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STEPS IN THE

United Front



By *EARL BROWDER*

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REPORT ON THE SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS

OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International was held in Moscow from July 25 to August 20, 1935.

New Steps in the United Front

*Report on the Seventh World Congress of the
Communist International **

By EARL BROWDER

THE new imperialist world slaughter, against which the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International warned the toilers of all lands, has opened with Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia.

For us Communists, the fight for Ethiopian independence, for the defeat of Italian fascism, for the active defense of Ethiopia, and our efforts to join hands in common action with everyone who will lend even the smallest support in this struggle, is more than sentimental solidarity with the oppressed Ethiopian people. It is an organic part of the whole world-wide battle against fascism and imperialist war, for human freedom, which formed the subject matter of the Seventh World Congress.

It is my purpose tonight to deal with the fascist invasion of Ethiopia, not in detail, but only in its larger connection with the whole world situation. How is it possible that this wanton and inexcusable war could be launched at this moment? It is no answer to point to the role of the criminal maniac, Mussolini, for that only raises the question how such bandits can operate so freely in the world today. The answer is that monopoly capitalism, imperialism, in every land outside the Soviet Union, has been feverishly preparing for this war, creating the pre-conditions for it, piling up the explosives, so that finally the only thing that is missing is the man to set the match to the fuse. Mussolini has stepped forward as this man of destiny. Tomorrow Hitler will continue the role.

A new repartition of the world has already begun. While Italian troops march into Ethiopia, while Japanese imperialism grabs

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ever more of China, German fascism, the chief force in the world making for war today, has brought all Europe in arms at the state boundaries, which Hitler proposes to change by armed force. He is preparing a war of revenge against France, dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, annexation of Austria, the seizure of the Baltic States, and the division of Soviet Ukraine from the Soviet Union. German fascism is allied with fascist Poland. British imperialism supports the German armament, trying to weaken the hegemony of France in Europe, and to direct Hitler's attack against the Soviet Union, while striving to establish a counter-balance to the United States in world politics. The main contradiction among the imperialist powers remains that between Britain and the United States, an antagonism which extends to all areas of the world.

At this moment, the imperialist interests of Great Britain place it in conflict with the aims of conquest in Africa by Mussolini. For that reason there is a momentary coinciding of Britain's immediate aim to halt the Italian aggression with the same aim held by the masses throughout the world who fight against war and fascism. That is why it was possible for Litvinov, representing the Soviet Union, to join in the action of the League of Nations, which raised the question of collective action and sanctions in defense of Ethiopian independence. But let there be no illusions. The only power in the League consistently standing to the end for peace and the independence of small nations is the Soviet Union. Britain, France, and the other powers at the moment opposing Mussolini, are behind the scenes trying to strike a bargain with Italy, at the expense of Ethiopia, ready to go to any lengths so long as their own special imperialist interests are respected. That is the danger facing Ethiopia today, which is second only to the immediate menace of Mussolini's hordes.

The chief factor in the struggle for world peace, the factor which has prevented the outbreak of war up to now, is the policy of the Soviet Union. This has been possible as a result of the great strengthening of the Soviet Union in relation to the capitalist world. The final victory of socialism has enormously increased the defensive power of the Soviet Union and thereby its specific weight in European politics, causing the imperialists to postpone the long prepared attack against the land of socialism, and enabling the Soviet Union to develop its peace policy. This policy, which was expressed

in the proposals for disarmament, in joining the League of Nations, in the proposed Eastern pact, and in the accomplished mutual defense pacts with France and Czechoslovakia, has won the support not only of the class-conscious workers of all lands, but has laid the basis for its cooperation with those states which at the present moment are interested in the preservation of peace. The Soviet Union stands at the head of a mighty concentration of all forces tending to prevent or postpone imperialist war.

As against those imperialist powers, which have placed their stake on war for the immediate redistribution of the world (Italy, Germany, Japan, Poland, Hungary) there is a tendency among a number of other countries to maintain the status quo, to postpone the outbreak of war. At the moment, this tendency is represented by the United States (shown in the neutrality resolution of Congress), and in Europe primarily by France, supported by most of the smaller countries, especially those whose independence is threatened by a new imperialist war.

The most favorable factor in the present situation for Ethiopia is that this peace front, organized around the policy of the Soviet Union, makes possible the rallying of enormous forces throughout the world under the slogan: Hands Off Ethiopia!, which for ever larger masses grows into the positive slogan: "Defend Ethiopian Independence." It has confronted the League of Nations with the alternative of either carrying out effective sanctions against Italian aggression or dissolving the whole system of collective security, which is the last frail barrier to a general world war.

This is the set-up of the world situation into which Mussolini has thrown the torch of war. Is it not clear, therefore, that every effort to fight for peace, against fascism, requires in every country that we should take as our basis and starting point the peace policy of the Soviet Union? Is it not clear that everyone who rejects or casts doubt upon that peace policy is helping the fascists and the war makers?

Unfortunately, we still have examples of people who do not understand this. Let us take the question of the defense of Ethiopia. We have a whole group of Negro leaders in America, who presumably want to help Ethiopia. I speak of the chief leaders of the N.A.A.C.P. and of its magazine, *The Crisis*. But how do they go

about helping their Ethiopian brothers? They first of all carry on a wide campaign of scandal-mongering against the Soviet Union, that power which has been most firm and energetic in Ethiopian defense. They ridicule the mass campaign against war and for the independence of small nations, conducted by the Communists in America, as "pious flubdub", yet if these same persons want to address even a single big mass meeting in defense of Ethiopia, they had that opportunity in this very hall last week, only because Communist cooperation had made it possible. While they attack the Soviet Union, the Ethiopian representatives in Geneva at the League of Nations, when told about it, exclaimed: "Nonsense! Litvinov is correct, sincere and genuine." Is it not clear that these gentlemen of the N.A.A.C.P. injure and embarrass the cause of Ethiopia by their malicious slander of the Soviet Union? Is it not clear that everyone who echoes these slanders, as is being done by local Socialist papers, helps fascist Italy? With this kind of line it is impossible to fight against fascism and on the side of freedom. Only by lining up on the side of the Soviet Union is it possible to mobilize the peace-loving masses against war and fascism.

