

NOVEMBER, 1935



THE

COMMUNIST

The Eighteenth Anniversary of the October Revolution
Manifesto of the Central Committee of the C.P.U.S.A.

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The Significance of the October Revolution for the
World Proletariat

G. DIMITROFF and D. Z. MANUILSKY

New Steps in the United Front EARL BROWDER
Report on Seventh World Congress of the C.I.

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The Fifty-fifth Convention of the A. F. of L.

JACK STACHEL

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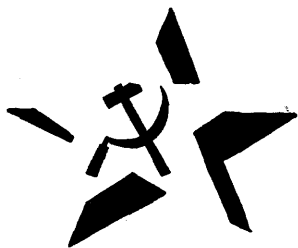
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SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS

of the

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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The Eighteenth Anniversary of the October Revolution

MANIFESTO OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE U.S.A.

EIGHTEEN years ago capitalism received a mortal blow in one of the greatest countries of the world. The workers of the Russian empire, led by the Communist (Bolshevik) Party, and fighting in alliance with the masses of the peasantry, rose in an armed insurrection, overthrew the capitalist government, established their own government of the Soviets and proceeded to take away the land from the big landlords, the factories from the manufacturers, the banks from the financiers, and to establish an order where all industry, all agriculture, all labor, all the natural resources, and all the inventiveness of the human genius can be used for the benefit, not of a handful of exploiters, but of the masses of the people.

Eighteen years have passed since the red-letter day in the history of mankind. The capitalists and their government who remained in command of five-sixths of the surface of the earth did their utmost to crush the only workers' republic. Direct military intervention and economic blockade, secret plots to damage and destroy, and campaigns of vilification were used by the world's exploiters to crush the Soviet Union or at least to stunt its growth.

But what do we see after the lapse of these eighteen years which, from an historical point of view, are only a brief span of time? When the workers' government came into power Russia was an impoverished land; its man power had been decimated by war and famine; its productive apparatus was nearly destroyed; its natural resources were undeveloped; its cultural level was very low. Compared with this workers' land the capitalist countries looked powerful, rich and highly developed. These powerful and rich countries forced upon the young workers' republic a civil war that lasted for three years and that sapped the vitality of the country to a still greater degree.

The Soviet Union, however, had momentous assets which the capitalist countries did not possess. The masses of the Soviet Union were led by the Communist Party which was intimately linked up with all toilers. They had their own government which, for the first time in history, was a government of the formerly exploited and oppressed and which used all its power against the former exploiters

and oppressors. The masses were animated by the consciousness of the fact that they were their own masters and that whatever they produced in any field would serve to improve their condition. The creative forces of the great bulk of the people who are downtrodden under capitalism were released and given free play under the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.

Eighteen years have passed. Let each worker, let each farmer, let each thinking intellectual compare the situation of the capitalist countries with the situation of the Soviet Union. Where capitalism rules we have a deep economic crisis and prolonged depression which has been in progress for the last six years. Where the workers rule we have an increasing prosperity, production rising within five years over 500 per cent; new factories, new plants, new railroads, new power stations springing up almost overnight. In the capitalist world the situation of agriculture is a crisis within a crisis; in the Soviet Union agriculture has been placed on a collective, Socialist basis and is beginning to yield an amount of foodstuffs and raw materials sufficient to ensure an abundant existence for all.

In the capitalist countries the entire social system is undermined; there is no security, no stability, no prospects. In the Soviet Union socialism has been introduced and the system is the most stable in the whole world. In the capitalist countries science is decaying, culture is in a state of degradation, scientific and educational institutions are being closed, men of learning are reduced to poverty and are unable to exercise their knowledge; in the Soviet Union schools and institutes and universities and libraries and academies are increasing in quality and quantity, and today the Soviet Union is the most cultured country in the world. In the capitalist countries scores of millions of workers are unemployed and starving; millions of farmers are either entirely ruined or are facing bankruptcy and starvation; millions of intellectuals have become "superfluous" because there is no room for them within the framework of the capitalist society; there is misery, sickness, death.

In the Soviet Union there is a job for every man and every woman, and their position is improving every day. In the capitalist countries it is the youth that suffers most because it has no prospect and it grows up to face a world which offers no future; in the Soviet Union the youth is triumphant; it is participating in building up socialism and it is absolutely certain that its future will be that of abundance, health, creative activity and cultural achievements.

Let every worker and every farmer and every intellectual compare the Soviet State and the capitalist world as regards their international relations. The Soviet government is a bulwark of peace. The Soviet system has liberated the oppressed nationalities which were formerly semi-colonial slaves to the tsarist regime, and has

lifted them to tremendous heights as regards industry, agriculture and culture. The Soviet system stands for brotherly cooperation between all nationalities, small or big. The Soviet government is an anti-imperialist government. It is inspiring the toilers of all lands to fight for peace and is using its increasing international weight to force the capitalist governments as far as possible to refrain from war. It is throwing all its might on the scales of peace wherever war has already begun, as now in the case of the war of Italian fascism against the Ethiopian people.

In contrast to this the capitalist world is torn by contradictions. In particular it is the aim of the strong nations to oppress and rob the weak ones whom they have turned into colonies or semi-colonies. Imperialism rules the capitalist world. And imperialism means oppression and poverty at home and oppression and poverty for the smaller and weaker nations abroad. Because the world has long been divided up among the great powers of imperialism and because the lust for new profits for their capitalists forces them to try and snatch from one another part of world's markets and colonial possessions, the imperialist powers are now one great armed camp, and war is the order of the day.

War is here. It is not only in Africa. It is in the air. It is in the atmosphere of international relations which are strained to the breaking point. It is in the weak and vacillating stand of the capitalist governments represented in the League of Nations, seeking their own imperialist aims, afraid to use drastic measures to stop the barbarous crushing of the Ethiopian people by Italian fascist imperialism. It is in that welter of international rivalries where cannon may begin to roar any minute, indicating the beginning of a new world war. It is in the existence and spread of fascism.

Fascism cannot live without war. Italian fascism gives only an illuminating example on a comparatively small scale. The Nazi-fascism of Germany, the fascist regime in Poland, the reactionary semi-fascist government of Japan, are aiming much higher. They wish to launch an attack on the Soviet Union which is hated and feared by all the capitalist governments. They wish to take chunks of territory from the Soviet workers and peasants and to enslave the now free Soviet masses.

Workers, farmers, small business men, intellectuals! We appeal to you on the eve of the anniversary of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution to take stock of the world situation as well as of your own situation within this country and to determine your stand among the social forces that are making the history of today.

Look at the Soviet Union. What lesson does it convey to you? Its message is clear. It shows to all those who suffer under the oppressive rule of big business that there is only one way for the

liberation of the people—and that is to overthrow the rule of capitalism—which makes the toiling masses masters of their own lives. Like the great beacon of light the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics stand over one-sixth of the surface of the earth proving to every worker, no matter what his political affiliation or organizational allegiance, that *unity of all the toilers in their struggle against the exploiters* will secure for them a better life in the present and full freedom and great abundance after they have overthrown the rule of the exploiters. The Soviet example is putting hope and enthusiasm and courage into the hearts of hundreds of millions throughout the hunger-driven and war-harassed world.

Workers, farmers, small business men, intellectuals, Negro or white! The Soviet Union shows you how it is possible to do away with national oppression, with national hatreds, with Jim-Crow rule, with lynch systems, with all that bloody mess which is called the national policy of imperialism, how it is possible to establish freedom for every nationality on the basis of self-determination, and cooperation among all the nationalities on the basis of equality in a system where exploitation of man by man has been abolished forever.

Grave dangers are facing the very lives of our people in the United States of America. The danger of fascism is growing. Fascism strives to rob the American masses of the remnants of their political freedom and civil rights in order the easier to enslave them economically, to make them suffer unspeakable privations and exploitation so that Big Business may garner greater profits. Fascism here is covering itself with all kinds of "constitutional" and "democratic" phrases, but is in reality serving the most reactionary monopolies, the worst open-shop bosses of the United States. Fascism is being sponsored by such organizations and individuals as the Liberty League, the Chambers of Commerce, the Manufacturers' and Bankers' Associations, the manufacturers of munitions, the public utility magnates, the Hoovers, Hearsts, Coughlins, and their ilk.

And is the Roosevelt administration an obstacle in the path of fascism? No, it is not. It is partner to the terrorist attacks on the fighting workers, farmers, and Negroes who must improve their conditions so that they may not perish. It is partner to all the reactionary laws passed by State and federal legislation; it has introduced coolie wages on the relief projects which in themselves are an insufficient concession on the part of the capitalist class to the fight of the toilers for jobs. It has not provided the workers or farmers with adequate relief or with a system of unemployment insurance. What it has done is to increase the armaments of the U.S.A. stupendously and to begin the militarization of the American youth. These measures of the Roosevelt administration facilitate directly and indirectly the growth of fascism in the United States.

Workers, farmers, intellectuals, small business men, and all friends of freedom and enemies of war! The Communist Party appeals to you—Socialists, trade unionists—to heed the lessons of the Soviet workers in this critical period in your own history. The Communist Party proposes to all workers, to all the exploited, of whatever creed, race, or political belief, to unite in a powerful front of action against the encroachments of monopoly capital with its twin servants, war and fascism.

Unite! Build your own independent power by building your own militant trade unions and your farmers' organizations. Fight against company unionism! Fight for industrial unionism and for democracy within the unions, and for trade-union unity. Fight for the united front of the Communist and Socialist Parties. Do not depend on Roosevelt to save you from poverty and fascism! Organize the people's anti-fascist front, the Farmer-Labor Party based upon trade unions, farmers' organizations and other mass organizations ready and willing to fight fascism, the big monopolies, and for the people's rights!

Fight against all curtailment of democratic rights, for the freedom of press, speech and assemblage, for the freedom to organize, strike and picket! Do not allow the bosses and their government to lower your living standards! Fight for a higher living standard! Fight for higher wages in factories and plants, for prevailing union wages on public-works projects and for more relief! Fight for the 30-hour week without reduction in pay! Fight for the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill, H.R. 2827, the Marcantonio Bonus Bill, H.R. 8665, the Farmers' Bill, H.R. 3471, and the projected Anti-Lynching Negro Bill!

Demand of the government the opening of the closed factories and plants to supply jobs to the unemployed at trade-union wages!

Down with the lynchers of Negroes! Fight for economic, political, and social equality of the Negroes and for the right of self-determination of the Black Belt!

Demand the immediate release of all class war prisoners, the immediate liberation of Tom Mooney, Angelo Herndon, the Sacramento prisoners, the Scottsboro boys, and the Gallup defendants!

Fight against the armament policies of the Roosevelt administration! Demand that all war funds be used to relieve unemployment! Fight for a system of collective security!

Fight for peace!

Support the peace policies of the Soviet Union!

Demonstrate in defense of the Soviet Union!

Not a train, not a ship in support of the Italian war against Ethiopia! Hands off the Ethiopian people!

Let the November 7 celebration be a powerful demonstration for

the united front, for peace, against fascism, for the defense of the Soviet Union, for socialism as manifested by the U.S.S.R., the fatherland of all the toilers!

Remember that the best revolutionary traditions of America are your traditions.

Make the November 7 demonstrations a mighty means of mobilizing millions in this country for the struggle against destructive and bankrupt capitalism, for the united front and for a Soviet America.

Hail the Communist International and the Communist Party of the U.S.A.!

Hail the unity of action of the workers and all toilers!

The Significance of the October Revolution for the World Proletariat*

THE victory of socialism in the Soviet Union—a victory of world-historic significance—gives rise in all capitalist countries to a powerful movement toward socialism. This victory strengthens the cause of peace among peoples, enhancing as it does the international importance of the Soviet Union and its role as the mighty bulwark of the toilers in their struggle against capital, against reaction and fascism. It strengthens the Soviet Union as the base of the world proletarian revolution. It sets in motion throughout the whole world not only the workers, who are turning more and more to Communism, but also millions of peasants and farmers, of the hard-working petty townsfolk, a considerable proportion of the intellectuals, the enslaved peoples of the colonies. It inspires them to struggle, increases their attachment for the great fatherland of all the toilers, strengthens their determination to support and defend the proletarian state against all its enemies.

This victory of socialism increases the confidence of the international proletariat in its own forces and in the tangible possibility of its own victory, a confidence which is itself becoming a tremendously effective force against the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The union of forces of the proletariat of the Soviet Union and of the militant proletariat and toiling masses in the capitalist countries holds out the great perspective of the oncoming collapse of capitalism and the guarantee of the victory of socialism throughout the whole world. (Dimitroff.)

* * *

In the period between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses of the Communist International, a very great event took place in the lives of the nations—the final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. (*Applause.*) This is the second great victory of the international working class over world capitalism since the great October Socialist Revolution, and it ushers in a new era in the history of mankind.

* Excerpts from the Reports of Georgi Dimitroff and D. Z. Manuilsky to the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern.

Strengthening the stronghold of the world proletarian revolution economically and politically, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. opens up a new phase in the development of our country: it marks another great change in the relation of forces in the world arena to the advantage of socialism and to the disadvantage of capitalism, and it marks the beginning of a new stage in the development of the world proletarian revolution. Won by the workers and collective farmers of our country under the leadership of the C.P.S.U., of its Leninist Central Committee, and of our great Stalin, with the active support of the proletariat of the whole world, it signifies the victory of the Communist International, which was born as a result of the October Revolution, the victory of its program, policy and tactics.

The significance of this victory of the Communist International is all the greater and more edifying for the international working class for the reason that in this period the world working class movement in a number of capitalist countries (Germany, Austria and others), where the Social-Democratic Parties and the reformist trade unions played the leading role in the movement, suffered defeats which were the defeats of the reformist policy and of the capitulatory tactics of the Social-Democratic Parties, defeats of the Second International. The world historical significance of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., which has been achieved in the period when an economic crisis unprecedented for its acuteness and duration prevails in the capitalist countries, lies in the fact that it throws a vivid light on the two paths of development of the international proletarian movement—the path of the Communist International and the path of the Second International. The path of the Communist International has led by way of the proletarian revolution to the victory of socialism in one-sixth of the territory of the globe and to the further strengthening of the position of the international proletarian revolution to an enormous degree, while the path of the Second International, the path of reformism, is leading to defeats of the workers and the victory of fascism. A comparison of these two results is leading, and is bound to lead, to a revolution in the minds of the proletariat of all capitalist countries, and is causing a profound change and re-grouping in its ranks.

But the significance of the victory of socialism in our country is not confined to the changes in the world working class movement. It is far wider and more profound. As a result of its socialist successes our country is beginning to set the peoples in motion. The comparison of our past with our present is beginning to convince vast masses of people of the correctness of the path we have taken, of the correctness of Bolshevism and the path of the Communist International.

* * *

Russia was beaten in the imperialist war of 1914-18. She emerged from this war bleeding, maimed and bankrupt. But the imperialist powers forced a new war on the revolutionary people, which had overthrown not only tsarism, but also capitalism. Our country was torn to pieces by the landlords and capitalists who had been driven out by the revolution. She was sold wholesale and retail. She was partitioned from her border regions—on the West, the South, the North and the East. And from this catastrophe to which the landlords, industrialists and bankers had brought our country, she was saved by the proletarian revolution. (*Applause.*) The revolution extricated her from the war, saved her from political disintegration and economic destruction; it saved her from the plunder of pirates who were stronger than tsarism; it emancipated her from economic slavery to foreign capital; it protected her from the world crisis, which has flung peoples and states into the abyss, and from the fascist reaction that is raging in the capitalist world. At a speed unprecedented in the history of humanity, it is developing her productive forces and replacing the mattock, the wooden plow and the scythe with tractors and harvester combines; it is transforming "the prisoners of starvation, the wretched of the earth" into the masters of their country and the creators of a new and magnificent life; it is steadily raising the standard of living of the masses; it is implanting a new and advanced socialist culture; it is establishing fraternal collaboration between the peoples. It has erected a powerful workers' state; it has created a new social and economic system, in which the new socialist man is being formed; and it has brought into being that of which the finest minds of mankind have dreamed—socialism.

* * *

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. has opened a new stage in the development of the world proletarian revolution by accelerating the growth of the revolutionary consciousness of the toiling masses, by calling forth a powerful movement towards socialism in all capitalist countries. It causes the millions to look to the U.S.S.R. as the bulwark of peace and the freedom of nations, as a bulwark against fascism and imperialist war. This change is not taking place at a dizzy speed, it does not imply that the masses are at one stroke coming over to the position of the revolutionary struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, it is not proceeding smoothly everywhere, it encounters the resistance of counteracting forces, but it is proceeding and receives a fresh impetus as a result of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R.

This change is developing in the midst of the deepening and further intensification of the antagonisms between the world of

capitalism and the world of socialism, in the midst of a fierce class struggle in separate countries as well as in the international arena; this development has been retarded in every way by Social-Democracy, which still occupies fairly strong positions among the broad masses. At the same time, this change is taking place amidst a growing fascist movement with the aid of which the bourgeoisie is trying to place obstacles in the path of development of the revolutionary upsurge.

