home in such places which are often not attractive. This led us to the idea of organizing special "women's clubs," which they can arrange and decorate to suit their own taste. Such "women's clubs" have now been opened not only in the Paris district but also in other towns, such as Bordeaux, Grenoble, and Marseilles. The women hold their meetings there, do sewing, hold needlework classes, and arrange cinema performances for the children. Here also medical advice is supplied, readings are held, and legal advice is given. The unorganized women come there simply for advice and then join our movement. The women's committees compete with each other for the best organization and performance of the work of the women's clubs."

The French women's committee carried on great work in connection with the International Peace Congress in Brussels. Though the number of delegates from France was restricted, the women's committee nevertheless sent 200 delegates, the biggest delegation to the congress.

The French women have displayed particular energy in connection with aid for republican Spain. In addition to the political campaign in defense of the Spanish people, for the restoration of free trade with republican Spain, the women's committees have collected considerable sums of money as well as food, medicines, new and second-hand clothes, and linen; in addition they have established special knitting and repair stations, sent two ambulances with the most up-to-date equipment to Spain, and car-

ried on work to secure the adoption of the orphans of fighters of the Spanish people's army. This work has been a big impulse to the development and formation of women's committees, especially in the Northern and Eastern counties.

The international solidarity of the French women was also expressed in the campaign to save Anna Pauker, prisoner in the hands of the Rumanian secret police.

The national women's committee succeeded not only in drawing into this campaign all our women's committees but also in getting a number of organizations not immediately sympathetic with us to take up the cudgels on behalf of Anna Pauker. For example, the League of the Rights of Man, the National Council of French Women, the Association of Republican Reserve Officers, etc., gave their support.

When the King of Rumania came to Paris to ask for a loan, letters, telegrams, and protest resolutions showered into the hotel where he was staying. The telephone never stopped ringing. One of the King's officials stated that "Anna Pauker has spoiled the King's stay in Paris." Ten of the best women's committees decided to take patronage over Anna Pauker.

These are some examples from the experience of the women's movement in France. The women are showing tremendous interest and initiative in questions of the defense of peace, democracy and women's rights. There are great possibilities for a mass women's movement in France.

MARIE RABATE,

Secretary, French Women's Committee Against War and Fascism

New Tendencies in the Student Movement

BY V. DUCROS

CHARACTERISTIC of the student movement during the last few years are the increasing activity displayed by the student organizations and their growing participation in the whole of social life.

This increase in the activity of the student movement of various countries is expressed especially clearly in the participation of the Chinese students in the struggle against the Japanese invasion of China; in the new forms of mass struggle (strikes, demonstrations, etc.) adopted by the students in the Balkan countries (Greece, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia) in defense of their economic demands and political rights; in the development of a powerful movement for peace and the rights of the youth in England and the United States; in the creation of national student organizations in India, Burma and a number of Arabian countries; and, finally, in the active participation of the students of Latin America (Cuba, Venezuela, etc.) in the anti-imperialist struggle.

In the fascist and semi-fascist countries (Poland, Rumania, Finland), fascism and reaction still maintain a predominant influence over the students, drawing them into activities which are against the interests of the working people. In general, however, the dominant note in the most important countries of Europe is the development of a pro-

gressive student movement, as well as the rising movement for national liberation and the anti-imperialist movement among students in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

This movement is expressed in the most varied forms, depending on the specific conditions in each country and even in each university center.

These new tendencies are generally expressed in the student organizations which already exist and not in the direction of the formation of new organizations. The students are the best organized section of the youth, both nationally and internationally; they are organized in societies, religious and political associations, etc., which have been in existence for dozens of years.

As the more radical tendencies penetrate into the ranks of the students, these traditional organizations change their nature to some extent and turn their attention to new tasks.