The same thing holds true in regard to the Franco-Soviet pact. There are still people, important persons, who say they want to fight against fascism and for peace, and yet who oppose or cast doubt on the Franco-Soviet pact. Yet it is precisely this pact which made possible the rallying of the Peoples' Front in France, which prevented fascism from seizing that country also. It is precisely this pact, which gave pause to Hitler in his mad drive towards war. It is this pact and the whole peace policy that it expresses which is changing the relation of forces against fascism in Europe, making more favorable the prospect that if war does break out in spite of all our efforts, the fascists will be defeated. Everyone who raises his voice among the masses to cast suspicion upon the Franco-Soviet pact is helping Colonel De la Rocque and his fascist bands in their preparations to crush French democracy. He is helping disarm the German masses before the Hitler terror.

Our consistent struggle for peace in all countries is the best answer to that slander so often directed against the Communists that we desire war because we expect it to bring revolution. The relation between the struggle for peace and the struggle for revolution

is of a nature quite different from this. But for the constant threat of revolution at home the fascist warmongers of Europe would long ago have been at each others' throats, again slaughtering millions of people. Thus, the struggle for revolution has been a main factor so far making for peace. The fight for peace is at the same time strengthening the preparation for revolution. The Communists have no illusions that war can be done away with while capitalism continues to exist, but this does not weaken, it only strengthens our struggle for peace.

The Seventh Congress based itself upon the thesis adopted by the Stuttgart Congress of the pre-war Second International, on motion of Lenin and Luxemburg, which said to the toiling masses of the world:

"If, nevertheless, war breaks out, it is their duty to work for its speedy termination, and to strive with all their might to utilize the economic and political crisis produced by the war, to rouse the political consciousness of the masses of the people and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule."

The United Front Against Fascism

The bandit war opened against Ethiopia by Italian fascism illustrates the profound truth of the slogan put forth by the Seventh World Congress: "Fascism means War; Socialism means Peace." The whole work of the Congress was tied up with the problems of the struggle against fascism, the struggle for peace, and the building of working class unity, and of the united people's front to that end.

The Congress had many new things to say on these questions. As the Congress was in the center of world attention, it has been extensively reported, not only in the Communist papers and in special pamphlets, but also in the capitalist newspapers. Our enemies have worked overtime in the effort to distort the work of the Congress in the eyes of the masses. On the one hand they have endeavored to picture it, a la Hearst, as a dark conspiracy of bewhiskered Bolsheviks, bearing a bomb in one hand, and a bag of Moscow gold in the other, sneaking into America after the Congress to carry out its instructions to blow up our democracy. On the other hand, we have such distortions as that which discovered that the Seventh Congress shows that Moscow has turned from red to pink, that the

Bolsheviks are going bourgeois, that in the United States we are "supporting Roosevelt". In spite of all these wild distortions, in which the *New Leader* competed valiantly with Hearst (it is an open question as to which should get the laurels) the main line of the Seventh World Congress has penetrated through to the masses, and the workers everywhere are responding to the call of the Seventh Congress. Surely for this audience I am dealing with questions with which you are all acquainted already to a greater or lesser extent. I will therefore bring forward and develop only those central, outstanding features which determine all other questions.

What are the factors which characterize and determine the alignment of class forces at this moment in history and the tasks which consequently face the world labor movement? The Seventh World Congress listed the following five chief points:

1. The final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the Soviet Union.

2. The most far-reaching and prolonged economic crisis in the history of capitalism.

3. The offensive of fascism, its rise to power in Germany, the assault of Mussolini against the independence of Ethiopia, and the consequent growth of the danger of a new imperialist world war and an attack on the U.S.S.R.

4. The political crisis, expressed in the Austrian and Spanish struggles, and in the People's Front movement against fascism in France.

5. The revolutionization of the toiling masses throughout the whole capitalist world, the powerful movement for unity of action among the workers, the growth of the revolutionary movement in colonial countries and the extension of the Chinese Soviets.

The Seventh Congress established that "the relationship of class forces on a world scale is changing more and more in the direction of a growth of the forces of revolution".

It is this fact that impels the ruling bourgeoisie more and more toward fascism, toward the establishment of the open, terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, the most chauvinist, the most imperialist elements of finance capital.

Fascism strives by demagogic slogans to find for itself a mass basis by directing the indignation of the impoverished middle class

masses away from capitalism and against the working class. Fascism has come to power in a number of countries through these means. The fascist victory bears witness to the weakness of the working class, caused by the split in its ranks arising from the policy of Social-Democracy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. But it is at the same time witness to the growing weakness of the bourgeoisie itself, which turns to fascism out of fear of the growing unity among the workers, fear of revolution, and because it is no longer able to carry through its growing attacks against the toiling masses and its preparations for war by the old methods of bourgeois democracy.

The most reactionary variety of fascism is the German type, which shows the whole world what the masses may expect where fascism is involved. The Nazis perpetrate the most barbarous horrors, inflame the deepest chauvinist prejudices, yet at the same time exploiting even the revolutionary traditions and sense of justice of the masses, by posing as the enemies of the bankers, by calling themselves "Socialists", by speaking of their coming to power as a "revolution". But whatever the masks which fascism adopts, and these differ from time to time and from country to country (in the United States the main center of fascism calls itself the "Liberty League") always and everywhere fascism is the most ferocious attack on the toiling masses, it is unbridled chauvinism and annexationist war, it is rabid reaction and counter-revolution, it is the most vicious enemy of the working class and of all the toilers.

The Seventh Congress emphasized the growth of the fascist danger in all capitalist countries, including the United States. The Congress warned against any underestimation of this danger. At the same time it rejected the fatalistic view that regards the victory of fascism as inevitable. Both mistaken views can only give rise to passivity and weaken the mass resistance to fascism. The working class can prevent the victory of fascism, but for this it must bring about unity in its struggle, it must develop militant action which does not wait nor allow fascism to gather strength, it must develop correct revolutionary leadership to rally around itself the broad masses of toilers generally.