Lenin said:

“Ten to twenty years of proper relations with the peasantry, and victory on a world scale is ensured (even if the proletarian revolutions—which are growing—are delayed), otherwise twenty to forty years of the torture of whiteguard terror.”

Explaining Lenin's words, Comrade Stalin, at the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in December, 1926, asked:

“And what does victory ‘on a world scale’ mean? Does it mean that such a victory is equivalent to the victory of socialism in a single country? No, it does not mean that. Lenin draws a strict distinction in his works between the victory of socialism in a single country and victory ‘on a world scale’. By victory ‘on a world scale’ Lenin meant to say that the successes of socialism in our country, the victory of socialist construction in our country, is of such enormous international importance that it (the victory) cannot confine itself to our country but must call forth a powerful movement towards socialism in all capitalist countries; and although it does not coincide with the victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries, at all events, it must be the starting point of a powerful movement of the proletariat of other countries towards the victory of the world revolution.”

Today the prophetic words of Lenin and Stalin are coming true. The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is a victory of world-wide significance. It has not yet led to the overthrow of capitalism all over the world; but the powerful movement towards socialism in all capitalist countries has assumed and will continue to assume wider and wider proportions as the contrast between the prosperous socialist world, with its extended proletarian democracy and the doomed capitalist world, with its torture of whiteguard fascist terror, becomes more and more pronounced.

And what is the fate of the people in the capitalist countries? What have they got out of the conquest of foreign markets, out of wars of conquest, and the loans obtained on usurious terms? Have these enriched the people, or have they enriched a handful of magnates of capital? Have they removed the rags and tatters of poverty, have they given work to the millions of unemployed who have been

forced out of industry forever, have they improved the material conditions of the masses?

America is the richest country in the world. It has all the conditions for a self-contained economy; the natural wealth of the country, an enormous territory, its own highly developed agriculture capable of feeding two such countries as America, a powerful industrial apparatus which if worked to full capacity could raise the national income to \$300,000,000,000 per annum. Only a few years ago the American people believed Hoover when he said that America was the land of "eternal prosperity", that the capitalist system of America was superior to the socialist system in the U.S.S.R., that America was the land of the highest wages and of the highest standard of living in the world. But what does America look like today?

Ten million unemployed, reductions of wages, hundreds of thousands of farms wrecked, the "middle class" ruined, an enormous increase in the lumpen-proletarian population of the towns, the growth of armed robbery by the so-called "gangsters", the bankruptcy of the N.R.A.—such is the picture of America today. The fact that America more than any other country became rich on war orders during the world imperialist war and the fact that at Versailles she dictated her will to both the victor and vanquished states did not help her in the least; nor did her imperialist penetration into the lands of Latin America, nor her open-door policy in China.

The American people today are asking themselves in alarm, what is to be done with the enormous army of unemployed, with the overgrown apparatus of production, to the development of which capitalism sets a limit. They have learned from their own experience the truth of Marx's law that the rate of profit serves as shackles which hinder the development of the productive forces of capitalist America. From the experience of the U.S.S.R. they see that the growth of public consumption, due to the enormous leap forward of the material and spiritual culture of the socialist man, provides unlimited possibilities for the development of production. From the experience of America they learn that capitalism is anarchy in production which, within the framework of capitalist relationships, cannot be subjected to any system of N.R.A. planning.

But the U.S.S.R. shows them a living type of planned socialist economy, secure against the crisis of overproduction, in which the master, the proletariat, reorganizes the various branches of production, mechanizes human labor with the object of still further reducing labor time. The mechanization of agriculture gives a mighty impetus to the further development of the productive forces, and by steadily raising the material and cultural level of the masses it expands to an unlimited degree the capacity of home consumption.

New Steps in the United Front

REPORT ON THE SEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS*

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. The Nazi bandits of Hitler Germany are arming to the teeth, waiting only the proper moment to carry the torch of war into the rest of Europe. Japanese imperialism, having already seized Manchuria and North China, is waiting the word from its fascist allies in Europe for their joint attack against the Soviet Union. Let no one think that the fascist assault against Ethiopia's independence is a local affair that does not affect our lives. It is intertwined with the whole system of world relations and in all probability may be the torch that explodes the powder mine of imperialist war throughout the world.

For us Communists, therefore, 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 ever more of China, German fascism, the chief force in the world

* Report made to Open Membership Meeting of the Communist Party, District 2, held in Madison Square Garden, New York City, October 3, 1935.

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 World 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 has 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 also at the same time the 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 bankruptcy 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 the toilers of all political trends for joint action, on a 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*.

Many Socialists have asked us if this policy does not mean that we were wrong when previously we characterized those Socialist leaders, who only played with "Left" phrases and avoided Left deeds, as the main danger to the workers. No, that former characterization still stands. What is new in the situation, however, is that we now have a growing real Left among the Socialists, which is not satisfied with phrases, which is passing over to a Left course in action. This is something fundamentally new that we are most glad to welcome, and we adjust our policies accordingly.

Other Socialists have asked us why, if now we propose to join hands with them in defense of bourgeois-democratic liberties, against fascism, it was not proper and necessary for the German Communists to have supported German Social-Democracy in upholding at all costs the Weimar Republic. But the Weimar Republic was not only a register of some democratic achievements of the German masses. It was at the same time the instrument whereby monopoly capital advanced step by step against the living conditions of the workers, robbed them of these democratic rights and prepared the way for fascism. The Communists were at all times prepared for united action to defend these democratic rights, but this could not be done by defending the Weimar Constitution as such, any more than it could be done in the United States under the slogan of defending the constitution of this country, which is the particular slogan of our fascists.

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 MOVEMENTS

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 United States, 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 collabo-

rate 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 Soviet Union, 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 that sectarianism which sees nothing but dangers of the application of the united front, which sees capitulation in the 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. We cannot go into these details tonight. The full report has already been made available to you in the *Daily Worker* and will soon be published in pamphlet form. 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 capitalist 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 seventeen 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."

A New Page for American Labor

AN EVALUATION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

By JACK STACHEL

THE struggles that took place at the Fifty-fifth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor will go down in history as epoch-making for American labor. Already this has thrown fear into the camp of the ruling class. A new courage and a new vision are taking hold of the working masses. Both the "old guard" of the Executive Council headed by the Green, Woll, Hutcheson, Frey group, and the "progressives" headed by Lewis, Hillman, Gorman, Howard and Dubinsky, referred to the Fifty-fifth Convention time and again as the most important convention in the fifty-five years of existence of the American Federation of Labor. Both sides, though not fully comprehending the forces at work did, nevertheless, sense that fundamental changes have taken place in the country, in the class relations, and especially in the mood of the masses. Not for a moment could they forget the mood of the masses. For in the very midst of the Convention there were present dozens of delegates right from the mines, mills and factories—auto, rubber, cement, mine, mill and smelter workers, and other industries. These delegates representing federal locals, and therefore representing directly their membership from the local unions, more truly represented the actual spirit of all the workers organized in the American Federation of Labor than did the self-appointed delegates of the craft unions elected by the self-perpetuating executive boards (some of these unions have not permitted a Convention to be held for from seven to fourteen years). This is partly true also of the "progressives" who represented the big national organizations—Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky, etc.

Precisely because they sensed that what was involved at the Convention was something more than the issues debated, the fight reached such sharp expression between the two major opposing camps at the convention. This was also expressed in the physical struggle on the floor between the proponents of the two camps, Lewis and Hutcheson, something unprecedented at such a gathering. The old-line reactionaries, driven by the fear of the change which they saw coming, tried to hold on to their power, to the old policies and traditions.

They feared that any change will only hasten greater changes that will engulf them. And for this very reason the "progressives" were inevitably compelled to go far beyond their intentions by the very circumstances that surrounded them. Formally the issue that divided the two camps was the issue of industrial unionism versus craft unionism. This issue was already to an extent raised within the A. F. of L. at the San Francisco Convention last year. But it was now raised in a new form, in a new light, and with far-reaching implications. Why?

The shadow that hung over the convention was the issue of the growing menace of fascism and reaction. For the first time prominent leaders of the A. F. of L., representing some of the strongest unions, spoke not merely of fascism in the European countries, but of the growing menace of fascism in the United States. And it was this danger of fascism that formed the background, to a greater or lesser degree, in practically all of the speeches for industrial unionism. Nor was this an abstract discussion. It was a discussion on the basis of the experiences of the workers and their organizations, especially in the last period. It reflected the growing attack on the trade union movement by the most reactionary sections of the ruling class, the instigators and promoters of the fascist trend in the United States, those elements that are grouped around the Liberty League, the Hearsts, the National Civic Federation, etc.

John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America, with its 400,000 members, the largest union in the country and organized on an industrial basis, said in his remarks:

"There are great influences abroad in the land, and the minds of men in all walks of life are disturbed. We are all disturbed by reason of the changes and the hazards in our economic situation and as regards our own political security. There are forces at work in this country that would wipe out, if they could, the labor movement of America, just as it was wiped out in Germany or just as it was wiped out in Italy.

"There are those of us who believe that the best security against that menace and against that trend and against that tendency is a more comprehensive and more powerful labor movement. We believe that the way should be paved so that those millions of workers who are clamoring for admission into our councils might be made welcome upon a basis that they understand and that they believe suited to their requirements."

The sense of the danger of fascism on the part of many of the labor leaders, reflecting, of course, the pressure of the growing struggles of the masses against fascism, was brought out even more clearly in a statement issued by Philip Murray, second in command to John L. Lewis as vice-president of the U.M.W.A., in connection with the attack by Italian imperialism against Ethiopia. In this statement Murray said:

"There is not a miner in the world who can support fascism. The miners have felt terror. We know how horrible it can be and we know that this terror can well be the forerunner of a well-planned organized governmental terror which ruthlessly smashes the trade unions and, while destroying the purchasing power of the citizens at home, drives out for foreign markets in war. We have seen it in Germany. We have seen it in Italy. We have seen it crawl insidiously through the back door in other nations, and we want to serve notice on any and all would-be fascist dictators, and potential fascist cliques right here in the United States of America, you will have to contend with us—American labor. We are prepared for you, and for my part I would like to say to the whole world that our hearts and minds are with the workers everywhere in their struggle against fascism."

In similar manner spoke Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, with a membership of over 100,000, who further added, as if in rebuttal to the Green-Woll forces, that the immediate issue is not between Communism and democracy, but between democracy and fascism. While Hillman did not develop this point, the implications are clear. Though it was a mild rebuke to the Red-hunting drive of the Executive Council, yet it contained the premise from which follows the need for a united front of the entire labor movement against the menace of fascism. That Hillman was not consistent on this point was indicated in his support for the modified anti-Communist amendment, and with this we will deal later. Similarly with Lewis and Murray. If they really wish to defeat fascism, they must reconsider their whole class collaboration policy, to which they still cling, they would also have to reconsider their opposition to the formation of a Labor Party, even though it is true that the miners' delegation tempered this opposition by making their arguments not one of opposition in principle and in defense of the so-called traditional "non-partisan" policy of the A. F. of L., but rather on the basis of the expediency of the moment—the danger of the election of a Liberty League representative in case of the defeat of Roosevelt.

And it is no accident that of the top officials of the A. F. of L. only Gorman was able to give the most thoroughgoing analysis of the situation in the country, the forces making for fascism, and show the next steps in the struggle. For Gorman, voicing the sentiments of increasing sections of the trade unionists and the masses generally, was the sponsor in the name of his organization, the United Textile Workers of America, of the most comprehensive resolution calling for the formation of a Labor Party (I. Nagler, representing the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, an organization of nearly 200,000 members, also spoke in the name of his organization for independent political action).

Gorman was the leader of the great and historic strike of the

textile workers involving a half million workers, North and South, last year. That strike was broken through the terror of the government of the various states, and the arbitration machinery of the Roosevelt administration. Gorman, in calling off the strike at the request of President Roosevelt, had claimed that the strike ended in victory for the workers. The Communist Party at the time sharply criticized the position of Gorman. The events following the calling off of the strike fully justified the position of the Communist Party. The textile workers have learned much as a result of that struggle. Gorman's speech reflected that change among the textile workers and their present position, their disillusionment with the Roosevelt "New Deal".

"Now—a year ago during the general textile strike when I had the privilege of standing before you, I said that 16 of our textile workers had been killed and a score or two wounded. Most of these casualties occurred in the South. In the year that has passed violence against us has continued and within the past two months twenty of our members have been shot—one a woman, fatally.

"We looked with what now seems to us to be naive faith, to the proponents of a New Deal—believing, I guess, that it meant a New Deal for labor. We have been sorely disappointed. . . . The administration has done nothing effective about protecting the Southern workers against this cruel persecution. . . .

"War is at hand. The world waits in strained anxiety for the next development in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict and for the possible war between Great Britain and Italy. . . .

"And during a war there must be no strikes. There must be no interruption in the pace and the limit to which they may exploit labor. Thus, they have renewed their vicious union-busting efforts; they are conducting new and more bitter campaigns aimed at the destruction of the entire labor movement. There can be no disputing that this is happening. We know that it is a historical fact that as militancy develops in the labor movement, the efforts of anti-labor, open-shop employers to kill trade unionism re-double. We have already seen that they stop at nothing to stamp out the constitutional and civil rights of the workers to organize and bargain collectively. They murder our people; they frame our leaders; they arrest our pickets; in short, they resort to the crudest and most vicious forms of coercion and intimidation in order to maintain a 'docile' labor army.

"This we have learned to expect from big business and the financial tycoons of this country. But we learned an even more important lesson—we have learned that the efforts to destroy the trade union movement will go untrammelled by the government. We have learned that the government leans on big business. We have learned that the Republican Party means destruction to the workers, and that the New Deal means a New Deal for big business and a Raw Deal for labor.

"Labor's right to organize and bargain collectively was not protected under the New Deal. We can prove this by looking at the facts. On whose side was the government in our thousands and thousands of cases of discrimination? On whose side was the government that promotes subsistence work relief and rising prices, starva-

tion wages? On whose side is the government which contributes to the destruction of the trade union movement? Not on the side of the workers. How can we defend a government which promotes sweatshop and open-shop conditions through its own system of awarding government contracts to the lowest bidder?"

These words coming from one of the outstanding labor leaders of the country indicate without question the deep-going change going on among the masses. Again and again this was expressed on the floor of the convention by the delegates from the mines, mills and factories, and even a number of officials. It was especially brought out in the discussion of the role of the National Guard in strikes. Numerous delegates opposed the Executive Council's recommendation to ask for "neutrality" of the armed forces in labor disputes by showing that they are never neutral but always on the side of the capitalists. Little wonder that even Matthew Woll sensed the temper of the workers and did not dare defend his National Civic Federation.

The growing understanding of the fascist danger on the part of a growing section of the trade union movement, the real meaning of the growing terror, the activity of the various incipient and more fully developed fascist groups was again brought forward most forcefully in Gorman's speech:

"Let us turn now to that gravest of all dangers, to the fast approaching, universally hated and dreaded danger of fascism. To deny this danger is to play ostrich and betray the entire American labor movement.

"We have only to look at Germany, at Italy, at Poland, at Austria. We have only to remember the hasty events which led up to the ascendancy of Hitler, and we can see what is happening in this country. The labor movement in Germany and Italy were unprepared for the monster. German workers looked with unseeing eyes to Italy and said: 'But this is Germany. This can never happen to Germany.' And as they were saying this Thyssen, Krupp and the big financiers and industrialists in Germany were equipping Hitler, and coaching him in his role of dictator.

"At the time of Hitler's ascendancy to power, the workers, through their various political parties, had a majority of seats in the Reich. But they did not use them. The Social-Democratic workers went to sleep; they refused to join the rest of the workers' political factions in a united program of resistance to Nazism. What were the consequences? Too terrible to describe.

"In France, on the other hand, the workers were more wary. They looked to the mistakes of their fellow workers in Germany, and when the fascist organization, the Croix de Feu, attempted a coup, a united front of all the workers, regardless of race, religious creed and political affiliation, prevented it. The continuance of this valiant resistance on the part of the French workers has made a repetition of the fascist attempt impossible so far, and indeed, has been the vital factor in determining France's pacific policies. But remember, only if the French workers *strengthen* their ranks can fascism be warded off.

"You may ask: And what has that to do with the American workers? We cannot close our eyes to the significance of the American Liberty League; of the subsidized press, which screams Americanism on the one hand, and prints tales lauding the accomplishments of Herr Hitler and Premier Mussolini on the other; the subsidized trade papers, house organs of the most powerful industrial interests in every business, and which express the trend locally. And many, many other manifestations too numerous to recount here today."

Above all, it is most encouraging to note that while the Old Guard of the Socialist Party with its rabid Red-baiting and anti-Soviet policy is still able to paralyze and frighten the Thomas wing in efforts towards united front, Gorman has placed the question of the united front of labor squarely before the masses. He has done this as we see not only by pointing to the results of the negative stand towards the united front taken by German Social-Democracy, but also by presenting the positive results of united front action in France.