In the majority of cases the work of the student societies which, to a certain extent, act as "unions" organizing all the students in defense of their own interests, has until very recently been that of organizing sports activities, fetes, dances, etc.,—and has often been utilized by reactionary and fascist elements. But for some time now these societies have begun to occupy themselves with

real work, in defense of the interests of the students, by occupying themselves with such problems as unemployment among intellectuals and the means of remedying it, the health of students, participation in the peace movement, and, in certain countries, even raising the problem of allying the student movement with that of the masses of the people.

There has been a very interesting evolution among the Christian students (above all the Protestants), who constitute one of the most powerful international organizations of the students. Although this change has proceeded at an unequal rate in the different countries, it is typified by the fact that the Christian students are coming to be interested in their social responsibilities and duties.

Among the problems most discussed we may mention the following: the economic and political crisis, the crisis of international relations (with, in general, a condemnation of capitalism and imperialism); the attitude towards the totalitarian state, condemnation of the racial theory and chauvinism; the problems of pacifism and the struggle for peace (till quite recently pacifist tendencies have been very widespread among the Christian students); the social duty of students and their link with the masses of the people; the attitude towards Communism and the Soviet Union, etc. The more advanced elements even go so far as to declare openly that Christianity should link up its fate with that of social progress, otherwise it will perish.

The arguments which are put in the forefront of these discussions against close collaboration with the Communists amount in the main to the question of atheism, the problem of violence, of individualism, etc.

Similar discussions are also taking place among the Catholic students, whose principal forces are to be found in the fascist and semi-fascist countries (Germany, Italy, Poland, Austria, etc.). Similar tendencies, especially in connection with the defense of peace, are also developing in other student organizations

like the League of Nations' unions, which it is true play a less important part in the life of the students.

We should mention also the Students' World Committee for Peace, Liberty and Culture, founded in December, 1934, at the Students' World Congress in Brussels, and which aims at bringing together all the student organizations, irrespective of political opinions, on the basis of progressive principles. Various student organizations of a religious, pacifist nature, are collaborating with this movement, the influence of which covers not only Europe, but also other continents, and thus renders it possible for the student organizations in China, India, and Latin-America to communicate their experiences and problems to the international student movement.

Side by side with this increase of progressive tendencies, we should also note, as something new, the movement for unity between the Socialist and Communist students, a movement which has already ended in a number of countries in the creation of joint organizations of students striving for socialism.

For a long time the Socialist student organizations in the majority of countries have conducted, and are still today conducting, a policy divorced from the special problems of the students, from their interests and their requirements. They are mainly small organizations which consider themselves appendages of the Socialist Party, and it is this fact which to a large extent explains their weak development.

The Communist students are also only now beginning to realize that their main task is to work patiently and persistently in the ranks of the students and not to allow the fascists to hold the ideological and organizational monopoly of the student movement.

The experience of unity between the Socialist and Communist students in a number of countries has proved to be an exceptionally positive factor both in strengthening the student organizations and in extending their activities among the masses of students.

In the United States, the National Student League (with Communist tendencies) and the Student League for Industrial Democracy (with Socialist tendencies) have amalgamated to form the American Student Union, which is growing and developing as an organization of progressive students. Today it has a membership of 20,000 and plays an important part in the student movement of the United States.

In England as well, at the beginning of 1936, a united organization of Socialist and Communist students was formed, the University Labor Federation, which has preserved the name of the former Socialist organization and its connections with the Labor Party. Since the merger took place, the organization has more than doubled its membership and considerably augmented its influence over the whole of the English student movement.

Joint organizations already exist in Belgium, Austria and Latvia. The Oxford Congress of the International Socialist Student Federation, which met in July, 1936, in summing up the positive results already obtained in a number of countries, declared itself by a great majority in favor of the international unity of the student organizations. An international unity commission, composed of three Socialists and three Communists, was elected and instructed to prepare for the convening in July, 1937, of an international unity congress in Paris.

It is interesting to note the general tendencies in the student movement in a number of the more important countries.