Fascism is an attempt by monopoly capital to bolster up its shaking rule. Its victory creates new formidable difficulties for the working class movement, yet at the same time fascism itself further shakes

the foundations of capitalism. It especially sharpens the internal conflicts among the capitalist groups themselves. It shatters the legalistic illusions of the workers. It accentuates the revolutionary hatred of the workers against capitalism. It reveals more and more the falseness of its demagogic promises. As a result of the victory of fascism, therefore, its mass base is disintegrating and narrowing down. But the Congress emphatically warned of the very dangerous illusion of an automatic collapse of the fascist dictatorship. It declared that only the united revolutionary struggle of the working class at the head of all the toilers will bring about the overthrow of fascist dictatorship.

The victory of fascism in Germany stimulated the growth of fascism all over the world. At the same time it stimulated the resistance of the working class and the toiling masses. This became a decisive factor in a new upsurge of the united front movement against the attacks of capital and fascism. It must be said that the moment which marked the beginning of a turn of large masses of Socialist and trade union workers toward the united front, was the Leipzig trial, when Hitler, Goering and all their hordes were defeated by the bare-handed Bolshevik heroism and clarity of our great Comrade Dimitroff, who won thereby the admiration and love of millions of toilers of all parties, in all lands. It was an historic feature of the Seventh Congress that Dimitroff came forward as the leader of the Comintern.

The united front movement is yet only in its beginning. But already the Communist and Socialist workers of France, fighting side by side, succeeded in beating back the first attacks of fascism. Thereby they gave an inspiring example to the workers all over the world. The beginnings of such unity in the armed struggle in Austria and Spain not only inspired the world with their heroism, but they demonstrated that victory against fascism would have been fully possible but for the sabotage of the Old Guard Right-wing Socialist leaders, and the waverings of the Left; the continued influence over the masses of the leaders who still held back from the struggle shook the ranks of the fighters, deprived them of the unity of action and clarity of aims which can only come from a united revolutionary leadership.

The events in Germany and Austria fully revealed the bank-

ruptcy of the Right-Wing as well as the Centrist policy of the old Social-Democracy. The Right-Wing German leadership by its entire policy helped the fascists to victory. The Centrist, self-styled "Left", Austrian leadership drew the broad masses away from struggle even on the eve of the inevitable armed clash. These events tremendously increased the disillusionment of the Social-Democratic workers, and hastened their radicalization.

The Second International is undergoing a profound crisis. Within its various Parties a regrouping into two main camps is taking place. Beside the old camp of reactionary leaders, who try to continue the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, there is arising the camp of those who are becoming revolutionized, those who come out openly for the establishment of the working class united front, and who are more and more taking the position of the revolutionary class struggle.

The Seventh Congress emphatically declared that it welcomes the aspirations of Social-Democratic workers to establish a united front with the Communists, and regards this as a sign of their growing class consciousness. It declares that a beginning has been made towards overcoming the split in the ranks of the working class, which when completely carried through will bring victory in the struggle against fascism and against the bourgeoisie.

The masses of all countries are more and more reaching the determination that they will not travel the path along which the German masses were led by their Old Guard leaders.

"Thus, fascism, which has undertaken to bury Marxism, the revolutionary movement of the working class, is," said Comrade Dimitroff, "as a result of the dialectics of life and the class struggle, itself leading to the further development of those forces, which are bound to serve as its grave-diggers, the grave-diggers of capitalism."

Chief Problems of the United Front

The Seventh Congress declared that "at the present historical stage it is the main, immediate task of the international labor movement to establish the united fighting front of the working class". The whole work of the Seventh Congress was directed toward speeding up the accomplishment of this aim. It is for this reason

that the Congress declared it to be the duty of every Communist Party to take into consideration the changed circumstances and to apply the united front tactics in a new manner, to seek to reach agreements with the organizations of toilers of all political trends for joint action on factory, local, district, national and international scale.

In this the Seventh Congress was answering the question being asked by millions throughout the world: "How can fascism be prevented from coming to power, and how can fascism be overthrown where it has been victorious?" United action of the proletariat is the mighty weapon with which victory can be won.

The Congress declared that the Communists everywhere must try by all means to make it easier for workers to find the road to unity of action and to secure agreements with Socialist Parties, trade unions and other organizations on long or short term basis, directed toward developing united action among the masses. It urged the greatest flexibility in searching for and finding those forms of united front which best correspond to the concrete situation in each country and each locality. It specifically approved, among examples of more permanent forms of united front, our proposal for the formation of a Labor Party in the United States.

The American delegation in the Congress already brought forward a clarification and broadening of our whole conception of the Labor Party.

We declared that we must broaden our conception of the Labor Party for which we have been actively fighting since the January meeting of our Central Committee. The association of workers and farmers and city middle classes in a united front party must be understood as a lasting coalition of these different class elements for joint struggle for their common interests over a long period. We must drop our opposition to the name Farmer-Labor as applied to such a party, and be ready to accept any name which is most appealing to the broad masses composing the movement.

We must not try to limit the program of such a united front party to such issues for which we have already roused mass movements for immediate demands, but must develop this program on a broader scale. Especially must we listen to every voice expressing that burning desire of the masses for measures directed towards reopening the closed factories, for putting the masses back to work,

producing the things that the masses need, while opposing every effort to segregate them upon "made work", opposing the limitation of this work to non-competitive fields. We must support and help to find the best formulations for the mass demand to cancel the usurped power of the Supreme Court to declare social legislation unconstitutional, to break down the special powers of the reactionary Senate, and to secure more equal and proportional representation in Congress. We must help to formulate for such a united front party a rounded out tax program for national, state and local governments, directed towards relieving the poor from taxation, abolishing the sales tax, fighting against inflation (which hits first and hardest the impoverished masses), and putting the expense of government upon the rich who alone can afford to pay because they hold the resources of this country in their hands. We must join in formulating a program for public works designed to meet the needs of the impoverished masses. We must jointly with all progressive forces take up more effectively the fight against the tremendous corruption which honeycombs American government. Upon the basis of such a program, we must direct every effort to make the new party, Farmer-Labor Party or whatever it may be called, the organizing, the leading force for a broad people's movement, drawing in all the oppressed and suffering masses.

The Congress pointed out that with the growth of a powerful united mass movement, which the ruling class is no longer able to halt, more fundamental proposals in the interests of the masses must be brought forward, such as control of production and the banks; disbandment of the capitalist armed forces, and their replacement by workers' militia, and so on. In the circumstances of the political crisis, such measures will still further shake the economic and political power of the capitalists, increase working class strength, isolate the parties of compromise and lead the working masses to face the question of power.