We have quoted so extensively from the speech of Gorman because Gorman more than anyone else of the top leadership of the A. F. of L. unions expressed the sentiments of the broadest sections of the organized workers, and furthermore because this speech, reflecting as it does the growing sentiments of the masses, gave a brilliant verification of the correctness of the decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. Gorman voiced not only the sentiments of the largest sections of the textile workers but of the miners, garment workers, more truly than did Lewis or Hillman, who, though sensing the new situation, are still trying to keep the workers chained to the Roosevelt wagon. And there can be no doubt that he voiced the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the workers organized in the craft unions, the building trades workers, the machinists, the seamen and longshoremen, in whose name the Hutchesons, Wolls, Ryans, Whartons, Freys, and Tobins lined up for the perpetuation of the outworn and reactionary policies of the majority of the Executive Council.

The conventions of the A. F. of L. are so organized that the will of the membership cannot be fully expressed. It is important to take note of this in order to understand that the convention did not and could not truly represent the sentiments of the union membership in the actions taken which we relate below. In the past it was practically impossible for a rank-and-file worker to be a delegate to the A. F. of L. convention. The convention was composed almost exclusively of the very top officials of the various national unions. The delegates in most of the unions are not elected by the membership directly. In some cases they are elected at the machine-controlled conventions. In other cases they are appointed by the national executive boards of the unions. As already mentioned, some of the unions have

refused to call conventions for many years. In this manner the bureaucrats who have entrenched themselves represent the union at the A. F. of L. conventions year after year without a mandate from the membership. Most of these unions send one or two delegates (officials) who cast the vote of their membership. The U.M.W.A. has the largest number of delegates, eight in number, who cast 4,000 votes, one vote for every 100 members. The delegates from the State Federations and City Central Labor bodies have only one vote each. As a rule these have in the past been machine delegates, because the larger cities are dominated by the machine, while the smaller towns for financial reasons could not afford to send a delegate. With the growth of the newly organized federal locals affiliated directly to the A. F. of L. there have in the past few conventions come to these gatherings a substantial number of rank-and-file delegates. The largest number was represented at this convention, but all in all they only had some 300 votes out of a total of 30,000 votes. They could not therefore materially affect the results as far as decisions were concerned. But these delegates played a role at the convention much greater than their voting strength. They were the militant force expressing the moods of the workers in the basic industries. They were fearless militant fighters, who gave force to those elements from the international unions, who fought for progressive measures. These things must be borne in mind in examining the decisions of the convention.

HOW THE CONVENTION ACTED ON VITAL QUESTIONS

1. *National Civic Federation.*

The 55th Convention adopted unanimously the following resolution introduced by the delegates of the U.M.W.A.:

“Resolved that no officer of the A. F. of L. shall act as officer of the National Civic Federation or be a member thereof.”

Since the formation of the National Civic Federation in the year 1900 some of the most prominent officials of the A. F. of L. worked jointly with outstanding captains of industry in this organization. It was formed to promote the class collaboration policies of the A. F. of L. to promote peace between capital and labor. It was the symbol of the subordination of labor to the interests of capital. Lewis himself was at one time connected with this organization. The editor of the U.M.W.A., Mr. Searles, was until recently connected with this organization, which includes the most outspoken open-shoppers, professional patriots and promoters of fascism both in the U.S. and abroad. At the time of the convention Matthew Woll, arch-reactionary and anti-Soviet Red-baiter, was its acting president while about a dozen other prominent labor leaders were among its members and officers. In fact, John L. Lewis, in his speech dealing with

the need for a change in structure of the A. F. of L. in the direction of industrial unionism, stated that:

"I did not realize how much influence the National Civic Federation had with the American Federation of Labor Executive Council—but I know now."

In the light of the above we can judge the historic significance of the action taken by the convention in passing the above resolution. The fact that Woll hastened the very afternoon that the resolution was introduced to resign from the National Civic Federation and even seconded the report of the committee to adopt this resolution does not in the least minimize this significance, or the defeat that was administered to the Executive Council. Nor is it minimized by the fact that Lewis may have had in mind a score he wanted to have settled against Woll more than the issue itself. The fact is that if he wanted to give Woll a licking *he had to resort to such an issue*. And the fact remains that this will be looked upon by the masses and correctly so as a big step forward in the breakaway of the trade union movement from the policies of class collaboration. And surely this action will have far greater consequences than even Lewis can foresee or may desire. There can be no question that it will lead to an acceleration of the movement for independent political action in the trade union movement, the freeing of the workers from capitalist ideology and subordination to the capitalist political parties. The fact that Woll and Co. did not dare to fight this resolution does not only show the clever tactics of Lewis in fighting his adversaries, it shows above all else that the resolution expressed the sentiments of the entire rank and file in the trade union movement. The defeat of Woll and the Executive Council was a heavy blow against Red-baiting, anti-Soviet schemes, and largely contributed to the inability of the "old guard" to make the 55th Convention, as they had planned, an anti-Red convention in order to be able to block the discussion of the major issues.

2. *Industrial vs. Craft Unionism.*

The convention, after the most thorough and heated debate, defeated the proposals to change the basic structure of the A. F. of L. But though the Executive Council won by a vote of 18,000 to 11,000 the victory was in reality on the side of industrial unionism. Never before did such a discussion take place in the A. F. of L. conventions. The issue of industrial unionism was presented and correctly so as a question of whether the A. F. of L. will be able to organize the unorganized tens of millions of workers. And as already mentioned, the issue of the organization of the workers into the trade unions was placed squarely as a question of whether or not the workers will be able to defeat the growing attacks of the capitalists, the rising forces of fascism. Lewis made this plain when he said:

"There is more in this proposition than a mere academic discussion of the modus operandi of organization, there is more to this proposition than revolves around the mere acceptance or rejection of the resolution.

"The economic well-being and the dream of the future of millions of Americans are involved in this question of whether the A. F. of L. will be able to devise policies that will permit it to function in a manner that will achieve its own objectives . . . the objectives of organizing the unorganized."

In this discussion on industrial unionism, which in all its phases took up three days of the convention, the rank-and-file delegates from the auto, rubber, radio and other industries brought forward example after example showing the ruinous policy of craft unionism in the mass production industries. It was openly charged that the A. F. of L. Council was intent upon blocking the organization of the unorganized. And there is no doubt that this is true. They fear the new workers with their militancy. The discussion was in general carried on on a very high plane. It was indeed a pleasure to listen to speaker after speaker bring forward the very arguments which the Communist Party and the entire Left-wing movement has pressed for years. But no matter how hard they tried the "old guard" could not make a case for itself and this is no accident. The best they could do was to lean on the history and tradition of the organization, a refusal to do anything that would upset past decisions. Delegate Murray of the U.M.W.A. referred to the chief theoretician of the "old guard", John Frey, who in 1929 had opposed unemployment and health insurance on the ground that this was contrary to the tradition of the A. F. of L. policies since its inception. And now Frey was giving the same arguments in opposition to industrial unionism. But in 1932 and 1933 the A. F. of L. Convention reversed its traditional policy of opposition to unemployment insurance in principle. He predicted that the opposition to industrial unionism would suffer the same fate.

The real test will come after the convention. The question now is whether or not the big unions which fought for industrial unionism at the convention will merely sit back and wait for the next convention, or give the support which they can give to the newly organized unions in auto, rubber, and the steel workers in their effort to organize themselves into powerful industrial unions.

But it does not depend solely on the position that these leaders will take. The issue of industrial unionism was dramatized as never before. An issue of the Left wing until now, it has now become an issue in the organized labor movement. The pressure of the masses, the developments within the company unions, in which workers are taking steps for struggle for their demands, the growth of the Left wing within the A. F. of L. make certain that the struggle will go

on, not merely at conventions, but will be more and more translated into actual organization of the workers along industrial lines.

3. *The Labor Party Question.*

The convention rejected the Labor Party resolutions without a record vote. The discussion was limited since it was postponed to the last day into which a great deal of business had to be crowded. But the estimate made by the proponents of the Labor Party agreed that around 5,000 votes of the convention were cast for the Labor Party. In fact at the Labor Party caucus meetings that were held delegations representing this number of votes were present. There were more than a dozen resolutions introduced favoring a Labor Party. Of these five were introduced by the old established national unions who went on record on this issue at their respective conventions—the International Ladies Garment Workers, the United Textile Workers, the Hotel and Restaurant Workers, Hat and Millinery Workers, and the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers International. There were a number of other international and national unions, favoring a Labor Party. Most of the delegates from the “federal” locals and a large number of delegates representing state federations of labor, and city central bodies favored the formation of a Labor Party.

Though this question received little discussion on the convention floor it was discussed at two caucus meetings openly announced on the floor of the convention. At the meetings those favoring the Labor Party established contact with each other and laid plans for the carrying forward of the fight after the convention. In these meetings a review was made of the already existing local Labor Party movements, and a growing sentiment in the trade unions was shown to exist for independent political action.

Of all the resolutions introduced, the resolution of the United Textile Workers was the most comprehensive and most desirable of those favoring the Labor Party. Gorman rallied around him all the forces for the Labor Party. He was looked upon as the chief spokesman on this issue just as Lewis through his vigorous fight for industrial unionism became the rallying center on that issue. We have already quoted at length from Gorman's speech. We now quote again on the question of “what kind of a labor party” and Gorman's rebuke to those who cling to the old policies of supporting the capitalist parties. Referring to the attack of the capitalists, the role of the government, the growing danger of fascism, he says:

“What shall we do in the face of these dangers? Sit supinely back and allow the bosses, with the help of the government, to destroy us? Shall we discourage the militancy, the intelligence and the foresight with which large bodies of our workers are attempting to meet these situations, by discouraging them in the development of

a labor party? Are we not supposedly the *leaders* of the American working class? And as such, it is not our solemn duty to *assume* that leadership?

"The Republican and Democratic Parties have completely broken faith with the workers by placing at the disposal of open-shop, anti-labor industrialists, few in number, forces designed and created under our Constitution for the maintenance and protection of the general welfare—the welfare of the many. We speak, of course, of the use of the National Guard, our State Militia, in times of economic struggle.

"Under the present decadence of our scarcity economy, other groups of people are in ever increasing numbers finding their way into the ranks of the workers. I refer to the small, so-called independent business man, who was unable to stay in competition with the powerful monopolistic trade association groups which ran the codes under the National Recovery Administration. I refer also to the vast army of technically trained young men and women, graduated from our colleges into a world of hopeless confusion, and into a world in which the employment opportunities are constantly and inevitably under the very nature of things decreasing. I refer likewise to the small farmer, crowded out of existence by the burden of debt, by rising prices of processed commodities, necessary to their very existence. And lastly, I refer to the large body of farm laborers and tenant farmers, scarcely able to eke out a bare, miserable existence, and so necessary to that portion of the organized labor movement which finds itself in agricultural areas. The Labor Party must be for all these people, for everybody whose right to live under decent conditions, and to take a hand in the guiding of his own destinies, must be protected. But, let me repeat, if it is to be successful, the basis of the party must be the organized labor movement.

"There have been, in the past, and at the present time there are, Third Party movements, based on the discontent of the destitute farmers, which movements have as yet been unsuccessful in their attempts at expanding their bases. In addition, their programs have been nebulous, rambling allusions to 'security', to social reforms not clearly nor concisely enunciated. The program of a successful Labor Party must be definite, must be built on the immediate demands of the workers, with a definite eye toward an expanding, even more inclusive program. It cannot be successful on any other basis.

"But let us not talk of 'third parties'. This Labor Party must never be confused with a *third party*. The Labor Party is a *second party*. I think you will have by now agreed with me that there is slight differentiation in the two old political parties, that a confusion of the Labor Party movement with a Third Party movement will be a confusion of the fundamental aims of a Labor Party.

"And if the large body of so-called 'liberals' who form the foundation of the Third Party movements, be really sincere, we do not need to invite them to join with us in the Labor Party. They will do so on their own initiative."

There is little to be added to the above conception of the Labor Party. Our Party, in working out the application of the principle of

the People's Front for the United States, has made these very proposals. That a labor leader of the type of Gorman comes to the identical conclusion as those formulated by the General Secretary of our Party, Comrade Browder, shows both the knowledge of the conditions and needs of the masses that Comrade Browder has mastered, and that Gorman has made great advances on the basis of his recent experiences.

Our Party welcomes this development and it is to be hoped that Brother Gorman will hold fast to this position and thus perform a great service to the labor movement. He and those who will join with him will find that the Communists in the trade unions and the Communist Party as a whole will do all in their power to help build the kind of a party of workers and farmers he has outlined.

4. *The Anti-Communist Amendment.*

The convention adopted a modified amendment to the constitution directed against Communists. But this represented a *retreat* from the original proposed amendment. In general the "old guard" did not succeed in creating the anti-Red hysteria which they had intended. In fact it can be stated that on the whole the strategy of the Green-Woll group failed miserably on this point. The original intention of the Executive Council had been to make the outstanding issue of the convention a fight against Communism. They hoped that in this manner they would be able to prevent the major issues from being discussed or at any rate to limit and restrict the discussion of these issues. But it can be stated that there was less Red-baiting at this convention than at any previous convention of recent years. There were absent completely the usual anti-Soviet Union speeches. Only twice was the Soviet Union mentioned and once only indirectly. First in the opening speech of President Green in inferring that the Labor Party was a Moscow invention. And secondly in the speech of Frey against industrial unionism. Frey wanted to prove that industrial unions exist and can exist only under "dictatorships" and he mentioned in the same category Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union. But the fact that on these issues there was at this convention so much support from the bigger unions made these charges of Green and Frey ridiculous, and their attempt at Red-baiting in this connection turned out to be a boomerang. It is important to note that even the representative of the American Legion was tipped off in time and refrained from the usual anti-Soviet slanders. With regard to Communism he referred to the position of the Legion without even mentioning the word Communism, rather limiting himself to stating that the "legion is opposed to all subversive movements". And those who tipped off the Legion Commander were not mistaken in their judgement. For as it was some 60 or 70 delegates walked out as soon as this enemy of the workers began to speak,

The discussion on the proposed amendment to the constitution directed against Communists took place only in the closing hours of the convention. There were less than a half dozen speakers on the question, two of whom spoke in opposition to any and all Red-baiting and against the amendment. The machine was anxious to have the matter over with with as little discussion as possible. There had been a great deal of maneuvering on this issue throughout the convention. The machine was forced to beat a retreat. Now they wished to have it over. It surely was not what they had in mind before the convention opened.

The original amendment proposed:

“No organization officered or controlled by Communists, or any person espousing Communism, or advocating the violent overthrow of our institutions . . . shall be allowed representation or recognition in this Federation, or in any central body, state federation of labor, national or international union connected with the American Federation of Labor under the penalty of the suspension of the body violating this section.”

In plain language this meant that the Executive Council would have the authority to take away the charter from any national union which they charged was officered by Communists or those espousing its doctrines. It is clear that this could easily be used by the Council not only against members of the Communist Party but against any one who got in their way as, for example, unions who fight for industrial unionism, for the Labor Party, etc. This proposal was brought forward because the Council after much effort was not successful in securing the expulsion of Communists from the unions despite their repeated calls upon the local unions and international and national unions. They now deemed it necessary, particularly in face of the fact that in a number of national organizations progressives and militant elements are gaining control, to put a stop to this.

The groups that were allied on the issue on industrial unionism and even a number of other unions saw in this amendment a threat to their independence, to their charter rights and they opposed it. In order to put over any amendment to the constitution a two-thirds vote is required. While these forces represented a minority they had the necessary more than one-third vote to block the amendment in the original form. And there is no doubt that had the vote taken place on the original amendment the machine would have received another licking. There was uncertainty on what they would do until the very last day. But on the last day a compromise was evidently reached between the Green-Woll and the Lewis forces on a compromise proposal. This compromise accepts the premise of the old and original amendment against Communists, but proposes only that known Communists shall be barred from membership in the State

Federations of Labor and the City Central bodies. In this way there is no interference in the inner affairs of any union, but those organs which are directly part of the machinery of the A. F. of L. Council (the State Federations and Central Labor bodies) have the right to bar Communists. In the report the Laws Committee which reported on this compromise amendment had to plead that this does not prevent any union from accepting and keeping Communists in their ranks if they so desire, or even electing them as officials. But of course such unions will not be given representation in the State Federations of Labor and Central Labor Bodies.

We must realize that the fact that the original amendment was defeated represents a partial victory for us. Already the reaction of the workers in the field indicates that they look upon the retreat as an admission that there shall be no expulsion of Communists from the unions. This, of course, does not mean that there will be no attempt at expulsions. On the other hand it does not mean either that Communists and their sympathizers will be barred from all central bodies. It will be a struggle and the extent to which we can mobilize the workers will determine the outcome of the issue in most cases.