In England, where in comparison with the other countries the number of students is somewhat limited (40,000) the latter are organized in powerful associations on the basis of sports, religion, politics, culture, etc. Oxford and Cambridge, the university centers of England, play a foremost role in English student life, a role deriving from their traditions. It is interesting to observe that of late progressive tendencies have been developing strongly among the students of Ox-

ford and Cambridge, despite the fact that in general the students belong to fairly privileged sections of the population.

In the student "unions" of Oxford and Cambridge, the students only a few years ago were mainly engaged in sports, literature, etc. During the last few months, however, these unions have engaged in discussions on such subjects as: Is England a free country? Is the policy pursued by the British government on the Spanish question fatal to the peace of the world? Ought we to help to return a Labor government to power? And in almost every case, a considerable majority declared in favor of the progressive viewpoint.

The majority of the big reactionary newspapers, alarmed at this evolution, have repeatedly conducted campaigns against the "Bolshevization" of the English students. The University Labor Federation (united organization of Socialist and Communist students) has a membership of approximately 3,500. In the course of this year it conducted a solidarity campaign with the hunger marchers, and is also participating in the solidarity campaign on behalf of the Spanish republic; it has sent volunteers to the International Brigade, has assisted in organizing medical units and delegations for Spain, taken part in the despatch of two foodships from the English youth to Spain, etc. This campaign of aid to Spain has often been conducted jointly with the Liberal students and the League of Nations' Student Association, and also, partially, with the collaboration of the Christian students.

The chief national student organizations in England are collaborating with the student sub-committee of the British Youth Committee for the Struggle for Peace. Lastly, four important organizations, Socialists, Conservatives, Liberals and the Friends of the League of Nations, publish a joint journal entitled the *Student Forum*, which is a sort of free platform where all tendencies can express their opinions, but which, at the same time, supports a positive policy of collaboration in defense of peace.

A similar movement, modified by the peculiarities of each country, is developing in other democratic countries, notably in the United States and in Czechoslovakia, and is characterized by a broad front for peace and a campaign in support of republican Spain.

Let us take Bulgaria as an example of another type of country. Although for a long time the anti-fascist elements have maintained strong positions in the universities, the fascists have influenced the mass of the students. They have succeeded in obtaining the leadership of the National Union of Bulgarian Students and, profiting by the fact that the anti-fascist elements limit themselves to socialist propaganda of a general kind, the fascists have appropriated the monopoly of problems relative to the life of the students, such as the question of student societies, and the national question, and are thus striving to win the support of the students as a whole.

At the same time, the ferocious reign of terror instituted by the government has decimated the ranks of the anti-fascist students. During the last year, however, important changes have been taking place which have expressed themselves above all in the general strike of the Bulgarian students which took place in March, 1937. This strike was called by the National Union of Bulgarian Students in support of the demands of the student societies and at the same time for the suffrage to be extended to students (the students were unable to participate in the municipal elections in Bulgaria which took place in March).

The unanimous spirit of the Bulgarian students was shown in this strike in defense of the economic demands and political rights of the students. The efforts of the fascist elements to gain possession of the leadership of the strike were quickly unmasked. The strike lasted for ten days and was accompanied by demonstrations of thousands of students in the main streets of Sofia. It was not terminated until an interview had been obtained between the representatives of the National Union of Bulgarian Students and

the King, who promised to satisfy all the demands of the students. These demands have in fact been partially satisfied.

What also contributed a great deal to this victory was the fact that in their propaganda, in their press, the anti-fascists had been energetic in raising the national question, a question of burning importance for the Bulgarian students and had shown that they really love their people and their country; by this means they deprived fascist propaganda of one of its strongest arguments.

Progressive tendencies are also developing among the students of Yugoslavia, particularly in the Belgrade University; the students of the capital are noted for their militancy, for their struggle in defense of their economic demands and their political rights.