It is entirely probable that such a united mass movement will face the problem of power before it is convinced of the full Communist program. In what way then can we, Communists, together with them, face and solve the immediate question of the formation of a government? Comrade Dimitroff answered this question in the following words:

“If we, Communists, are asked whether we advocate united front only in the struggle for partial demands, or whether we are prepared to share the responsibility even when it will be a question of forming a government, on the basis of the united front, then we say, with a full sense of our responsibility: Yes, we recognize that a situation may arise, in which the formation of a government of a proletarian united front, or of the anti-fascist People's Front, will become not only possible, but necessary, in the interests of the proletariat, and in that case we shall declare for the formation of such a government without the slightest hesitation.”

This question has for some countries a broader and more practical application than for others, but in one form or another every party may be faced with the question. In France, for example, it is a practical question of the day as to whether the next government will be formed by the People's Front or whether it may not already be forestalled by a fascist *coup d'état*. In England the question arises in a different form, as to whether the Communists in the labor movement shall advocate that the Labor Party should set itself the task to win the majority in Parliament and form the next government, and under what conditions such a government could be supported by the Communists. In the United States, the practical significance of this question does not arise yet in the same form, yet we must also face it as a practical problem.

The masses will ask: Will we fight for a majority, for control of government, can we take control of government with such a party, what could such a government do? We clearly answer: Yes, we will fight together with such united fronts for a majority in all elected bodies, local, state and national. We will support such a party wherever and whenever it wins a majority, in taking over administrative power, so long as it really uses these powers to protect and extend the democratic liberties and advance the demands of the masses. When we are asked: Will we, Communists, act merely as critics in such a movement, while we advocate a Soviet Power for which the masses are not yet ready to fight, we answer: The Communists are even prepared for practical participation in such a government. We openly declare that such a government will not be able to introduce socialism, which is possible only with a really revolutionary government, a Soviet government, but that it *can* prevent fascism from coming to power, it *can* protect the democratic liberties

of the toiling masses, it *can* fight off hunger and economic chaos, and it *can* thus give the toiling masses time to learn through their own experience, and not through the horrors of a period of fascist barbarism, what is that larger, more deep-going program, which they must adopt in order to realize socialism, which alone is the final solution of their problems.

It is clear that here we are speaking of a transitional form of government before the victory of the proletarian revolution. Such a government should not be confused with the possible Soviet government, formed on the basis of a bloc with Communists, Left Socialists, etc., which had jointly participated in a victorious revolution. We speak of the possible formation of the united front government before such a victory.

The special character of such a government would be that it is primarily a government of struggle against fascism and reaction. It could only be a government arising as a result of the united front movement, and therefore in no way restricting the activity of the Communist Party and the mass organizations of the working class, but on the contrary, acting against monopoly capital and fascism. Such a government could come into existence only under conditions of a political crisis, when the ruling classes are unable to deal with the powerful upsurge of the masses. It could only come when the capitalist state apparatus is seriously paralyzed, when great masses are ready to act against fascism, but not yet prepared to fight for Soviet Power, and when a considerable part of the Socialists and the mass organizations of the workers participate in the united front and demand decisive uncompromising action against the fascist and other reactionaries, and are ready to go along with the Communists to realize these measures.

It is clear that this possible united front government before the proletarian revolution has nothing whatever in common with the reformist, the opportunist conception of coalition government. It has nothing in common with the unprincipled government blocs that have been formed by the Social-Democratic Parties in Europe together with sections of the bourgeoisie. We have not the slightest wish to revive these bankrupt and discredited practices of the Second International. Where this old coalition policy represented collaboration with the bourgeoisie to preserve capitalism from the attacks of the

masses, the united front government in our perspective is on the contrary a vehicle of collaboration between the organizations of the masses in struggle against capitalism, of all anti-fascist parties and groups, in the interests of the entire toiling population.

Nor is our policy an adaptation of the Old Guard theory of the "lesser evil". That theory was the justification for submission without struggle to one section of the ruling class in the hope that it would protect the workers from the more reactionary section. Our policy, on the contrary, is a further stage in the mobilization of the masses for the *active defense of their own interests*.

The decisive feature of our conception of united front government, which the Communist Party will support in every way, is that that government will, in the words of the Congress Resolution, "really undertake decisive measures against the counter-revolutionary financial magnates and their fascist agents, and will in no way restrict the activity of the Communist Party and the struggle of the working class".

The Unity of the Trade Union Movement

The Seventh Congress emphasized the special importance of the united front in economic struggles of the workers, and the unity of the trade union movement. It declared decidedly for the re-establishment of trade union unity in each country and internationally. It declared for united class trade unions, as one of the bulwarks in each country against the offensive of capitalism; for one trade union in each industry; for one federation of trade unions in each country; for one international federation of trade unions in each industry; for one general international of all trade unions based on the class struggle.

We in the United States had, already before the Congress, in the main solved the problem of trade union unification, although it is still necessary to conduct an ever-stronger resistance to the expulsions, and here and there are still some unions to unite with the main body in the American Federation of Labor.

The Congress declared it is the duty of Communists to work actively in the trade unions, to consolidate them, to recruit the unorganized, and to bring forward policies of actual defense in the interests of the workers and help them really become genuine class

organizations. For this purpose the Communists are ready to cooperate with all those, including officials, who are prepared to go along this road.

The Congress declared for the defense of the trade unions against all attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie and the fascists to restrict their rights or to destroy them. It declared for the mobilization of the entire union membership against the expulsion of revolutionary workers or entire branches from the unions, for maintaining contact between such expelled members and the bulk of union membership in a joint struggle for restoring the disrupted trade union unity. It declared the only necessary basis for such unity is that of the class struggle and trade union democracy.

The broader and deeper conception of the Farmer-Labor Party here put forth requires that we shall more energetically than ever struggle for working class unity. Such a lasting coalition of different class groups requires for its success a strong and ever more united working class as its foundation and unifying leading force. The central problem of working class unity is the creation of a strong, united trade union movement. The decisive question in building the Farmer-Labor Party is winning the support of the organized workers in the trade unions.