What is, however, important to underscore here is the fact that the big unions which voted for the resolution on industrial unionism and even those which voted for the Labor Party *did* vote for the amendment. It is true that there was no roll call vote and no one is on record. But the fact is that the representatives of these unions accepted the compromise in the committee and that none of them spoke against the revised amendment from the floor. Some may argue, and they undoubtedly do, that they accepted the "lesser evil" for fear that the original would pass. But this is not very well borne out by their silence. The fact is that on the whole these people, Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky, etc., were ready to accept an attack on Communism and they even favored this so long as the amendment did not endanger their own position. But, of course, what is true is that if they really wish to carry on a fight for progressive measures, against fascism, for industrial unionism, they can not very well do this by becoming partners in Red-baiting. This was clearly brought out by those delegates representing the rank-and-file membership of the unions who spoke against the amendment.

While recognizing the retreat on the part of the Green-Woll clique and fully utilizing it, it is necessary to develop, and this will be done, a campaign in every local union for the repudiation of this amendment. In every central labor body and at every convention of the State Federations of Labor a fight will be conducted against this policy of discrimination and division.

5. *Other Important Issues.*

The convention reiterated the fight of the A. F. of L. for the 30-hour week but greater stress was laid on the accomplishment of this aim without any wage reduction to the workers. While the convention approved the Roosevelt security program, Green was compelled to admit that it is inadequate and the A. F. of L. will have to fight for new legislation to extend and improve this legislation. This admission opens up a very great possibility for the development of a broader movement around the principles embodied in the *Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill*.

One of the high points of the convention was the discussion on the winning of the youth to the trade union movement. Here the old line reactionaries again exposed their reactionary stand. On the other hand a number of important trade union leaders, among them Hochman of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and Martel of the Typographical Union joined the youthful delegate from Chicago in support of special youth forms and demands in order to attract the youth to the trade union movement. Some mention was made in the discussion of the need of special measures to organize the women workers but this question did not receive the necessary attention.

The resolutions dealing with the winning of the Negro workers to the trade unions and the discriminatory practices in many of the international unions were left to the very end of the convention. The Executive Council, which was instructed the previous year to hold hearings on these questions with a view of solving them, could report nothing for the simple reason that they had done nothing. An attempt was made to refer the issues back again to the Council without any discussion. In spite of this Randolph and Webster, two Negro leaders of the Pullman Porters organization, spoke and vigorously condemned the policies and activities of the Executive Council. But the convention took no steps to remedy the situation. It is clear that only the workers themselves, perhaps with the assistance of some of the progressive leaders, can force a change in the attitude of the A. F. of L. to the task of organizing the Negro workers and abolish all discrimination in the unions themselves.

The greatest response throughout the convention that any of the speakers received was when they denounced war and spoke for peace. This perhaps more than anything else explains why the reactionaries were unable and did not dare to try to bring forward their usual slanders against the Soviet Union. For every one sensed the feeling among the masses that the Soviet Union is the bulwark for peace, while the fascists are the instigators of war. The actions taken were in solidarity with the peoples of Ethiopia, condemnation of Italian fascism, and in the main did not go much beyond the "neutrality"

position of the U.S. government. But the sentiments of the convention went far beyond that even if the decisions did not. One thing stood out so much that even Green in reply to one of the speakers from the floor in a moment of enthusiasm voiced this sentiment. It was that the workers and the masses generally alone can prevent war which is only in the interests of the capitalists. And furthermore that the fight against fascism and war is one fight.

The convention adopted a resolution condemning the activities of Father Coughlin after deleting the characterization of Coughlin as a fascist. Resolutions condemning Hearst never reached the floor and were referred for action to the Executive Council.

One of the important decisions of the convention was an authorization to President Green to open negotiations with the Amsterdam International and to the Council to affiliate if satisfactory arrangements can be made.

One of the last acts of the convention was the decision that the A. F. of L. go in favor of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution making it impossible for the U.S. Supreme Court to nullify social legislation such as embodied in the N.R.A., the Social Security measures, in other words, legislation regulating wages, hours, social insurance, etc. This action was opposed by the old line reactionaries who had already succeeded in tabling the resolution at the opening of the last session of the convention before the delegates were all in the hall. But on the motion of Delegate Dubinsky representing the I.L.G.W.U. it was taken from the table and passed by the convention.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

In general we can say that the convention was throughout divided into two main camps with the issue of industrial unionism as the dividing line. But the nature of this issue, and the fundamental character in which it was brought forward, tended to group these two camps on opposite sides on almost every other progressive issue. The progressive bloc, if we should call it such, or the industrial union bloc consisted of a variety of groupings—from supporters of Roosevelt to Communists. The craft union camp of the arch reactionaries consisted in the main of elements in the two old parties who veer in the direction of the Liberty League, the Hutchesons (Republican) and the Wolls, and "old guard" Socialists.

The bloc that favored the Labor Party resolution was of course a more genuine progressive bloc, holding forth real promise of rapid and fundamental changes in the trade union movement. Aside from the Communists and a group of militant Socialists who on the whole found themselves in agreement with us on the basic questions, Gor-

man stands out as the most advanced of the old time officials who occupy a position of prominence in the trade union movement.

The attitude of the Communists and their sympathizers, who constituted a bloc of some 40 or 50 delegates, toward the Lewis forces was one of aiding them in every way as far as they made a genuine fight for industrial unionism and other progressive measures as, for example, the National Civic Federation resolution. Bearing in mind the past record of Lewis, they judged him on the basis of every proposal he made, reevaluating their stand towards him not so much because they believed that he had basically changed his whole position but because the whole development in the country, in the trade union movement and the problems faced by the U.M.W.A. have placed him in a new objective role at the present moment. It is not, of course, possible to predict with certainty what will be his role tomorrow. For that reason the Communists on the one hand boldly take into account the new situation in which they found themselves and welcomed it, but at the same time always stressed that the real test will be in the efforts that these leaders make in the developing of the struggles around the issues they championed, to what extent they will allow the development of the initiative of the members of their own organizations, to what extent they will themselves allow the rights to the membership while fighting against the position of the Executive Council.

The Communists and their supporters at the convention, bearing in mind the decisions of the Seventh World Congress, were able to play an important role without for a moment forgetting their independent role. This was best seen in the fight against the Red amendment and further in the position of supporting the nomination for the first time in almost 20 years of a candidate in opposition to a member of the Executive Council—the nomination of Brother Costello as third vice-president against the notorious Woll. They did not play tail politics to their allies at the convention. They fought jointly on every issue possible, and where they found themselves in disagreement with the so-called progressives, they brought forward their position and tried to mobilize as much strength among the delegates as possible. It is encouraging that on the whole the militant Socialists at the convention fought side by side with the Communists on every major issue.

The "old guard" of the S.P., which for a long time staked everything on the "old guard" in the A. F. of L., is now compelled to further expose itself before the workers. This will greatly strengthen the position of the militant Socialists within the S.P., provided they boldly utilize the present situation and come out openly and vigorously for the united front.

MAJOR IMMEDIATE TASKS

The decisions of the convention, the whole situation in the country, place great responsibilities upon the shoulders of those who fought for progressive measures at the convention. The Communist Party recognizes its responsibilities and will do all in its power to fulfil them.

The Party will carefully reexamine its position in every union with a view of making possible joint work within the unions with all those with whom it found itself in agreement on major issues at the convention. This, of course, implies full freedom of the Party to fight for all issues on which there is disagreement on the basis of trade union democracy. At the same time more attention will have to be given to develop the fight against the reactionaries in the unions that lined up against every progressive measure. In general our Party will try to achieve a broad progressive movement within the trade unions in the interests of the immediate needs of the masses, to beat back the growing attacks of the capitalists, the growing danger of fascism—to unite with all progressive forces in each industry and in the trade union movement as a whole.

To make possible the achievement of such a broad progressive movement, to put out of the way all minor obstacles that impede such a development, great care must be taken by all Party organizations and fractions to develop our criticism of policies and leaders in the most responsible manner. An end must be put to irresponsible name calling, to negative attacks which are only used by the enemies of the workers within and without the trade union movement. This, of course, does not in any way imply capitulation to any wrong policies. On the contrary it presupposes the sharpest criticism against all those who fail to fight in the interests of the workers.

Above all, it is necessary to rally all the forces for the organization of the unorganized, for the building of industrial unions. We must fight against all attempts to wait for the next convention. Now is the time to organize the unorganized. Even the present set-up can be used to considerably advance industrial unionism, despite the sabotage of the Executive Council. Here is where will be determined to what extent Lewis, Hillman, etc., have really broken with their past and are ready to face the new problems of the labor movement.

Every Party organization must become part of the effort to organize the unorganized. The entire Party press must enter this campaign with full vigor. This demands that every Party member eligible to join a trade union must do so if not yet a member. In this campaign to build and strengthen the unions we will overcome more quickly and more thoroughly the still existing distrust that exists

towards the Communists among some workers, a distrust promoted by our enemies on the basis of slanders.

Another task which we must place in the very center of our work is the task of building the Labor Party. The Communists will do all in their power to promote the Labor Party by concentrating in the first place upon the winning of the trade unions for the Labor Party and at the same time to draw all elements into the movement from amongst the farmers, middle classes and professionals. Only if the movement is built from below will the Labor Party become a reality. The Communists by their work and struggle for the Labor Party, showing to the masses that they are an indispensable force in this movement, will be able to prevent their exclusion by all those who wish to make out of the Labor Party movement a movement directed against the Communists.

Finally the present situation makes possible and above all also necessary that we strengthen our Party by recruiting new tens of thousands of trade unionists into our ranks. The conditions are indeed ripe for this. And if we wish to carry through the decisions of the Seventh World Congress with regard to the struggle against fascism, the building of the People's Front, the promotion of the Labor Party, we cannot do this effectively without bringing into our ranks those militant forces that, as even the A. F. of L. Convention has proven, exist, and are ripe for our Party.

A new page is opening up for American labor. Great events are in the making. We can say that our Party is trying to keep pace with events and to fully utilize the situation in the interests of our class, in the interests of all the oppressed. But the immediate future will try us as we were never tried before. On the basis of the most resolute and most flexible carrying through of the decisions of the Seventh World Congress we will be able to meet the test.

Problems of the Struggle for Peace *

By ALEX BITTELMAN

FROM preliminary talks with the organizers of this meeting, I have the impression that you would want to me take up a number of specific questions, and on the basis of these, discuss the general decisions of the Seventh World Congress. I think that is a good way of discussing the Congress decisions. For today, I have selected a number of political questions arising out of our struggle for peace. I have in mind the questions dealing with our slogans, tactics, and also with the united front as we are developing it today in the fight against Italian aggression on Ethiopia, and the German threat against Lithuania.

I think that the best approach from this angle would be to discuss Dimitroff's telegram to the Second International, published in the *Daily Worker* on September 26. It characterizes the immediate situation as follows:

"War may break out in Ethiopia at any moment. The German fascists have only been awaiting this moment to hurl themselves on weak Lithuania to occupy Memel. The war measures of Italian fascism and German fascism will have incalculable consequences. They may lead to another world war."

What is to be done? Dimitroff answers:

"It is necessary to unite the efforts of the two Internationals in order to maintain peace. They must act in concert and by their common efforts to stay the hand of the fascist instigators of war.

"Common action by the two Internationals would mobilize the working class and would secure the support of the forces of peace among other classes of the population. It would draw whole peoples into the fight for peace. It would call forth an international movement against war of such power that the League of Nations would be compelled to undertake really effective action against the aggression of Italian fascism and German fascism under its pressure."

Here you have the practical concrete approach to the question of war. The first thing Dimitroff does is to state clearly the particular war danger spots at the present time. He is not calling upon the Second International to fight war in general, he is calling for united

* Introduction to a series of discussions on the decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern, delivered at the meeting of the National Bureau of the Young Communist League, September 30, 1935.

action to carry on the fight for peace in a concrete and specific manner, *i.e.*, by devising ways and means of meeting the war danger in those places where it is most acute. I want to emphasize this because as we go on we shall find that this is a consideration that is fundamental, namely, the fight against war and for peace concretely, specifically.

In this telegram you have in a nutshell the whole strategy of the Communist International for peace in the present world situation. You have the strategy applied to the danger spots in the world today—on the question of Germany against Lithuania and of Italy against Ethiopia. Here you have a demonstration of how the Communist International leadership applies in a Leninist way its principles of struggle against war. I will try to analyze very briefly the most important elements of this telegram. What have you there? First of all you have a clear statement of the strategic aim of the Communist International in this struggle—the struggle for the maintenance of peace. The resolution of the Seventh World Congress states that the central slogan of the Communist Parties in the struggle against war is the struggle for peace. Dimitroff formulates it concretely that in the struggle against the war danger around Ethiopia and Memel the aim is to maintain peace. This is our central aim. Then he takes up the concrete question of strategy. Whom must you concentrate on in this struggle for peace? And he answers: We must concentrate against the chief war instigators at this very moment: German and Italian fascism.

If you have studied Stalin's treatment of Leninism, the particular section which defines strategy and tactics, you will remember that he defines strategy in the following way: It is the determination of that point, of those classes against which the main blow must be directed at any particular stage of the class struggle. It is secondly the determination of the disposition of the revolutionary forces, *i.e.*, the allies of the working class and the reserves, which can be mobilized at this particular time for the struggle. Following this definition of Communist strategy, Dimitroff in his telegram arrived at the following conclusion in line with the resolutions of the Seventh World Congress. He says that the main blow must be directed against the chief instigators of war at the present moment—Italian fascism and German fascism. Then he discusses reserves at the disposal of the working class and its possible allies. And who are these? "Other classes of the population", "whole peoples", and the utilization of the contradictions between the imperialists.

When he refers to other classes of the population, he means the farming population basically, the city petty bourgeoisie, certain sections of the bourgeoisie itself. When he says whole peoples, he means what Comrade Ercoli has explained in his report to the

Congress—first of all, certain small nations of Europe and Africa whose territories are threatened by the two fascist governments. And when he refers to the development of a movement that would compel the League of Nations to take effective actions against Italian and German fascism, he means the utilization of the existing contradictions between the imperialists.

The next thing I want to take up is that this strategy of the Communist International is a strategy to be applied by all Communist Parties, *i.e.*, by the Communist Parties of the capitalist world as well as by the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. What is to be said here in this connection, is something that Comrade Ercoli discussed in his report to the Congress:

“For us it is absolutely beyond doubt that the aims of the peace policy of the Soviet Union and the aims of the policies of the working class and the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries are fully identical. . . . And we defend not only the Soviet Union in general, but we defend concretely its whole policy and every one of its acts. But this identity of aims does not at all mean that at every given moment, in all actions and on all questions, there must exist a complete identity of tactics of the proletariat and the Communist Parties which are still fighting for power and the concrete tactical measures of the Soviet proletariat and the C.P.S.U. which are exercising power in the Soviet Union.”

This is an important question which is not yet clear to all comrades. We proceed from what is absolutely agreed, *i.e.*, that the aims of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries are absolutely identical with the aims of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But from this it does not follow that our tactics in the capitalist countries are the same as those pursued by the Communist Party of the S.U. Sometimes they are the same and at others they are not. And when they are not, it is because the position of the working class and the Communist Party in a capitalist country where we are still fighting for power is very much different from the position of a Party which already holds power. A couple of examples will make this more clear. The Soviet Union, that is, the Communist Party and the working class of the Soviet Union, are fighting for peace. So are we in the United States. The aim is absolutely identical. But now let us take up some of the tactics and measures taken by the Soviet Union and by us. How does the Soviet Union fight for peace? It industrializes the country, collectivizes agriculture, strengthens the Socialist economy, improves the well-being of the people and the material resources of the country. Thus, it is in a stronger position to fight for peace. When the Soviet Union builds a new plant, it fights for peace. We cannot fight for peace by building a new plant in the United States. That is clear. The Soviet Union fights for peace by building the Red Army. We

cannot. The Soviet Union fights for peace by making peace pacts. Obviously, a Party fighting for power is not yet in a position to make peace pacts. Our task is to mobilize the masses in support of these peace pacts. The U.S.S.R. fights for peace by being present in Geneva. We cannot be in Geneva. What are our methods of fighting for peace? When we organize big mass demonstrations with slogans which we consider correct, we fight for peace. When we organize struggles against the American bourgeoisie even for economic demands, we are fighting for peace. When we help to build and strengthen the unions with militant leaderships, we are fighting for peace because we strengthen the class which is interested in peace. When we fight for the united front and for the Farmer-Labor Party, we are fighting for peace. The slightest reflection on this matter will convince us of what Comrade Ercoli said, that the aims of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries are identical with those of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., but when it comes to methods and tactics, they are not always the same because the position of the Party fighting for power is not the same as that of the Party already in power.

What are the special slogans and tactics in the capitalist countries at the present time in the concrete struggle for peace, *i.e.*, the struggle against Italian fascism's war on Ethiopia and the threat of German fascism against Lithuania? The chief slogans are:

1. We seek to stop the transportation of munitions and all supplies to Italy.
2. We seek to make it impossible for the American bankers to extend loans or credits to the Italian government.
3. We seek to bring about a situation where the Ethiopian government will be able to secure arms and munitions in the United States.
4. We demand the closing of the Suez Canal to Italian war transports.
5. We support the peace policies of the Soviet Union.