In the majority of the fascist and semi-fascist countries, fascism still maintains its influence over the student masses, and the leadership of the student societies, utilizing national demagogy to develop national hatred, anti-Semitism (Rumania, Poland).

In France, despite the strength of the People's Front, fascist elements still maintain considerable influence over the students, setting them against foreign students, against the "bureaucratization" of the intellectuals, etc.

But even in the fascist countries certain positive symptoms are to be noted in the development of the student movement. In Italy, for example, serious discussions are to be found in the fascist student press; to such an extent was this the case that Starace * was compelled a few months ago to centralize under his own guidance the whole of the university press in Italy. Discussions are taking place in these journals on social justice, the real corporative state, the attitude to be adopted towards Communism and the Soviet Union. For several months now one can observe a tendency growing up against Hitler influence upon Italian politics. This tendency is expressed in

* Secretary of the Fascist Party in Italy.

criticism of the racial theory, in appeals to return to the cultural traditions of Italy, etc.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, we are witnessing a rapid growth of the anti-imperialist student movement, especially in China, where the students are playing an important part in the struggle against Japanese imperialism. Especially worthy of note is the wave of demonstrations that took place on December 9 and 16, 1935, in Peking, and which afterwards spread throughout the whole of the country. Since then, the struggle of the Chinese students is going on without a break in various forms. At the same time much is being done to organize the students.

In May, 1936, the inaugural conference of the National Union of Students for the Salvation of the Fatherland took place; this union includes the students and scholars of 50 university centers and embraces approximately 300,000 members. The students conduct energetic propaganda in the villages, they organize artistic performances, groups of songsters, etc.

During the events in Sian, the Chinese Students' Union expressed its attitude in a manifesto against civil war, demanding the unity of the people and the government against the foreign enemy. The Students' Union sent a delegation to the Third Plenary Session of the Kuomintang, and presented a petition containing the following slogans: "A unanimous foreign policy," "Support Chiang Kai-shek at the head of a government engaged in the struggle against Japan."

After the Plenum, the Students' Union included the following principles in its program: (a) cooperation with the government, and the provision of complete legal status for the student movement; (b) the strengthening of the Students' Union and collaboration with the masses of the people; (c) the organization of real military training for students, so as to render them capable of resisting the Japanese invasion.

The Chinese student movement main-

tains contacts with the student organizations of Europe and America, and is collaborating with the Japanese students in the defense of peace in the Far East.

Side by side with the rising tide of the student movement in China, national student organizations of a mass character with a program of demands, corporative and national, are being formed in India and Burma for the first time.

In Latin America a mass anti-imperialist movement is developing among the students, the movement in each given country having its own particular features. The ideological basis of this movement is University Reform, the basis of which was laid in 1918 in the Argentine and which afterwards extended to almost all the university centers of Latin America.

However, this movement in certain countries (especially in Mexico) displays an exclusively political character and neglects, or leaves in the background, corporative questions and the specific interests of the students.

The following tasks face the student movement of Latin America: the strengthening of the existing National Student Federation on the basis of defense of the students' interests, a struggle against illiteracy, and the development of national culture, etc.

This is a task which cannot be fulfilled except through collaboration with the Catholic student organizations which are quite important in certain countries of Latin America. It is equally necessary to coordinate the student movement throughout the American continent.

* * *

The Communist students can play an outstanding part in the progressive movement of the students which is now developing in a number of countries. But they cannot fulfil this task unless they acquaint themselves with the lives of the students, make a close study of their interests and their problems, and take heed of their demands and requirements. In the struggle against fascist influence

among the students, it is of great importance to understand the problems of a political and cultural nature which mainly occupy the minds of the students, in order to prevent the fascists gaining control in these questions.

While spreading socialist ideas among

the students and in taking the line of mass work, it is the duty of the Communist students to unmask the counter-revolutionary role of the Trotskyists, who still secure a hearing among certain groups of the Socialist students, notably in France.

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