Our most important achievement in the past year has been our success in the fight for trade union unity. I will not recount here all the lessons of that struggle, which are already well known, but a few features must be given even more emphasis than before. One of these is the growing radicalization of native-born workers, even those who for generations occupied a privileged position, and whose consequent conservatism has long been a most tremendous barrier to the political independence of the labor movement, a fact noted by Frederick Engels already in the nineteenth century. Along with this goes a radicalization of even large numbers of lower and middle trade union officials, those who were formerly the bulwark of conservatism in the trade unions, but who now begin to turn towards a Farmer-Labor Party, towards uniting with the semi-skilled and unskilled masses towards demands for complete unionization, industrial unionism, unity and solidarity in action. This change necessitates the fundamental revision of our attitude and approach towards such people. A few years ago it would have been opportunist nonsense

to expect to win over quickly these historically conservative elements, but today it has become a most practical and key question.

We must emphasize that all successes in extending and deepening the united front movement among the youth, the farmers, the city middle classes, has been the result of and dependent upon, in the first place, our success in uniting the trade unions, and firmly rooting the Communists among them. It is this that enables us to talk seriously, small as our Party still is, about being one of the decisive factors in creating a broad, mass Farmer-Labor Party which can stand at the head of an anti-fascist People's Front embracing many millions, which can check the advance of fascism in the U.S.A., which can preserve the democratic rights of the masses, which can win some amelioration in their catastrophic economic situation, and which can provide the opportunity which the masses require to learn through their own experience the further solution of their problems.

The United Front With the Socialists

Of how much importance is the question of the united front between Socialist and Communist Parties? How can we bring this united front about? What are the prospects for creating one united party of socialism, a single, revolutionary proletarian party?

United action of Socialists and Communists to build a Farmer-Labor Party, to fight against fascism and war, is of the most tremendous and immediate importance. Small as both Parties still are, effective united action between them would multiply their influence on the masses very many times. It would hasten the realization of a mass Farmer-Labor Party. It would change the whole political complexion of the organized labor movement almost over night. It would immediately put a check to the free development of reactionary influences in thousands of places where they now run wild. It would speed up the whole political development of the American working class; in short, it must be declared that to win the decisive sections of the Socialist Party to the united front is an absolute necessity, a matter of life and death for the toiling masses.

To achieve this, however, requires the isolation and defeat of that little group of stubborn Old Guard leaders who ride the Socialist

movement like an old man of the sea, choking its development, keeping it in opportunist, sectarian isolation, who are consciously and stubbornly counter-revolutionary and anti-socialist, who even collaborate with open fascists like Hearst. On the other hand, it requires the closest, most friendly and most patient collaboration with and help to all those individuals and groups within and around the Socialist Party, who are breaking with the old reformist, reactionary policies, and who are moving, however confusedly, towards a class struggle program.

To the degree that we successfully achieve unity of action with the Socialists, for the building of the Farmer-Labor Party, and for the immediate current struggles of the masses for the economic and political interests, for the fight against fascism and war, *to that degree we are opening up perspectives for the organic unity of Socialists and Communists in one revolutionary party of socialism.* We are coming to the end of that period, which began with the World War and the Russian Revolution, of the world-wide split in the Socialist movement. We are entering the period of the healing of this split, a period which is opened by the undeniable and final victorious building of the socialist society in the U.S.S.R., at the moment when the workers in the capitalist countries are faced with the alternative of united struggle or the rise of barbarous fascism.

There can be no doubt that the split in the Socialist movement and the prolonged and bitter struggle between the Socialist and Communist Parties served to drive away large masses of workers, who, not understanding the issues involved, turned their backs on both parties and upon socialism in general. This further weakened the power of socialism to attract the farmers and city middle classes around itself and to gather the allies of the revolution.

We are raising for discussion with the Socialist workers the problem of organic unity, in one party, of all those who want socialism. We will discuss this question with the Socialists, not as a substitute for joint action on the immediate problems, for joint work in building the Farmer-Labor Party, for joint efforts in the trade unions for progressive policies and for trade union democracy, for building and uniting the unemployed organizations, but rather to help along this practical united action, which lays the foundations for future organic unity. We will place this slogan of the united action of all

adherents of socialism and their eventual unity in one party in opposition to the slogan of the Old Guard leaders, which calls for a united front with the open supporters of capitalism, even with Hearst, against the Communists.

For a Broader United Front in Support of Negro Rights

It is necessary to say a few words also about the problems of broadening the united mass struggle for Negro rights, and what this means for the policy of the Communists. The Communist Party is proud of its past work in this field and especially of our long and bitter struggle for the Scottsboro boys, for Angelo Herndon, for the organization of the Negro sharecroppers, for the carrying of mass organization and struggle into the dark South. We do not apologize for the sharp polemics which were necessary against those who tried to frighten us away from this struggle, who said that we were bringing down heavier oppression upon the Negroes by raising the slogan of equality. But we must recognize that hundreds and thousands of those who formerly opposed us most bitterly are themselves changing and turning towards more militant policies, under the influence of the crisis and the educational effects of our own work. Even the N.A.A.C.P., which fought us most bitterly, which still carries on vicious slanders against us, has itself been forced by the new mood among the masses, the reorientate itself towards the Left, to become more active and more bold in demanding equal rights for the Negroes. Such a practical tribute to the fundamental correctness of our position is more important to us than words. We must recognize that it opens up new possibilities for the joint work and struggle, on a far broader basis than ever before. At the same time we know that the past struggles between us has also had one bad effect upon our own forces, of making them too suspicious, too inclined to see enemies everywhere, sometimes even where they do not exist, and where there are potential friends. We ourselves must break loose from these self-imposed limitations, we must have greater confidence in those broad circles, not hitherto associated with us, who are taking up the struggle for Negro rights. It is for these reasons that the Communist Party believes that all its members and sympathizers should welcome the initiative that is being taken by a broad group

of representative Negroes in all walks of life in the planning for a National Negro Congress, to take place early next year. We believe that it is possible for this Congress to hammer out a program, acceptable to all fighters for Negro liberation, including the Communists, which we can wholeheartedly support. One of the most important signs of the practicability of this project is that broad united front in support of Angelo Herndon, even though it is not yet complete in its organizational forms—a united action to which Norman Thomas contributed greatly in realizing.