All these are parts of the general slogans of *defeating Italian fascism*, of *support to the Italian people against Mussolini*, and the *support of the Ethiopian people for national independence*. Now, on this question, there exists considerable agreement between us and the Second International. You have read the manifesto published some time ago by the Executive Committee of the Labor and Socialist International on the present war dangers and the policies to be pursued by its affiliated parties. What did the executive propose in this manifesto?

It singled out German fascism, Italian fascism, and the Japanese military clique as the chief instigators of war. That is very important. There was a time when the leaders of the Second Interna-

tional used to talk war in general without putting their fingers on any particular spot. There was a time when some of the leaders of the Second International thought that Japan was not threatening the U.S.S.R. But in this manifesto, they see clearly where the main danger of war comes from. Furthermore, they agree with one of the chief slogans of the Seventh World Congress. They say that *fascism is war*. They call upon their parties to engage in a number of practical activities to combat the present world danger. The manifesto calls for closing the Suez Canal to Italian war transports. It calls against financial assistance to Italy. And it also calls for the national independence and territorial integrity of Ethiopia. That is our slogan. It is because of this fact, that you found in Dimitroff's telegram the following sentence: "The Communist International welcomes your decision."

And Dimitroff adds: "But all that has been done up to now on your part and on our part is insufficient in the face of the magnitude of the danger."

The Second International takes a position which is essentially in line with the demands and slogans which the Communist International has formulated. Now, are there differences in approach and in attitude? There are. For example, the manifesto of the Labor and Socialist International says not one word about the united front.* Then it calls upon its affiliated parties to "use all political means at their disposal to persuade their governments to fulfill their duties as members of the League of Nations". That is not the way we put it. We do not call upon the working class "*to persuade*" their governments. Dimitroff in his telegram says we should organize the working class, its allies, its primary and secondary reserves, to build up a movement of such strength as will *compel* the League of Nations to take effective measures against Italian and German fascism. The executive of the Labor and Socialist International proposes that its parties utilize mainly, if not exclusively, parliamentary means in order to exert certain pressure on their respective governments. To say this is insufficient. *We say that the most important thing is to set the masses in motion in big struggles against their own imperialist governments and in this way compel them to do certain things.* However, as the resolution of the Seventh World Congress indicates, we are ready to join hands with all those who are willing to fight

* Since this lecture was delivered, the dispatches have announced that due to the insistence of the British and Scandinavian representatives, the Executive Committee of the L.S.I. rejected the proposals of the Communist International for the united front. In forcing this rejection, the leaders of these aforementioned parties have chosen to continue collaboration with the imperialist bourgeoisie instead of the proletarian united front against fascism and for peace.

for peace, even though their methods may differ from ours, even though they are willing at this time to go only part of the way.

The Second International manifesto confines the struggle for peace almost exclusively to parliamentary procedure and puts it on the basis of persuading and supporting the imperialist governments. We seek to build up primarily the power of the masses themselves, utilizing for this purpose all parliamentary means, not to "persuade" but to compel, and certainly not to follow a line of supporting but of combatting our imperialist governments. These are important differences. Nevertheless, we seek the united front because, as far as certain demands and aims are concerned, there is very little difference between what we are demanding today and what the Second International says in its manifesto.

We do not call for support of the League. It is not our demand. We call for mass struggle for peace of such strength as will compel action by the League and governments along certain lines. At the same time we are against that sort of false pacifism which, in the name of peace, would allow Italian and German fascism to make war. This takes me to a very important practical question, the question of League sanctions.

It caused considerable discussion, as you know, in the British Trade Union Congress, and probably will find considerable reflection in the conference of the British Labor Party. What was the difference of opinion at the British Trade Union Congress? There were four tendencies. One was expressed by Lansbury. What was his opinion? It was something like this: We are against war, against Italian fascism making war on Ethiopia. We are with the Ethiopian people and against Italian fascism. But what should be done about it? For a while Lansbury was inclined to take the position that he would support the League of Nations if it took a firm attitude towards Italian aggression. But later he retreated from that position, because, he said, that would make the British working class support the national government and its imperialist aims. And this, he said, we cannot do. The result is that Lansbury does not exist as an effective factor in the struggle against war.

What is the second tendency? That is the one represented by the British Socialist League, by Stafford Cripps. It is very similar to Lansbury's, except that the League generalizes Lansbury's vague ideas into a tactical principle, and says in effect that nothing can be done against war as long as capitalism exists. What does that mean practically in the struggle against war today? It means, do nothing.

Then comes the third tendency in the congress, the official position. This a position of support to the national government of England. The national government, as you know, does not want to see Italy take complete hold of Ethiopia because this would threaten

the imperialist position of England. Hence the national government is willing to go a certain way to prevent Italy from getting complete hold of Ethiopia. In this the official leadership of the British Trade Union Congress is willing to support and follow the British national government. It is precisely this latter angle of it which arouses Lansbury's anger. And in this he is right. But his own policy is no policy of the struggle for peace. It is a policy which, in fact, gives a free hand to both: British imperialism and Italian fascism.

The fourth tendency is the one expressed by the Communists. The policy of the Communist International, the fight for peace, no endorsement of, and no support to, the national government or any of the imperialist governments, but utilization of the imperialist contradictions and active support of the peace policy of the Soviet Union.

This brings me to some misconceptions on the question of sanctions. I have seen some very confused ideas expressed on this question, which arise from two chief misconceptions. One: if we demand sanctions, they will be applied by whom? By the imperialist powers. Hence, that means support of imperialism. The second misconception is that, since sanctions mean war, and since we cannot demand war but must want peace, therefore, we cannot demand sanctions. Some of these misconceptions are the result of inability to understand that it is really possible to carry on a revolutionary struggle for peace. This is the case of Lansbury and the case of some opinions expressed in the *Socialist Call*. And, of course, there are others who really do not want to fight against war and are using pacifist arguments to prevent the struggle against war.

The answer to these "arguments" against sanctions is: it depends on how you fight for them. If you fight for them like some of the official leaders of the British trade unions, that is if you place yourself behind your imperialist government and support it, then you do assume responsibility for the policies of that government and for imperialism. But when you fight for specific sanctions, as the C.I. proposes, for instance, in Dimitroff's telegram, then you are carrying on a correct fight. Dimitroff's telegram says that we should mobilize the masses against Italian and German fascism for direct struggle for peace, at the same time seeking to compel the League of Nations to take really effective measures against aggression by Italy and Germany. We want to force the League of Nations and the British government to close the Suez Canal. This will be a very effective measure to stop war or lead to the defeat of Italian fascism if war breaks out. In putting forth this demand, we do not assume any responsibility for the League of Nations or for any government involved there except the Soviet Union. We will watch the behavior of these imperialist governments and attack them if they do not

check Italy, or if they proceed to partition Ethiopia, *always exposing the imperialist policies of the bourgeois governments*. We are reserving complete political freedom to carry on our own line and to utilize for our peace struggle the contradictions between the imperialist powers. Therefore, the slogan of "Close the Suez Canal" is a very effective one in the fight for peace if it is carried on in complete independence from the imperialist governments. Let us see how the situation actually is developing. When the Communist Party of England demands of the British government that it should exert itself in favor of closing the Suez Canal, this is not only a struggle against Italian fascism, but also against the reactionary circles of British capitalism itself. This is very important. It is well known that a large portion of the Conservative Party of England is pro-Italian and pro-fascist. It is also known that the last thing that the British government would want is to apply such sanctions against Italy. Therefore, when the Communist Party of England calls for the closing of the Suez Canal it is following the policy not only of fighting against Mussolini's war, but also against its own government. It is a revolutionary policy of struggle for peace.

The second argument is that if you demand sanctions you demand war. This is one of the sophisms Lenin always warned the workers against. There are the arguments that tend to confuse and weaken the struggle against the bourgeoisie. It is the argument which says in effect: Let Mussolini make war. To the person who says that if you demand the closing of the Suez Canal, you demand war, our answer is: What is your alternative? Let Mussolini make war. In other words, in the name of peace, you will let Mussolini make war on Ethiopia. In the name of peace you will let Hitler make war upon Lithuania, Czechoslovakia. In the name of the same peace you will let Hitler and Japan make war upon the Soviet Union. It is precisely this sort of "pacifism" that helps war and the war makers.

In last week's *Socialist Call* Norman Thomas says: "It is impossible to have much enthusiasm for the League or the League sanctions." Enthusiasm? No, we have *none* for the League of Nations. But we agree with Comrade Stalin that it offers a certain impediment, slight as it is, to the fascist instigators of war. And we are determined to utilize the imperialist contradictions in the struggle for peace. The demand to close the Suez Canal seeks to accomplish that aim. Is Thomas for it? That is the question. I am sure that Thomas is against Mussolini and for Ethiopia. But we are discussing here *methods of struggle* against this particular war. We want to stop Mussolini from making this war or be defeated if he begins, as he did.

The main thing, however, is that there are big points of agree-

ment between us and Thomas in the struggle against Italian fascism. That is why we say that there is a good basis for the united front between us. In the same article, Thomas writes:

"I am for an absolute embargo here in America on anything that may help his [Mussolini's] conquest."

Good. Let us unite forces to struggle for this demand.

You recall the slogan we issued: No material, no arms, no loans, no credits to Italian fascism. You see then that on a number of basic questions of struggle we are in agreement. This must be translated in terms of common action.

It has been asked whether it would be correct to accept the slogan, "Keep out of war". I do not think it is a correct slogan. It is not our slogan. Our slogan is a positive one of *fight for peace*. But the slogan, "Keep out of war" exists. It is widespread. It is used by warmongers like Hearst, by adherents of the status quo like Roosevelt, and also by people who wish to carry on an active struggle for peace. Therefore, the first thing we must know is *who puts this slogan forward*. I would say that in Hearst's mouth, the slogan, "Keep out of war" is a war slogan, a slogan to cover up war instigation. Hearst's position is similar to that of Colonel House who wrote in *Liberty* (Sept. 14, 1935) that

"Just as social peace cannot prevail without some adjustment of the capitalistic system, so international peace cannot be preserved *without drastic territorial readjustment*. Great Britain, France, Russia [!] and the United States must receive Italy, Germany and Japan on terms adjusted to present world conditions and recognize their insistence upon being given their proper part of the colonial resources of the world." (Emphasis mine—A. B.)

The meaning of this plea is clear. It tells Hitler, Japan, and Mussolini to go ahead and make war on the small nations, the colonial peoples and especially the Soviet Union. And it is done under the cover of the slogan: "U.S. keep out of war".

The resolution of the Seventh World Congress on the question of war shows that the United States is a country which belongs to that group of powers in the world today that stand, on a world scale, for the preservation of the status quo. That is true; and the Roosevelt administration represents this tendency more or less in its foreign policies. But this is not the policy of all sections of the bourgeoisie. The most reactionary capitalists in this country, the Liberty League, the big banks, the chemical and munitions industries, are for Colonel House's policy. This is also the policy of Hearst, who covers up this policy with the slogan, "Keep out of war". On the other hand, the Roosevelt administration also operates with

the slogan that we must "Keep out of war". And also shows a certain amount of desire, though hesitatingly, of collaborating with the League of Nations in favor of maintaining peace. This expresses the desire of the American bourgeoisie to maintain the status quo. *But it is not a policy of active struggle for peace*, in which the large masses of this country are interested. It is not a *consistent* peace policy because it is based upon imperialist interests. The American working class and all toilers need an active policy of struggle for peace and they need an international policy, such as outlined by the Seventh World Congress of the C.I. But this is not yet clear to the large masses of American workers and youth who still labor under the illusion that the slogan, *Keep out of war* expresses their interests. To them we must say: *Yes, we too are fighting to keep the United States out of war, but this aim can be fought for effectively ONLY by means of an ACTIVE and INTERNATIONAL policy of struggle for peace in a united and people's front along the lines of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International.*

Syndicalism in the United States

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

IN its basic aspects, syndicalism, or more properly, anarcho-syndicalism, may be defined very briefly as that tendency in the labor movement to confine the revolutionary class struggle of the workers to the economic field, to practically ignore the state, and to reduce the whole fight of the working class to simply a question of trade union action. Its fighting organization is the trade union; its basic method of class warfare is the strike, with the general strike as the revolutionary weapon; and its revolutionary goal is the setting up of a trade union "state" to conduct industry and all other social activities. In short, syndicalism is pure and simple trade unionism, using militant tactics and dressed up in revolutionary phraseology.

In restricting the organization of the working class to the trade unions and in confining its struggle to the economic field, syndicalism commits a whole series of fatal mistakes. Among the most important of these are: (1) failure to provide the closely-knit organization of the most developed revolutionary elements (which must be a Communist Party) indispensable for uniting and leading the less developed masses; (2) failure to utilize the many political methods of struggle vitally necessary to carry on the workers' daily fight against the state and the capitalists for the eventual overthrow of capitalism, and for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat; (3) failure to establish a basis for the unity of the workers with the poorer sections of the farmers and petty bourgeoisie against the capitalists, a unity fundamental for effective struggle against capitalism; (4) failure to work out a practical plan for the operation of the workers' society after the abolition of capitalism.

Thus, briefly, by preventing the revolutionary political organization of the workers, by hindering their developing political struggle, by alienating their natural class allies, and by confusing them regarding the future order of society, syndicalism demobilizes the workers politically before the attacks of the capitalist state, and it leads inevitably to the defeat of the working class in its revolutionary struggle.

Let this very brief outline suffice to characterize the syndicalistic tendency. Although possessing certain specific characteristics of its own (which I shall discuss in passing) American syndicalism nevertheless basically conformed to the foregoing skeleton analysis of

syndicalism in general. Here my task is not to analyze at length syndicalism theoretically as a movement, nor to demonstrate in detail its weaknesses. That has been thoroughly done already by others. The main question here is to trace the origins of syndicalism in the United States, to point out those objective and subjective factors that have produced this syndicalism, and to indicate, at least in a general way, the role it has played in the revolutionary movement of the United States.

I. THE EXTENT OF SYNDICALISM

Before tracing the major causes of American syndicalism, let me first briefly outline the extent to which this tendency has prevailed. Now syndicalism has developed more or less in nearly every country which has a substantial capitalism. But as a rule it has been much weaker in the more industrialized countries. The most outstanding exception in this respect, however, is the United States. In the United States syndicalist tendencies have been manifest to a far greater extent (manyfold in fact) than in the other highly industrialized countries, notably Great Britain and Germany. Indeed, it is not generally realized just how very extensive syndicalism has actually been in the United States, and what a great role it has played in the American revolutionary movement. Nor has the Communist Party yet paid sufficient attention to analyzing this important syndicalist tendency and its many consequences.

The reality is that for a full thirty-five years syndicalist tendencies, more or less clearly developed in the different periods, were very pronounced in our revolutionary movement. During all these years they kept sprouting here and there spontaneously, showing that syndicalism had powerful native roots in the objective situation. To secure at least an inkling of the great extent of this crippling tendency, let us glance back very briefly at some of the major features of our labor history, and then we will find syndicalism continually cropping out on a broad scale in the revolutionary movement.

Let us begin with the great eight-hour-day struggle of 1886. This historical movement already bore strong syndicalist features. Its acknowledged leaders, Parsons, Spies, etc., were anarcho-syndicalists rather than the anarchists which they have been called. They were anti-political; their organization was the trade union; and their major weapon was the general strike—all syndicalist characteristics. They had a huge mass following and were a decisive influence in the labor movement of the time.

In the 'nineties such important labor unions as Debs' American Railway Union and De Leon's Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance also bore distinct traces of a nascent syndicalism, with their super-stress on economic struggle, industrial unionism and dual unionism

and under-stress on political action. Furthermore, in this same period, De Leon, by gradually minimizing the role of the Party before, during and after the revolution, and by exaggerating the role of the trade unions, was developing the opinions that were eventually to lay the main theoretical foundations of American syndicalism.

After the turn of the century syndicalist tendencies in the Left wing became even more pronounced and clear-cut. A number of industrial dual unions were formed during the period shortly after 1900 with decided syndicalistic trends, such as the United Railroad Workers, American Labor Union, etc. This trend came to a head in 1905 with the formation of the Industrial Workers of the World. At first but semi-syndicalistic, the Industrial Workers of the World soon developed its basic syndicalistic character and became the classic example of American syndicalism. It conducted many big strikes and for a dozen years was a real factor in the labor movement and even extended to several other countries. It especially exerted a profound influence over Left-wing elements in every organization.

In 1913 came the Syndicalist League of North America. This organization, although much smaller than the I.W.W., had considerable influence in the trade unions. It eventually gave rise to the Trade Union Educational League in 1920, which was also distinctly syndicalist at its formation. Shortly after the Syndicalist League of North America was launched, the Goldman anarchist group also tried to establish a syndicalist league, but nothing came of it.

More significant still of the strong syndicalist trend in the American revolutionary movement was the powerful and persistent syndicalist sentiment in the Left-wing of the Socialist Party. It is not too much to say that from the time such a Left-wing began to take shape in the Socialist Party, about 1902 or 1903, it was literally saturated with syndicalistic tendencies up till the split of 1919.

Characteristically, the three outstanding Left leaders of the two pre-war decades displayed strong syndicalist trends. De Leon, as we have already indicated, was actually the theoretical father of American syndicalism; Debs, although in lesser degree, shared many of his syndicalist illusions about the role of the trade unions, and Haywood became definitely a syndicalist.

It was the Socialist Labor Party and the Left-wing of the Socialist Party that were responsible for the formation of the syndicalistic I.W.W. in 1905. At that time the political conceptions of these Lefts were confused and their syndicalist trends strong. This is sufficiently illustrated by the fact that in the long manifestoes calling the first convention of the I.W.W. there is no mention whatever of the government, no more than if it did not exist, and the whole problem of the workers is posed solely as a problem of revo-

lutionary trade unionism. This manifesto was signed by such diverse Socialist and other Left elements as Debs, Haywood, Trautmann, Mother Jones, A. M. Simons, Untermann, Shurtleff, Frank Bohn and Father Hagerty. And when the I.W.W. was formed, its famous political clause in the preamble (put in by De Leon and later removed by the "direct activists") showed a distinctly syndicalistic trend inasmuch as while it called for organization in the political as well as the industrial field, it proposed as the revolutionary way for the workers to "take and hold that which they produce by their labor, through an economic organization of the working class without affiliation to any political party".

Fundamentally, the Left-wing of the Socialist Party was political. It was that stream in the labor movement that gave birth to the Communist Party, the revolutionary Party of the working class. But that it was afflicted with a heavy admixture of syndicalist features is also evident from even a glance at its developing program after the launching of the I.W.W. In the 1909 fight in the Socialist Party of the State of Washington, for example, the Left-wing program was anti-parliamentary and otherwise syndicalistic. And when the disastrous split took place many of the Left-wing leaders, especially the proletarians, such as Joe Manley, Floyd Hyde and Joe Biscay, and others went over to the I.W.W. I, myself, did the same and remained a syndicalist for a dozen years.

The Socialist Party Left-wing in the big inner-Party fight of 1912, led by Bill Haywood and the International Socialist Review group, was even more syndicalistic and more under the influence of the I.W.W. ideology than in 1909. The bitter internal fight at that time centered around the question of the right of Socialist Party members to advocate sabotage, a central syndicalist policy. The Left-wing was defeated in this historic struggle. Haywood, the Left leader, thereupon quit the Party, became a professed syndicalist and thenceforth devoted his whole activity to the anti-political I.W.W. Large numbers of other Left-wingers followed his example and to a great extent the Socialist Party Left-wing movement liquidated itself into syndicalism.

In the Socialist Party split of 1919 which gave birth to the Communist Party, the Left-wing, although by then considerably more matured politically, was still afflicted by many of the characteristic syndicalist features of anti-parliamentarism, dual unionism and industrial union utopianism. But if this time the movement did not degenerate into syndicalism as in previous splits, it was because of the existence of new and strong influences, corrective of the traditional syndicalist sickness of the Left-wing and of which I shall speak further along.

To the foregoing more definitely syndicalist tendencies may be

added the "economism" or sort of Right-wing syndicalist trend of the old trade unions themselves. This conservative official American Federation of Labor syndicalism, brother under the skin to the more radical brand, was evidenced by the trade unions' stubborn resistance for many years to extending their struggle on to the political field, by their long continued fight against an independent labor party, by their sharp opposition to all labor legislation regarding working hours, wages, social insurance and the like affecting adult workers.

II. FACTORS MAKING FOR SYNDICALISM

The foregoing brief references to American labor history, especially Left-wing history, suffice to show the existence of a widespread syndicalist tendency over many years. They also indicate that the United States developed a much stronger and deeper-rooted syndicalist movement than either England or Germany, which were comparable industrial countries. In Germany, the syndicalist movement, a narrow sect, never amounted to much, and England never had a native syndicalist movement; what little syndicalism it had being partly due to American I.W.W. and partly to French C.G.T.* influences. But the syndicalist tendency in the United States was native, deep-rooted and persistent through a long period of years.

What, then, was the reason for this strong development of syndicalism in the United States? It is a timely question; for up till now the question of our syndicalism has not been adequately analyzed and explained, and the remnants of this old-time syndicalism still exert some influence in the revolutionary movement.

Obviously the explanation of syndicalism in the Latin countries, France, Italy, Spain, etc.—on the ground that it derived from the less developed character of industry and the prevalence of strong anarchist traditions—does not apply to the United States. This country is a classic land of big industry and monopoly capitalism and it possesses but weak anarchist traditions. Hence the explanation for our heavy dose of syndicalism must be looked for elsewhere.

In my judgment, the basic causes of American syndicalism are to be found in a whole series of other economic, political and social factors, operating over a long period. These forces, by hindering the growth of class consciousness and checking the development of independent working class political organization and activity, tended to restrict the struggle of the workers to the economic field and thereby created the objective conditions favorable to the development of syndicalism.** Among the more important of these factors, merely indicated here, are the following:

1. *Bourgeois democratic illusions.* Inasmuch as the American

* Confederation Generale de Travail (General Confederation of Labor).

** Marx and Engels long ago noted this tendency for the American masses are now ready for a broad labor party.

bourgeois revolution accorded the workers a considerable degree of formal rights of free speech, free press, free assembly, the right to organize and strike and set up a fiction of legalized social equality, this situation resulted in a growth of bourgeois-democratic illusions among the workers and the latter, aware of no burning political immediate demands, were greatly hindered in developing independent class political organizations and action. What grievances the workers were conscious of loomed up to them as economic—such as questions of wages, hours, working conditions, etc. This is the most fundamental reason why there was no mass labor party or Socialist Party developed in the United States and why the workers have made their main fight on the economic field—the mass of workers had no platform of urgent political demands such as would be required as a basis for such a party.*

2. *Flexibility of the two-party system.* The decentralized character of the two old capitalist parties and the policy of the capitalists to make small concessions to the labor aristocracy enabled many of the more conservative trade unionists, especially officials, to be elected to government office on the basis of their “milk and water” labor program. This fact put a definite check upon the formation of a separate working class mass party.

3. *No strongly centralized national government.* Because of the highly developed “states rights” principle in government, the workers faced government oppression (troops, police, hostile court decisions, anti-labor legislature) *mainly* from the individual state governments (until recent years), and this tended to scatter the workers’ political struggle and to hinder the growth of a national mass labor party. Hence, American labor parties of a mass character have always been upon either a local, state or regional basis.

4. *Government free land.* The existence of free government land over several generations, down to about 1900, this land to be had by settlers upon easy conditions, has been often cited as one of the basic factors hindering the revolutionary development of the American working class. For many years it acted as a safety valve to leak off the discontent of the urban and agrarian toiling masses.

5. *Higher living standards.* The existence of higher wage standards generally in the United States than in the countries from whence millions of immigrants came was undoubtedly an important check upon working class discontent generally.

6. *Large labor aristocracy.* The United States for long had a relatively large aristocracy of skilled workers, principally American

* I have dealt with this subject fully in a recent article in *The Communist International* entitled “The New Political Basis for a Labor Party in the United States” (No. 12), showing how, by the growth of mass political demands, the masses are now ready for a broad labor party

born. These, organized mainly in the American Federation of Labor and supporting the two capitalist parties, have been a great bar to American proletarian progress. Their ultra-reactionary leaders, corrupt to the core and shameless agents of the bourgeoisie, have for two generations ruthlessly used the great power of their organizations to defeat every attempt of the Left-wing to organize independent working class political organization and struggle or to propagate revolutionary ideas among the masses.

7. *Bourgeois prosperity illusions.* During the very rapid industrialization of the United States, large numbers of workers became well-to-do, many became petty bourgeois and some even big capitalists. This did much to blur class lines, to create bourgeois prosperity illusions among the toiling masses, and to check independent working class political development.

8. *Disfranchised immigrant workers.* During the whole period of rapid growth of American industry, about 50 years, there was present a large body of immigrant workers, in later years running into many millions. These immigrants, being largely non-citizens and very often not intending to remain long in the country, were more interested in economic questions of wages, etc., than in political matters. Hence, they as a mass were subject to non-political and often anti-political moods. Many of the Italians and other Latin groups had strong syndicalist traditions. And inasmuch as the revolutionary movement historically (S.L.P., S.P., I.W.W., C.P.), has always based itself largely, if not mostly, upon these foreign-born masses, it was unquestionably greatly influenced by their non-political attitudes.

9. *Floating workers.* Another force in the working class making against independent political action was the large body of itinerant workers in the West, several hundred thousand in number, made up chiefly of agricultural workers, construction workers, miners, lumbermen, etc. These workers, mostly homeless, familyless, penniless, jobless, were a militantly revolutionary force. Although many were American-born, they were nearly all disfranchised and voteless because of residence disqualification; hence, in view of the general syndicalist trend of the Left-wing, they became virulently anti-political. Their great political significance lay in the fact that they early captured control of the I.W.W., gave it its pronounced syndicalist character and formed its backbone during its whole period of important struggle and influence.

10. *Heterogeneous composition of the working class.* Unquestionably the fact that the American working class has been for so long made up of such a great variety of nationalities, with different languages, standards of living, traditions, etc., constituted a difficulty in the way of organized working class action, especially political

action, the employers and political bosses knowing well how to play off one group against another, especially the Americans against the foreign-born and the whites against the Negroes.

11. *Corrupt American politics.* For many years American workers have been disgusted and dissuaded from political action by the shameless corruption of American political life, marked by wholesale open bribery of representatives, brazen stealing of elections, etc. Even as early as 1886 we find Albert R. Parsons urging as a reason for boycotting politics the fact that a short while before, the workers in Chicago had been ruthlessly robbed in the counting of ballots in the city elections.

12. *Petty-bourgeois control of the Socialist Party.* Ever since its inception the Socialist Party has been controlled by radical petty-bourgeois elements (doctors, lawyers, preachers, petty business men, etc.), who, feeling the pressure of trustified capital and seeing no hope in the two old parties, flocked into the Socialist Party to use it and its proletarian following in defense of the interests of the petty bourgeoisie. Their grip on the Socialist Party remains unbroken till this day. Consequently the proletarians in the Socialist Party were never able to use it as a revolutionary party. And this situation thus gave a powerful stimulus to syndicalism by closing another important gateway to working class political action and tending to confine Left-wing activities to the economic field.

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYNDICALISM

The foregoing were the main factors, chiefly objective in character, making for the development of American syndicalism. They are the native soil in which this persistent deviation grew. Individually and collectively they tended, let me repeat, to check the general growth of class consciousness among the workers, to prevent the organization of a mass workers' party and to hinder the development of sustained independent class political action of the workers. Their combined effort was basically responsible for the fact that historically the class battles of the American workers have been fought almost entirely on the economic field, in the realm of trade unionism.

But these objective factors, however strong, were not of themselves sufficiently powerful to have created the syndicalism of the S.L.P., S.P., I.W.W., S. L. of N. A., etc. Still another strong factor, subjective in character, entered decisively into the situation. *This was the historical tendency of the Left-wing, instead of struggling against these anti-political forces, to adapt itself to them and to restrict its revolutionary struggle to the economic field.* In this manner arose the stubborn syndicalist tendency which plagued and weakened the American revolutionary movement for so many years.

Instead of making a Marxian analysis of the many factors working against proletarian class political action and then laying out a sound program for their theoretical penetration, the Left-wing confusedly retreated before them and tended to develop its movement solely in the sphere that lay open before it, the economic field. It theorized an anti-parliamentarism conveniently to fit those factors making against political action and, under cover of many radical phrases and gross distortions of Marx, it reduced the role of the Party and it showed how the labor unions alone could overthrow capitalism and operate socialism in such a highly industrialized country as the United States. This syndicalistic adaptation was all the more facilitated because, although the American working class was so passive politically, it nevertheless militantly resisted on the economic field the ever-sharpening capitalist exploitation, and for fifty years before the World War it had a record of hard fought and bloody strikes such as no other country had, except tsarist Russia.

The United States, being a rich field for syndicalism, was also subject to a great deal of anarchist and syndicalist propaganda from foreign countries, especially France. It absorbed much of this, including anti-parliamentary theories, glorification of the general strike as the workers' supreme revolutionary weapon, elevation of sabotage into a major proletarian tactic, theories of decentralization, spontaneity, etc. But the fundamental causes of American syndicalism were the native influences above-cited.

Thus our syndicalism, in the last analysis, must be traced to the theoretical weakness of the Left-wing in the United States. The revolutionary elements did not know how to develop a revolutionary political policy and party in the face of so many obstacles to mass working class political action. Instead, they tended constantly to yield before these difficulties and to take the easiest theoretical road into the syndicalist swamp.

It was the great strength of the Russian Communist Party that it had as its leader the masterful Marxian theoretician, Lenin. Over many years Lenin was able to penetrate and fully expose the fallacies of liberalism, "economism", syndicalism, menshevism, populism, anarchism, Trotskyism, and many other dangerous anti-proletarian trends. And thus the Russian workers were able, under the most adverse circumstances, to develop a revolutionary political program and to build around it a solid revolutionary party. It is safe to say that without this tremendous preliminary theoretical work by Lenin the Russian revolution could not have succeeded.

But the American revolutionary movement had no Lenin. Nor was it, until the Russian Revolution, even aware of his writings. It had indeed very few real contacts with the Left-wing in other countries, and the opportunistic petty-bourgeois Socialist Party leaders,

who, of course, had every reason to prevent the development of a revolutionary political program, were careful to keep the Left-wing thus isolated. Although possessing the works of Marx and Engels as general guides, the American Left-wing proved theoretically incapable of the great task of analysis and organization confronting it, in the special problems of developing capitalism in the United States and thus it failed to build a real Bolshevik Party, however small it might have been. On the contrary, it floundered about theoretically for many years on the edge or in the midst of the syndicalist mire. And its best leaders, over a period of thirty years—De Leon, Debs, Haywood—could do not better than help it lose itself in the syndicalist swamp.*

The theoretical history of the Left-wing of the American revolutionary movement contains many syndicalist and semi-syndicalist illusions piled upon each other. Space limitations forbid a detailed recital of all these errors. Suffice it to briefly indicate here three of major character, all operating simultaneously, each one of which opened up a broad avenue to syndicalism.

1. *Underestimation of the role of the Party.* Instead of realizing that the Workers' Party was the main fighting leading organ of the proletariat, there was a persistent tendency to minimize its role, an error that led straight to syndicalism. The "Left" sectarian Socialist, De Leon, was a big sinner in this respect. By abandoning all immediate political demands and by considering the labor unions as the principal fighting organization of the working class, he reduced the Party to the weak status of a mere propaganda organ and practically an auxiliary of the labor unions. This opened the door wide theoretically for the syndicalist deviation. Debs was much affected by De Leon's semi-syndicalistic minimizing of the role of the Party and exaggerating that of the unions. As for Haywood, he liquidated the role of the Party altogether, and further degraded De Leon's feeble parliamentarism into a virulent anti-parliamentarism and put all his trust in the unions as the leading revolutionary organs of the working class. And the masses of the Left-wing in the S.L.P., S.P., and I.W.W., pressed as they were by so many objective factors hostile to working class political action, naturally enough followed these syndicalistic vagaries of the outstanding leaders.

2. *Dual unionism.* The Left-wing in the S.L.P., S.P. and I.W.W. never understood the role of the conservative trade unions. It could not perceive their working class character beneath their veneer of bourgeois ideology and reactionary leadership, and the necessity for rebels to penetrate and revolutionize them. On the contrary, De Leon, Debs and Haywood, who so well expressed the

* I need hardly again say that I, myself, to the extent that I had any influence, also helped to create the syndicalist confusion.

thought of the American revolutionary movement, vied with one another in finding phrases sharp enough in condemnation of the reformist unions as capitalist organizations and in setting up rival revolutionary unions against them. This policy of dual unionism, followed with the greatest intensity for twenty-five years by the Left-wing, was a fruitful source of syndicalism. It detached the Left-wing from the organized masses and reduced its movement to a sectarian basis. It thus facilitated the development of the great overestimation of the importance of the industrial form of labor union, the ascribing to this structure an almost magic strength, and the giving leash to that remarkable "one big union", wheel-of-fortune union-diagram and chart-making utopianism which was such a characteristic feature of American syndicalism.

3. *Misconception of the role of the state.* The capitalist state is the strong right arm of the capitalist class, its principal means for violently subjecting and exploiting the working class; and the capitalist class can never be expropriated until the workers and their class allies, by force of arms, smash that state. These are elementary truths, fundamental for the workers' struggle, and they were many years ago established by Karl Marx. But our Left wing long failed to grasp their significance, for it was infected throughout its history with many semi or syndicalistic theories of defeating the capitalist state and overthrowing the capitalist system merely by economic strikes: that is, by "locking out the bosses", or by the workers en masse simply folding their arms and refusing to work. De Leon contributed much to such theories, which reached their full logical development in the I.W.W. and its supporters in the Left wing of the S.P., and which were fatal to the development of revolutionary political struggle and the Party.

The Left wing also long had a totally wrong conception of the future proletarian state, of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of transition to Socialism after capitalism should be overthrown. This was shown by its syndicalist conceptions (prevalent for many years in the S.L.P., S.P. and I.W.W.) of the future society being operated in all its phases by the system of industrial unions.