The National Question and Revolutionary Traditions

The Seventh Congress, calling for systematic, ideological struggle against fascism, pointed out that the most dangerous form of fascist ideology is chauvinism. By this the fascists use the pretext of defending national interests in order to oppress and exploit the people of their own country as well as other people. Our policy must show that the working class, by fighting against every form of national oppression, is the only genuine defender of national freedom and independence.

Comrade Dimitroff brilliantly exposed the fascist demagogues, who are rummaging through the entire history of every nation so as to be able to pose as the heirs and continuers of all that was exalted and heroic in its past, while all that was degrading and offensive to the national sentiments of the people, they make use of as weapons against the enemies of fascism. He poured scorn upon those Communists,

“ . . . who suppose that all this has nothing to do with the cause of the working class, who do nothing to enlighten the masses on the past of their own people in an historically correct fashion, in a genuinely Marxist, a Leninist-Marxist, a Leninist-Stalinist spirit, who do nothing to link up their present struggle with its revolutionary traditions and past—voluntarily relinquish to the fact-falsifiers all that is valuable in the historical past of the nation, that the fascists may bamboozle the masses.”

Comrade Dimitroff pointed out that

“ . . . we, Communists, are the irreconcilable opponents, on principle, of bourgeois nationalism of every variety, but we are not

supporters of national nihilism and should never act as such. The task of educating the workers and all toilers in the spirit of proletarian internationalism is one of the fundamental tasks of every Communist Party, but whoever thinks that this permits him, or even compels him, to despise all the national sentiments of the broad, toiling masses, is far from genuine Bolshevism and has understood nothing of the teachings of Lenin and Stalin on the national question."

Comrade Dimitroff cited his own experience at the Leipzig trial, when the fascists attempted to slander the Bulgarians as a barbarian people. He declared:

"I was not wrong in taking up the defense of the national honor of the toiling masses of the Bulgarian people who are struggling heroically against the fascist usurpers, these real barbarians and savages, nor was I wrong in declaring that I had no cause to be ashamed of being a Bulgarian, but that on the contrary I was proud of being a son of the heroic Bulgarian working class."

We may hope that these words will still the last doubts of those few very "Left" Communists who are afraid that the Eighth Convention of our American Party was capitulating to chauvinism when we boldly appropriated the revolutionary traditions of our own country of 1776 and 1861. For America, also, the revolutionary movement is fighting to save the culture of the people, to liberate it from the chains of the rotting monopoly capitalism, to preserve it from the threat of that barbarous fascism, which is more and more raising its head in the United States. Only the working class revolution can avert the destruction of culture, can raise it to a higher stage, can infuse its national forms with the content of socialism, as is being demonstrated in the great federation of peoples in the Soviet Union, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and its great genius, Stalin.

There are great lessons in this, also, for us in our struggle for the rights of the oppressed Negro people. Those slanderers, who accuse us because we raise the slogan, "Self-Determination for the Negro People in the Black Belt", that we want to jim-crow the Negroes, that we want to separate the Negro people from the white, these falsifiers are thereby putting themselves in the position of advocating the forcible unification of the Negroes, which means

their segregation as a subject, oppressed nationality. This is chauvinism, white chauvinism, and when expressed by Negro misleaders, is a surrender to white chauvinism. The Soviet Union, which unites in unbreakable solidarity more than 150 separate nationalities, has proved once and for all that only the free self-determination, the unity by choice, not from compulsion, is the road to national freedom and independence, and to international solidarity.

The enormous importance of the youth, in the fight against fascism, was very strongly registered in the Seventh Congress. In a number of countries, particularly in Germany, the underestimation of the youth has been cleverly utilized by the fascists, who succeeded in misleading large sections of the youth into their camp. The sharpest criticism was directed against the sectarian habits of many of our Young Communist Leagues, often expressed in trying to copy the Parties.

The Young Communists of our country were congratulated upon their decisive break with sectarianism, upon their bold joining hands with the Young Socialists, with the youth in religious organizations, and, together with them, forging a strong anti-fascist front which has successfully created the great Youth Congress movement.

The particular ruthlessness and cynicism with which fascism enslaves women makes this a central question for the anti-fascist struggle. There cannot be a successful fight against fascism and war unless the broad masses of our women are drawn into it. This cannot be done by agitation alone. We must find a way to mobilize the masses of toiling women in support of their everyday needs. from the fight against the high cost of living clear up to the struggle against every manifestation of inequality of women, against fascist discriminations, etc. Where this is necessary we must not be afraid of the formation of separate women's organizations. We must find the simplest, most easily understood forms, to bring together the existing mass organizations of women, especially those of progressive, anti-war, anti-fascist, trade union and Socialist character.

With the development of fascist bands, vigilantes, and so on, and their use to attack the labor movement, the question must be energetically raised in a practical manner of the establishment of anti-fascist mass defense corps, recruiting them from the reliable, tested elements of all organizations in the united front movement.

The Anti-Imperialist Front in the Colonies

The new words spoken by the Seventh Congress with regard to the colonial and semi-colonial countries were to raise sharply as the most important task the establishment of a broad, anti-imperialist people's front. The Communists are advised to do everything possible to bring about joint action with the national revolutionaries and national reformist organizations on a definite anti-imperialist platform. We already see this tactic being applied in Cuba, where the initiative of the Communist Party already gives promise of uniting the anti-imperialist people's front to include also the nationalist, "Young Cuba" and the national reformist party of Grau San Martin. In China the brilliant successes of the Red Army in smashing the encirclement movement of the Kuomintang, shifting its base to the interior, and extending the Soviet movement over new territories, is being combined with the development of the people's anti-imperialist movement all over the country. The Chinese Soviets, by their proposal for a joint war against the Japanese invaders and its organization through a broad anti-imperialist government, are brilliantly exposing the national treachery of the Kuomintang, its shameless surrender to the Japanese invaders, and rallying more and more the entire Chinese people to the emancipation struggle.

We workers in the imperialist countries, in the interest of our own emancipation, must give much more support to the struggle for the liberation of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. We, in America, must more effectively support the Cuban anti-imperialist revolution. We must give more attention to helping our Filipino brothers. We must give more support to such praiseworthy efforts as that of the organization of the American Friends of the Chinese People and its brilliant journal, *China Today*.