The syndicalist errors in the prevalent Left-wing conceptions of these three major questions of the Party, the unions, and the State, are evident at a glance. They were of sufficient importance to put a syndicalist or semi-syndicalist stamp on the whole Left-wing movement and to undermine its political work. And a whole series of other syndicalist conceptions, which were also present, might be added to the foregoing. The extent to which such syndicalist conceptions prevailed in the S.P., S.L.P. and I.W.W. over so many years was the measure of theoretical failure of our revolutionary leaders to break through all the objective obstacles I have pointed out

earlier, and to develop a revolutionary political program and organization, even though it were but a small Party.

IV. THE DECAY OF SYNDICALISM

Although the syndicalist tendency persisted so long and vigorously in the American revolutionary movement, it has finally shrunk to a very minor factor. Its decline dates from the Russian revolution and was chiefly caused by that great event. This is because, in the fire of the practical experience of this first great Socialist revolution, these fundamental lessons of revolutionary working class program, organization and strategy, were made to stand forth so clearly that many previous false notions on these vital questions were exposed as manifestly fallacious and harmful. The Left wing in this country was able to learn the major political lessons thus so dramatically taught, and in consequence its syndicalism began to vanish.

The experience of the Russian revolution (combined with the after-War struggles generally in Europe) thoroughly exposed the bankruptcy of syndicalism (as well as of revisionist socialism and of anarchism). In blazing letters of fire it pointed out the only way to proletarian revolution. Among other great revolutionary truths, it made as clear as day the role of the workers' party (which must be the Communist Party) as the militant leader of the revolution and the supreme thinking, fighting organ of the working class before, during, and after the revolution. It showed inevitably that without such a party there could be no proletarian revolution. It exposed the folly and disaster of the syndicalist plan of attempting to substitute the mass trade unions for the Party of trained revolutionaries, and of the plan to depend upon spontaneity for united action. It demonstrated in practice the role of the trade unions in the pre-revolutionary period, in the revolution itself, and during the era of socialist construction, and it fatally showed up the incorrectness of the syndicalist position on all these points. It exploded the syndicalist nonsense of overthrowing the capitalist state by a "folded arms" general strike, and proved by practice as well as by theory that not by a narrow economic trade union strike, but only by a broad armed uprising of the working class and its farmer allies can the toilers abolish the capitalist system. And, finally, it gave a practical demonstration of the structure and operation of the revolutionary workers' state—the dictatorship of the proletariat, and showed the futility of the syndicalist notions of the mass trade unions operating the industries and generally conducting socialist society.

For workers with eyes to see and ears to hear, the meaning of all these great lessons spread to the toilers of the world through the writings of Lenin, is plain—the syndicalist path is not the way of revolution but a surrender to the bourgeoisie. And the American

revolutionary movement mostly had such receptive eyes and ears, and it did learn.

Under the influence of the Russian revolution and the great lessons it taught, the Left wing of the Socialist Party, headed by C. E. Ruthenberg, and already long in revolt against the reactionary Right-wing Socialist Party leaders, began to shed its traditional syndicalist illusions and to adopt a truly revolutionary political policy, a Communist program. That is why when the S.P. split took place in 1919, the Left wing did not liquidate itself into the syndicalist swamp as it had done several times before in struggles against the Right-wing leaders.

The organization of the Communist Party was a death blow to American syndicalism. The Communist Party's policy of Leninism was a magnet that soon attracted the best revolutionary elements of all labor organizations. The Left wing of the I.W.W., led by Haywood, affiliated itself to the Communist Party and the I.W.W. soon shrivelled into a small, reactionary sect. The best elements of the S.L.P. also joined the Communist Party. The members of the Syndicalist League also joined the Communist Party, as did the Fox proletarian group of anarchists. Weakened in all these Left strongholds of the S.P., I.W.W., S.L.P., and S.L. of N.A., etc., syndicalism passed swiftly into decay.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that, although American syndicalism was dealt such a fatal blow by the Russian revolution, it was liquidated immediately offhand. On the contrary, syndicalist remnants of anti-parliamentarism and dual unionism lingered in the Communist Party, and there are traces of them there yet. These syndicalist vestiges have caused much ideological and organizational weakness in the Party (their prevalence had considerably to do with the severe factional fight from 1923-29), and the Party, under the guidance of the Communist International, has labored sedulously to eliminate them.

Besides this liquidation of the subjective syndicalist factor by the Russian revolution, the traditional American objective factors that made difficult organized political action by the workers and that created the fertile soil for syndicalism have also been greatly modified in recent years, especially since the onset of the present great world economic crisis. Thus (to mention these factors in the order I have presented them above), (1) the workers have now become strongly conscious of a whole set of major political demands during the present crisis (unemployment insurance, 30-hour week, government work, national minimum wages, against fascism and war, etc., etc.), which provide a solid political basis, the first time in American history, for a mass labor party; (2) the Federal government has become vastly more centralized, especially in the past three years;

(3) the effects of the former free land have, of course, by now practically disappeared; (4) the traditionally higher American wage and living standards have gone to smash in the crisis, and the masses are full of discontent; (5) unemployment, wage cuts, mechanization of industry have greatly undermined the privileged position of the labor aristocracy and weakened its reactionary influence among the toiling masses; (6) the old-time and dangerous bourgeois prosperity illusions are fast going also in the crisis, and masses of workers, however waveringly, but with the Soviet Union in their minds, are beginning to think in terms of revolution; (7, 8, 9) the working class is rapidly being made more homogeneous by mass unemployment, weakening of the labor aristocracy, stoppage of immigration and maturing of the immigrants' children, etc.; (10) the revolutionary workers now have a fighting Communist Party of their own that is fast gaining a mass following and whose struggles for the united front are increasingly gaining the support of the Socialist Party membership and the trade unionists. This favorable shift in both the subjective and objective factors that once made for syndicalism greatly favors the development of revolutionary political organization and struggle by the workers. It should be no surprise, therefore, that the rising wave of proletarian struggle in the United States takes on increasingly a political character. Syndicalism, although traces of it still linger, as a living mass tendency among American workers, is dead.

The Communist International and Red International of Labor Unions have conferred many benefits upon the American revolutionary movement, but none greater than the elimination of the erroneous syndicalistic theories that had so long crippled it. By linking up the American Communist Party with the great Russian Party and with the fighting Communist Parties and labor unions of Germany, China, etc., and by greatly raising our Party's theoretical level, by giving our Party generally the benefit of the experience of the world revolutionary movement, the Comintern and Red International of Labor Unions have helped our Party to mature, that is, to accomplish the theoretical tasks it could not do alone, to develop a revolutionary American political program and Party, to set its feet firmly on the Marxian-Leninist path, and to lay the foundation for a revolutionary struggle that is now gradually mobilizing the starving, toiling masses and that will one day put "finish" to bankrupt American capitalism and establish a Soviet America.

Thesis on the International and the War

By OTTO BAUER, THEODORE DAN, JEAN
ZYROMSKI and AMEDEO DUNOIS

[*We are publishing for purposes of information the thesis on the war danger submitted to the Labor and Socialist International by four of its outstanding leaders.—Ed.*]

FOREWORD BY FRIEDRICH ADLER
(*International Secretary of the Labor and Socialist International*)

“WHEN war flares up—then it will be too late!” In this precise form the former German Chancellor, Herman Mueller, expressed himself in a private conversation with reference to problems which I attempted to raise for discussion in a pamphlet about the position of the International in the event of war (1929). With this he openly expressed views which—more or less consciously—determine the position of broad circles of the Labor and Socialist International. Everything must be done to prevent war; but if the calamity does burst upon us, then in the mass grave of all civilization will be buried the international policy of the proletariat—just as it happened in 1914. The desire to prevent the war danger, which is common to the entire Socialist International, is associated by many with absolute hopelessness as to the future; it may even be said—with fatalism in regard to war, if and when it should break out. Such hopelessness is in great measure a reflection of the past; it flows from the subconscious desire to defend the policy of 1914, and, with some, it may be even the unspoken desire to preserve freedom of action for the future, so that in case of war they may again have the right to carry out an autonomous national policy rather than submit to the general interests of the international working class, which coincide with the basic interests of the entire mankind.

These fatalistic views are in fundamental contradiction to the principle on the basis of which the Labor and Socialist International was united at the Hamburg Congress in 1923. Its constitution states:

“The Labor and Socialist International is not only a weapon of the working class for the solution of problems in peaceful times but an indispensable weapon in time of war.”

The formulation does not give any detailed directives but it does contain one thing: a definite recognition of the necessity of an international Socialist policy in case of war.

The principle is recognized, but the L.S.I. has not taken a single step toward the practical solution of the problem. There are many explanations. In the first decade after the World War its terrible experiences were so fresh that for the broad masses the slogan, "No war under any circumstances!" meant not so much a real political demand for the future, as the definite condemnation of the past. Millions of people refused to admit even the thought of the possibility of the repetition of the agonies they had lived through. Even those who saw the new dangers in the future, but were full of optimistic belief in the possibility of preventing them through a system of collective safety, the first step of which must be the League of Nations—even they thought that all efforts must be concentrated on the prevention of war through the development of the Geneva institutions and that any discussion of the position of the L.S.I. on the possibility of a new war would only undermine faith in the possibility of a new war through collective agreements. The impotence of the League of Nations in regard to the Japanese war makers, and the paralysis of the conference for disarmament, were danger signals which indicated that, in the end, such an ostrich policy would leave the working class in case of a new war just as unprepared as in 1914. Surely it is important to utilize with increasing energy all possibilities of the Geneva institutions, and it is important to work tirelessly over the creation of collective guarantees of peace. While this is done, in order to preserve peace, it is most important seriously to reconsider the question, "What shall be done when war flares up?" Work on these problems cannot be postponed until that moment when war becomes a reality because then it will be too late.

Following the developments of this spring, one is tempted to ask, with increasing concern: "Isn't it already too late?" Therefore, we must heartily congratulate the attempt of a number of comrades, well known to the International, to prepare a draft of the International policy of the working class in case of war. I had no opportunity to participate in the drafting of this document and I haven't signed it at its present stage in order not to give cause for misunderstanding, which would come up because of my functions as secretary of the International. But my personal attitude to this document is already clear from the above. The authors of this document deserve a great deal of credit for their first attempt realistically to approach this problem. Basically I agree with the general line of the thesis, but it is clear that this draft is first of all meant to be a basis for a discussion, and that everyone must have an opportunity to present amendments in one or another direction. But leaving these secondary matters aside, it must be said that this thesis for the first time poses the question to be solved in the proper perspective.

In the archives of the general staffs of all militaristic countries

are to be found detailed strategic plans dealing with all possibilities of war, however unrealistic they may sound. The proposed thesis for discussion has in mind only one possibility. The authors approach it with a view to the conditions which the world situation creates at the present moment. But we know how rapidly the world situation changes in our fast moving times. We must be armed for the possibility of a situation developing differently. In our study we must approach the various conditions just as the general staffs do, for in the moment of need no satisfactory explanation will be available. Then it will be too late. The proposed document also emphasizes the fact that the placing on the order of the day of the problem of the international policy in case of war is not only a problem of intellectual content and historic inquisitiveness, but may be first of all—a question of moral strength. The nationalistic forces of all countries burn with hatred at every open assertion of an internationalist position. They will attempt to brand the proposed document as a “betrayal”. We will not be frightened by that. With the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia the foundation of a world catastrophe was laid. And now, as then, we are convinced that for the working class there is only one possible position in regard to war and to all of the agonies it produces—a position of unequivocal and bold internationalism.

THE THESIS

FOR three reasons the International and the affiliated Parties should lose no time in considering the attitude to be taken in case of war:

1. The Socialist Parties must not, as in 1914, once more be taken by surprise and thus driven into a hasty, ill-considered attitude. They must carefully consider and prepare their action.

2. The victory of National-Fascism in Germany, the elevation of the Soviet Union and the agreement concluded between her and certain countries have completely modified the situation. The International must, in time, free itself from traditional opinions which are no longer in accordance with the actual situation.

3. The present attitude of the International with regard to the most important problems of International policies must already be determined by a clear vision of the tasks which the International will have to fulfill in the event of war.

For these reasons the undersigned present the following statement of policy as a basis for discussion.

They propose the rules contained in this statement in their own name, not in the name of their respective Parties which are not responsible for these suggestions. The undersigned do not agree among themselves on every single question treated in the memo-

randum. But they are unanimous as to the general tendencies expressed in the memorandum and the policy recommended.

I.

1. Germany, under Hitler's rule, is the strongest bulwark of fascism. In case of war, a victory of Hitler Germany would bring the whole of Europe under the heels of the most brutal form of fascism. On the other hand, Germany's defeat in a war would bring about the revolution of the working classes in the biggest, most industrialized Continental country and thus make possible the victory of socialism in Europe. Therefore, if war should break out, it is strongly to the interest of international socialism that German fascism should be defeated and the working class revolution in Germany brought about.

2. The Soviet Union has expropriated the big landlords and the capitalists. It has built up a great nationalized industry, made agriculture a collective service and greatly raised the educational standard of the nation. These revolutionary changes have been effected under a terrorist dictatorship; but when the Socialist proletariat of the world will be able to conquer the fascist tendencies of the general international evolution, and as soon as the rapid development of the productive forces of the Soviet Union enables it to overcome economic misery, to end the bitter struggle between town and country over still insufficient harvests, to raise the standard of living and the educational standard of the masses and, consequently, to strengthen their self-respect and their will to self-determination—then the dictatorship, gradually reducing itself, will and must develop into a Socialist democracy. This evolution of the Soviet Union would create the model of a Socialist society and thus greatly enhance the propagandist force of Socialist ideas all over the world.

A defeat of the Soviet Union in the event of war would wipe out all that evolution, bring about the downfall of the Soviet government and let its vast territory fall a prey to blood-thirsty counter-revolution. On the other hand, a victory of the Soviet Union would greatly add to its reputation in Europe and Asia, severely shake the power of international capitalism and thus greatly facilitate the world-wide victory of Socialism. Therefore, if there should be a war, the interests of international Socialism demand that the Soviet Union should be victorious.

3. The victory of the democratic countries—Great Britain, France, U.S.A.—in the World War destroyed the autocratic powers in Germany and Austro-Hungary. It brought about the rule of democracy in Central Europe. But the power of the capitalist classes ruling in the three victorious countries has prevented the Central European Revolution of 1918 from going beyond the limits

of capitalist democracy. If the World War was a victory for democracy, it was a capitalist, bourgeois democracy that won it.

In the course of a few years, the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe were destroyed by the antagonism of the classes and fell a victim to fascism or military dictatorship. With the exception of Czechoslovakia, all democratic powers founded in 1918 have been overthrown by the forces of counter-revolution. Fifteen years after its great victory, democracy has lost again the whole ground conquered in 1918. And as fascism overpowers democracy, the danger of war is again raising its head.

The nations of Central and Eastern Europe have learned that democracy is not safe as long as it is based on capitalist foundations. They have learned that capitalist democracy could not assure peace and liberty for more than a few years. The working class of the world was not able to overthrow capitalism when it was weakened by the World War; it is now threatened by the danger of having to go through the hell of a second World War. These experiences must inspire the working class of the world with the determined will to use a new war in order to win power for the workers and, thereby, to overthrow the capitalist system.

There are, thus, three points of view which must determine the policy of international Socialism in the event of war. The interests of international Socialism demand that German fascism shall be defeated. The interests of international Socialism demand that the Soviet Union shall be victorious. The interests of international Socialism demand that in all capitalist countries the war shall be used to win power for the working class and to abolish the capitalist system.

II.

These points of view must, even now, determine the international policy of the working class.

1. International Socialism must, of course, continue to make every effort to prevent war. War is the most terrible of all crimes against humanity. Only if the masses will realize that capitalism and fascism alone are responsible for the disaster of war; only if the masses will know that international Socialism has done everything in its power to prevent the outbreak of war—then only will international Socialism be able to use the war in order to win power and to overthrow capitalism.

German national fascism probably wants to postpone the war merely in order to complete its armaments, to win allies so as to be able to attack with greater strength. However, even this probability must not induce international Socialism to accept the idea of a preventative war against Hitler Germany. It is likely that in

the course of time fascist Germany will gather strength against democratic France; it is certain that during the same time the Soviet Union gathers strength against fascist Germany. It is equally certain that, as time passes, the fascist dictatorship in Germany will be wearing out and losing its prestige in the eyes of the German nation, and the revolutionary forces in the German working class will increase. Thus, if in the passage of time, German fascism may become stronger against capitalist democracy, it will yet lose strength against working class revolution. We are under no illusions; there is no eternal peace within the capitalist system. But we have the strongest possible interest to prevent, by our fight against war, its outbreak as long as possible.

2. In fighting against war, international Socialism must support the governments of those countries which, saturated by the results of the last war, want to preserve peace. But if international Socialism supports the efforts of capitalist governments to preserve peace it must do so without any illusions and must try to destroy the illusions of the masses as to the aims which these governments are pursuing.