Strengthening the Communist Party

Calling for the all-round consolidation of the Communist Parties themselves, the Seventh Congress declared: In order that the united front may be really brought about, the Communists must overcome the self-satisfied sectarianism in their own ranks, which in our day is, in a number of cases, no longer an infantile disorder,

but an ingrained vice. This sectarianism, by overestimating the degree of revolutionization of the masses, by creating the illusion that the path to fascism had already been barred, actually developed passivity instead of more energetic struggle against fascism. Sectarianism more than anything else is the obstacle to the realization of the united front.

The Seventh Congress already established the achievement of considerable growth and maturity in the various Communist Parties. So much so that the Congress could make the momentous decision of a general shift of the operative leadership of Party work to the Central Committees of the various countries and charge the international executive to intervene only in exceptional cases, and to give its major attention to working out the common international political problems of all the Parties. But to be satisfied with the extent of our achievements in consolidating the Communist Party would be the most dangerous thing. The united front can be built and strengthened only to the degree that we strengthen the Communist Party in every way and increase its membership. This is not a narrow Party concern of ourselves, but of the entire working class. The more we emphasize that we are ready to go hand in hand with the Socialists, the progressive trade unionists, and all anti-fascist elements in a common struggle against fascism, the more we at the same time emphasize the growing importance of building and strengthening our own Party, and protect it against the penetration of class collaboration, opportunist influences.

The struggle against sectarianism is the struggle to reach and win the masses in practical everyday work, to win their confidence by the correctness, energy and persistence of our work. This requires that we take into account much more seriously the degree of preparation of the masses for our program, that we very soberly estimate the relation of forces, that we do not mistake our own wishes for the actual state of affairs. We must patiently and systematically create the possibility for the broad masses to move step by step towards the full platform of the class struggle. We must break once and for all with the sectarianism which sees nothing but dangers in the application of the united front, which sees capitulation in careful Bolshevik work among the still undeveloped masses, and which is nothing but helplessness and fear of the difficulties of serious mass work.

We, in America, must above all emphasize two key points in building the Party: cadres and recruiting. We must have more trained and developed leaders in the lower organizations of the Party and in the mass organizations. We must have bold promotion into leading posts of those workers who display the capacity to lead and organize masses. We must have a ruthless elimination of all those in leading posts who are petrified, who cannot move with the times, who cannot bind the Party ever closer to the masses, who are fearful of every move towards the masses. Every Party committee must take up the problem of developing these leading cadres, especially on a shop, neighborhood and section basis, for these are the people who must build the Party, who must build the united front, who will be the leaders of the revolution. Along with this must go a great increase in Party membership. We are still a ridiculously small Party. There are 50,000 workers immediately surrounding our Party, ready and fit to become Party members. We keep them out by our sectarian inner-Party life. We must bring them into the Party and adjust the Party life so as to make it possible for them to function as Party members without limiting but rather strengthening their work in mass organizations. We must abolish that sectarian nonsense which thinks that when a worker joins the Party he must give up all family life and devote all his waking hours away from the job to Party meetings and literature distribution. We must actually become a mass Party, and create the conditions that the masses can feel at home in our Party units.

The Victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union

In conclusion, I must speak, even though it must be briefly on account of the late hour, about the outstanding feature of the Seventh Congress, the report of the results of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, by Comrade Manuilsky. The period between the Sixth and Seventh World Congresses marked the achievement of the final victory of socialism in the Soviet Union. This is an epochal event in the history of mankind. This victory is the proof of the correct policy and leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the guidance of our great and beloved Comrade Stalin. This victory is all the more significant in that it

takes place precisely in the period of the prolonged, catastrophic crisis in all capitalist lands, and the complete bankruptcy of all those parties and trends within the working class which had based themselves upon uncompromising struggle against the Communists.

The Soviet Union inherited a country that was most backward, in every respect. It inherited a country which further had been crushed and ruined by the imperialist war and interventions, and harassed by a hostile, capitalist world. But this poverty-stricken, backward and ruined country was raised up out of its catastrophic situation by the proletarian revolution, by the Soviet Power. In sharp contrast to the course of the capitalist world, which despite its enormous wealth and accumulated productive forces, and even because of this wealth, descended into deep crisis, with starvation and fascist barbarism for the millions of the toiling masses, the course of the Soviet Union, on the contrary, has been steadily upward. It restored the ruined economy of the country and then proceeded to develop productive forces at a speed hitherto unknown in history. It transformed the crushed and outcast masses into the rulers of the country and the creators of a new and magnificent life. It raised the standard of living and created a new, advanced Socialist culture. It welded the internal collaboration of a great family of nations. It built a powerful workers' state, created a new economic order, and is already actually achieving its proclaimed goal of creating a new kind of human being. It is actually realizing in practical life the dream of all the best thinkers of mankind—socialism.

This gigantic achievement was not secured automatically, nor without difficulties and struggles. It has been a constant battle, not only against a hostile world without, but with the remnants of the old social order within the country. It was secured only at the price, also, of uncompromising struggle against all deviations within the Communist Party away from the clear path of Marx, Engels and Lenin. This victory was possible only through the firm, monolithic unity of the Communist Party, under Stalin's leadership, against the Zinoviev-Trotsky opposition, which finally even descended to assassination, and by maintaining and carrying through the Leninist-Stalinist principle of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country. This victory was possible only through overcoming the Right opportunists, who wanted to take the path

of capitulation to the capitalist elements within the country. This victory is the fruit of the genius of Stalin, who led the Party and the working class of the entire country to socialism.

The Seventh Congress was given a profound and detailed report on all aspects of this tremendous achievement. Its conclusions are unchallengeable. Let us remind ourselves of merely a few features of the rise of socialism in comparison with the decline of our own country.

Since 1928 the number of workers employed in the United States has declined at least ten million and the sum total of wages has dropped by more than half. In the Soviet Union the number of workers has doubled, and the sum total of wages has been multiplied by five. In the United States, where the need is greatest, social insurance is still only a vague aspiration, while in the Soviet Union, where unemployment is unknown, the social insurance funds have been multiplied sevenfold and run into many billions of rubles. In the United States, industrial production dropped over 40 per cent, while in the Soviet Union it is increased fivefold. In the United States, the mass of farmers have been thrown into poverty, and a large part of them escape starvation only by the government paying them for destroying their crops, while in the Soviet Union, collectivized agriculture is expanding production and is bringing Socialist prosperity and culture to the whole countryside. In the United States, millions of the population are moving from their homes into cellars and shacks. In the Soviet Union, they are moving from cellars and shacks into great, modern apartment houses. In the United States, thousands of schools are being closed and millions of children denied education. In the Soviet Union, thousands of new schools are being opened, the number of pupils has risen to 25,000,000, the number of teachers already reaches 600,000, while the secondary schools have been multiplied by ten and 1,300,000 workers' children are studying in the colleges and universities. In the United States, more than 10,000,000 workers have been thrown out of the factories and the youth are denied all employment, while in the Soviet Union 1,500,000 former workers and workers' children occupy positions as factory managers, judges, lawyers, teachers, scientists, and so on.

Are not these facts alone enough to prove beyond all question

that the program of Lenin and Stalin, of socialism, alone leads humanity to a new and higher life, while capitalism, even in the country where it accumulated half the wealth of the world, is leading humanity to destruction?

Let us draw a different kind of comparison. A few days ago we read in the newspapers the speech of President Roosevelt at Boulder Dam. The President praised this great technical achievement, the flower of capitalist technique, which had finally been finished after ten years' work. What benefits could he point out which the great Boulder Dam had brought to the people? In spite of his best efforts he could speak only of jobs for 4,000 men in building it, a possible influence of forcing some lower prices from the power trust for the consumers of electric current, and the providing of water-control for the Imperial Valley, which would save from destruction by natural forces some of the crops for later destruction by the government itself to avoid overproduction. He was silent about the fact that every technical achievement in America, be it Boulder Dam or a new machine, is swelling the army of the starving unemployed, cutting the wages of the employed workers, and rendering even more inextricable the catastrophe in which our country is involved. Compare this with the Soviet Union. There whole new great, industrial cities are rising up in a few months' time around the great Dneiper Dam power station, around Magnetostroy, around Kuznetstroy and so on. Every day great new giant factories are opening and begin to pour their stream of commodities out to an eagerly awaiting Socialist market. There every new technical and constructional achievement is immediately reflected in better wages, more and better food, more schools, more universities, more newspapers, more theatres, more libraries, for the whole of the toiling mass of the people. There can be no doubt that in the United States we have much higher development of technical efficiency, that in the Soviet Union they are still relatively backward in a technical sense compared to us, and yet over there they are rising out of poverty to a general well-being for all, while here we are sinking into a swamp of misery that seems to be created by the very wealth of the country. The cause of this enormous difference in the direction of development between the two countries is simple. It is merely that in the United States all our great productive forces, all our

gigantic accumulations of wealth, are the private property of a little handful of monopolist capitalists, who are the masters of the country and its government, while in the Soviet Union, relatively poor as they are, the country and all its productive forces are the common property of the people, operated for the benefit of all. In short, in the United States we have capitalism. In the Soviet Union they have established socialism.

Or let us take another comparison. That great technically advanced country, Germany. There the masses have not only been plunged into economic catastrophe, but have lost the last vestige of democratic liberties, and their life is being stultified by a barbarous destruction of all the finest flowers of culture. The same forces of fascism have already engulfed a number of European countries, are threatening to seize France, and are daily becoming more menacing in the United States itself. In this country we see the daily encroachment upon civil rights and democratic liberties. Compare this whole development in the capitalist world with the direction of development in the Soviet Union. There, not only have the masses been developing a new kind of democracy, Soviet democracy, ever since the Revolution, which is a hundred times more democratic than anything ever seen in a capitalist land, but the Soviet Union is now, thanks to victorious collectivization of agriculture and the final victory of socialism, precisely at the moment when the capitalist countries are descending to fascism, able to pass over to another great step forward in democratization—the equalization of representatives in the Soviets as between city and country, the introduction of the secret ballot and direct elections to all offices from the lowest to the highest.

As a result of this flowering of the new socialist prosperity, the completion of Soviet democracy, and the beginnings of the emergence of a new socialist human being, the land of the Soviets is able to turn its attention to a new task, which society had never before even been able to formulate, that is, the organized care by society as a whole for human beings, the development of all their capacities, the cultivation by society itself of the individual personality. That is the meaning of the new slogan put forward by Stalin, of the new Socialist humanism.

Is it any wonder that the masses all over the world, even through the poison gas of lies and slanders, with which the reactionary capi-

talist press surrounds the Soviet Union, are able to see in the new Socialist system the only beacon light of hope that shines out over the catastrophic capitalist world? Is it any wonder that the best minds among the intellectuals of the whole world are coming out openly in defense of socialism, and of the Soviet Union where socialism is being realized for the first time in history? Is it any wonder that everywhere the slogan, "Defend the Soviet Union", is taken up by large masses and that even many of those who for 17 years bitterly fought against the Soviet Union are now forced to acknowledge that in truth it is the fatherland of the toilers of the whole world?

Comrade Manuilsky ended his report to the Seventh World Congress with words which we repeat here as the conclusion of this report. He said:

"We must advance, Stalin declared, in such a manner that the working class of the whole world can look to us and say: There it is—my vanguard; there it is—my shock brigade, my workers' power, my fatherland. They are working for a cause which is also my cause. Good, let us aid them against the capitalists, let us arouse the world revolution.

"To be unreservedly faithful to the cause of proletarian internationalism, to the cause of the fraternal alliance of the proletariat—this is what our Party teaches, and what Stalin teaches. Under the leadership of Stalin our Party has served and continues to serve whole-heartedly the cause of proletarian internationalism, by setting itself the task of building up socialism in one country under the conditions imposed by a hostile environment. Today this victory is a fact. The Party serves proletarian internationalism when it strengthens, extends the defensive powers of the Soviet country. That the toiling masses of all countries do not stand disarmed before the class enemy today, that they are able to lean on a powerful support of peace and freedom in their struggle for emancipation is the magnificent achievement of the Stalinist policy, of the unreserved faithfulness to the cause of proletarian internationalism. We are true to the cause of proletarian internationalism and shall remain true to it to our last breath. And this is the reason why the exploited and oppressed in all countries of the world see in the land of victorious socialism their fatherland, in our Party and our working class, the shock brigade of the world proletariat, and in our Stalin the great, wise and beloved leader of the whole of toiling humanity."

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