The governments which, today, try to safeguard the peace of Europe are conservative governments which want to preserve the balance of power brought about by the World War and to maintain the capitalist system; ours is the opposite aim. They are imperialist governments defending their own domination over the working class at home and over subject races in colonies as well as their position in the world; we are against all imperialism. We may be forced today, in the interest of peace, to support the policy of these governments; but their policy is not our policy. In the course of events we may and, indeed, we will be forced to turn also against these governments and to mobilize the masses against them.

3. The conservative capitalist governments have no other means of maintaining peace than the formation of an overwhelming coalition against every aggressor, a coalition strong enough to make every aggression ineffective. The fear of such a coalition may make Germany abstain from aggression. As long as working class Socialism has not yet won power in the most important countries, Socialism must support the policy of capitalist governments in order to save peace.

For that reason, international Socialism must support the institution of the League of Nations and demand that all governments should strictly observe their obligations under the covenant. It must oppose every government which violates these obligations as well as those governments which, in the interest of imperialism and alliances, weakly condone these violations which prejudice and disgrace the League of Nations.

But if international Socialism must support the League of Nations, it must beware of dangerous illusions as to what the League of Nations will be able to do to prevent war. Controlled by the great powers, the League of Nations merely is what those powers make it. If the great powers are agreed not to tolerate any aggression nobody will dare to attack. If the great powers are not agreed among themselves the League of Nations, in the moment of danger, will not be able to decide nor to act. Therefore, every policy which tends to make the action of international Socialism in the event of war dependent upon the decisions of the League of Nations (to determine the aggression and to take collective action against it) is utopian. International Socialism in the case of war cannot depend for its action upon the decision of the League of Nations; it will have to act for itself.

4. In fighting against war, international Socialism must assist the efforts to enlarge and support the covenant by pacts designed to create a system of collective security. But it must not deceive itself as to the character and efficiency of such pacts.

Europe is already divided into two hostile camps. Whether in case of a conflict between the two camps a system of collective security will operate against the aggressor will depend upon the decision of Great Britain. Moreover, as long as Great Britain is governed by capitalist and imperialist governments, that decision will be determined by imperialist interests. If, for instance, Japanese imperialism should attack the Soviet Union and if, subsequently, Hitler Germany and Poland should seize the opportunity to attack the Soviet Union in their turn, it will depend on Great Britain's decision (according to the Locarno treaty) whether France and Czechoslovakia may come to the rescue of the Soviet Union without risking a conflict with Great Britain. Great Britain's decision, however, will be determined by its imperialist interests in the Far East. Thus the collective security system puts British imperialism in the place of an arbitrator over Europe. The decisive role which Great Britain has secured for itself for many centuries, by means of the European "balance of power", she is now again assuming by means of the "system of collective security".

A new world war would threaten the loose structure of the British Empire. For that reason, British imperialism has an interest in preserving peace. Therefore, international Socialism may support the efforts for the institution of a system of collective security, although this system obviously favors the interests of power of British imperialism. But if we do so actually for the sake of peace, we must not have any illusions nor let illusions be created among the masses as to the fact that as long as Great Britain will be governed by capitalist governments, the system of collective security, too,

is an instrument of imperialism. And we may be forced in the further course of events to oppose it because of its imperialist character and because it may be used for imperialist purposes.

5. In fighting against war, international Socialism must also support regional pacts designed to oppose a strong coalition of forces to any possible aggressor and thus deter Hitler Germany from going to war.

But international Socialism must not deceive itself and must not let the masses be deceived as to the fact that these regional pacts are nothing but the modern form of military alliances and that they, too, are being made to serve imperialist purposes.

In this way, France in order to win Italian fascism as an ally against German fascism has given the former a free hand in Austria and has thus been partly responsible for the brutal suppression of Austrian labor. In this way France, for the same reason, has offered but extremely weak resistance to the aggressive plans of Italian imperialism in Abyssinia.

Therefore, if international Socialism in the interests of peace supports regional pacts, it cannot and must not refrain from making the masses understand that in the hands of capitalist governments all these pacts are instruments of imperialist aggression and oppression.

6. Ever since the end of the World War, international Socialism has urged international disarmament. Had it been strong enough to secure the carrying out of this demand, the restoration of equality of the defeated nations would have been effected—not by their rearmament but by the disarmament of the victors. This was prevented by the resistance of the capitalist classes and the governments of the victorious nations. The equality of the defeated nations has been restored by their rearmament and by the unilateral denunciation of the peace treaty. This shifting of the balance of power between the nations of Europe, resulting from Germany's one-sided rearmament, directly creates the danger of war.

At the present time, after Germany's rearmament and in view of the attitude of Italy and Japan in all questions of armaments, the plea for international disarmament on a scale large enough to ban the danger of war has become utopian. International Socialism must nevertheless assist all efforts to arrive at a limitation of armaments by agreement. But it must not indulge in the illusion—nor make others cherish it—that a measure of international disarmament really sufficient to safeguard peace can still be attained.

International Socialism cannot ask for the unilateral disarmament of countries threatened by Hitler Germany's possible attack. Supporting, in the interests of peace, the efforts to constitute a collective force in order to check every possible aggressor, it cannot wish to

disarm that force. Desirous that Hitler Germany—if it went to war—should be defeated, it has no reason to desire that Germany's opponents should be lacking arms.

But international Socialism must not overlook the fact that, under capitalist governments, an army is not only an instrument for fighting a foreign aggressor but also for keeping down the working class at home. It must not close its eyes to the fact that in many countries the general staff and part of the officers are active supporters of reactionary and fascist tendencies. It must not overlook the fact that countries which today are opponents of Hitler Germany and allies of the Soviet Union may just as well use their arms tomorrow in a different situation: to fight the Soviet Union, to crushing working class revolutions or to serve imperialist plans of expansion and aggression.

Therefore, as long as power remains in the hands of the capitalist classes, international Socialism must leave to them the political responsibility for armaments. It must recognize the necessity for all the countries threatened by Hitler Germany to train their people in the use of arms and to supply them with the necessary means of defense; but it must oppose the militarist institutions which are apt to make the army an instrument of reaction. It must demand that the army be purged of all fascist and reactionary elements, that officers' privileges which are not necessary to the maintenance of military discipline should be abolished and that class privileges should play no part in the selection of officers. It must oppose the extension of military service beyond the time indispensable for instruction and for protecting the frontiers. It must above all strongly oppose the setting up of a large "skeleton army" of professional soldiers within the armies of general conscription since the "skeletons", set up under the pretext of technical necessities, are in fact nothing but strong armies of mercenaries used by capitalist governments to keep their own people in check. It must oppose all possibilities to make war an opportunity for capitalist extra profits and, therefore, demand the nationalization of the armaments industry and the total elimination of war profits by means of taxation.

III.

Every war is a crime against humanity. But not with regard to every war can the attitude of international Socialism be the same. Its attitude during the war must be dependent upon the effects which the possible results of the war may exercise upon the struggle for emancipation of the working class of the world. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the attitude of international Socialism in face of every conceivable war. Only its attitude with regard to a particular war between certain determined parties can be laid down in fixed rules. The following applies to a war between two coalitions

or groups of powers, one headed by Hitler Germany, the other including the Soviet Union. It is in view of this particular war that we want to determine the attitude of the working class of the world.

In 1914 two coalitions faced each other which were both composed of capitalist and imperialist powers. On the one side there was Russian tsarism, while on the other side stood Prussian militarism and Austria-Hungary, the jail-keeper of 14 nations. At that time, the International could not take sides with any of the two opposing coalitions. The situation in the war which now threatens humanity is different. If Hitler Germany and the Soviet Union face each other in a war, the International must take its stand against Hitler Germany and its allies; it must wish to see her defeated by the Soviet Union and its allies.

But if, in 1914, the International could not decide in favor of either of the two coalitions, the Socialist Parties accepted a policy of National Union with their respective governments and appealed to the working masses to defend their respective countries. By entering into a national union the Socialist Parties abstained from using the war for winning political power and for overthrowing the capitalist regime. But in every future war this will be precisely the most important and decisive task; to make use of the opportunity which the weakening of capitalism by the war is offering in order to win political power for the working class.

These considerations lead to the following rules applying to the case of war which we have in mind:

1. In the Soviet Union, naturally, the working class must defend the existence of the revolutionary State with all their force and all their enthusiasm against any attack. Even the Socialist Parties of the Soviet Union which are in opposition to the Bolshevik dictatorship must unconditionally and unreservedly rally to the revolutionary defense and, during the war, must subordinate their claims to the necessity of fighting for victory in the interest of the whole working class of the world. On the other hand, the Soviet government will strengthen the revolutionary defense as well as the enthusiasm of the workers of Western and Central Europe for defending the Soviet Union by granting an amnesty to all Socialists and Communists in opposition who have been imprisoned or exiled and by calling upon Socialist and Communist groups in opposition to take an active part in the organization of the revolutionary defense.

There are parties affiliated to the Labor and Socialist International which aim at the secession of their respective nations from the Soviet Union. We do not deny the right of self-determination to Ukrainians, Georgians and Armenians any more than to any other nation; but we ask the Socialist Parties of these nations, as we ask all other Socialist Parties, to subordinate their particular national

interests to the common interest of the working class of the world. Socialist Parties who, during the war, should organize or assist nationalist insurrections against the Soviet Union or, for nationalist reasons, undermine the defense of the Soviet Union, would by so doing act contrary to the vital interests of the working class of the world. They would play into the hands of Hitler Germany. They would take their stand on the other side of the barricade. It is therefore necessary to make it quite clear, in time, whether the Ukrainian, the Georgian and the Armenian Socialist Parties are prepared, in case of war, unconditionally and unreservedly to assist the defense of the Soviet Union and to subordinate their national claims to that defense. Only if they are prepared to act accordingly can there be room for these parties within the L.S.I.

The Soviet Union will be forced, in case of war, to ally herself with capitalist powers. If the Soviet government, even now, is forced to adapt its diplomatic methods to those of its capitalist allies; if the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, even now, disapproves of the Communist Parties of the countries allied to the Soviet Union in order to please these capitalist allies and asks them to submit to the demands of their capitalist war ministers—if this is happening now there will be certainly in the event of war, a still greater danger that the war policy of the Soviet Union may be influenced by the pressure of her capitalist allies and that, therefore, her revolutionary, working class character may be obscured or diluted. In view of this danger, international Socialism must insist that the Soviet government conduct the war as a revolutionary war, a war of propaganda with a view to bringing about the working class revolution in Germany and to facilitate in the other countries the use of the war for the overthrow of the capitalist regime.

Every revolutionary war is in danger of ending in Bonapartism. This danger is aggravated by the existing dictatorship of a small leading group within the ruling Party of the Soviet Union. Socialism must avert that danger by trying to bring into action—without interfering, however, with the strong, united disciplined way of conducting the war—the popular forces in the Soviet Union, thus meeting all menaces of Bonapartism by the self-consciousness of the masses of the people and their strong will to self-determination.

2. In the countries allied with the Soviet Union, Socialists cannot and must not hinder the conduct of war: all sabotage would be a help for Hitler Germany and a blow to the Soviet Union. Socialists must appeal to the workers to do their duty as soldiers as well as workers in the war industries.

But Socialism must not forget that the aims of the capitalist governments fighting on the side of the Soviet Union are entirely different from its own. It must therefore maintain, with regard to these

governments, its complete independence. It must not accept political responsibility for their conduct of the war. It must not enter into a "civil peace" with them.

The capitalist governments will go to war with the intention of destroying Germany's power forever. They will want to dismember Germany, to deprive the German people of its national unity and liberty, to make it an enslaved tributary nation. We, on the other hand, will not go to war—if war there should be—to fight the German people but to fight German fascism. Our aim can never be to dismember Germany or to enslave and plunder the German nation. Our aim can only be to bring about the working class revolution in Germany and as soon as the revolution is victorious, immediately to make peace with the new working class Germany on the basis of complete equality, without open or veiled annexations or contributions, and to combine with her in trying to bring about the union of all European nations in a Federation of Socialist Workers' and Peasants' States.

At the end of the World War, the capitalist governments of the victorious countries brought under heel the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs but they prevented the revolutions in Central Europe from going beyond the limits of capitalism. They crushed the Hungarian revolution by armed force, favored counter-revolution in Soviet Russia. When another war leads to working class revolution in Germany, the capitalist governments of the Western Powers will, all the more, try to save the capitalist system in Europe, which the German revolution would threaten, by counter-revolutionary intervention. Against this, our aim must be to help the victory of working class revolution in Germany and to make its victory the starting point for transforming the whole social system all over Europe.

The capitalist governments will at first try to defeat Germany, in alliance with the Soviet Union. But every victory of the Soviet Union will add to her reputation in Europe and Asia and thereby endanger the capitalist system. Soon, the capitalists of the countries allied to the Soviet Union will be more afraid of the victories of their ally than of the victories of the common enemy. Having first tried to defeat Germany by shedding the blood of the Russian workers and peasants, they will on the very day after the common victory turn on the Soviet Union in order to save the capitalist system. Against this, our aim must be first to defeat fascism by a common effort and then to organize in common with the Soviet Union and the victorious German revolution, the Socialist economy of Europe.

Therefore, the Socialist Parties of the democratic countries allied to the Soviet Union, from the first day of war, must make the masses understand the difference between their own aims and those of the

capitalist classes. These Parties must make it clear that the capitalist classes, by imposing unbearable burdens on Germany after the last war, by refusing to restore Germany's equality by way of disarmament, by humiliating and ill-treating the new-born German democracy, have themselves worked for the victory of German national fascism and, by so doing, have been responsible for the return of war. They must make it clear that an imperialist war against the German nation carried on by fascist governments would rally the German people behind the fascist dictatorship; only if the working classes in the countries fighting against Germany take the power into their own hands will the German nation be sure that Germany's enemies do not aim at conquering, dismembering or outlawing it; and only in this case will the working class revolution in Germany be promoted and war quickly brought to an end. They must make it clear that only if the working classes in the countries fighting against Germany take over the power, will it be possible to conduct the war as a war of revolutionary liberation, to maintain solidarity with the Soviet Union, to hasten the German revolution and thus to bring about, as a result of the war, a social system in the whole of Europe in which there will be no more war.

By making the masses understand these issues, the Socialist Parties in the countries fighting against Germany will prepare themselves, in the course of the war, to make use of it in order to seize power, to turn the war against Germany into a war against fascism and capitalism, to bring about the German revolution, and, as soon as it has been successful, to bring war to an end.

In the democratic countries fighting on the side of the Soviet Union against Hitler Germany, Socialism cannot refuse nor undermine national defense. But it must try to make use of the war in order to transform it into a Jacobin revolutionary defense of a working class and Socialist country.

3. In fascist and semi-fascist countries which may belong to the coalition allied with the Soviet Union, Socialism can only call upon the workers to use the arms which fascism gives into their hands to fight their fascist rulers, to first overthrow them and then only to turn against Germany. An anti-fascist revolution of the working class in the countries fighting against Germany should set the German workers an inspiring example how to overthrow their own fascism and, thereby, to end the war.

4. In Germany and in the countries allied with Germany, Socialism must oppose war and rouse the laboring masses to revolution against war, against Nazi-fascism and against capitalism.

At the beginning of the war, the German workers, disorganized, intimidated and fettered, will not be capable of revolutionary opposition to war. An appeal of the International to prevent war by an

international general strike would find no way into Germany and would not meet there with any response. For that reason, no such appeal can be made; for since it could only be answered in the democratic countries opposed to Germany, it would mean a help to German fascism.

Even in the course of the war, the working class revolution in Germany will find a serious obstacle in its way; during the last war, the western countries declared over and over again that they were only fighting the German rulers, not the German nation; and yet they imposed on defeated Germany the injustices and the burden of Versailles. Having had this experience, the German people will be afraid that if a revolution during the war disorganized the defense and led to another defeat, they might suffer a still more disastrous fate than at Versailles. The German people will only rise against their oppressors if they have reason to hope that by overthrowing their tyrants, they will end the war and bring about a peace without injustice and plunder. Therefore, the sooner Socialism in the countries fighting against Germany seizes power and thereby cleanses the war of all imperialist purposes directed against the German people, the easier will it be to bring about working class revolution in Germany.

If, however, working class revolution in Germany should take place before the working class in the capitalist countries fighting against Germany has been able to win power, then the German revolution will have to organize the Jacobin revolutionary national defense against the imperialism of the capitalist classes in the enemy's countries which threatens the German people. In this case, the Soviet Union will have to part with her capitalist allies and immediately make a separate peace with revolutionary, working class Germany. In this case, Socialism in the capitalist countries fighting against Germany will have to oppose by all means any counter-revolutionary intervention in Germany, any intention to continue the war as well as any attempt to impose on Germany another imperialist peace which would maim or dismember her; and in opposing these intentions, by revolutionary means it will try to seize power.

5. In the neutral countries, Socialism must not demand their joining the coalition which fights against Hitler Germany; it must not demand their joining the war. If it did, it would accept responsibility for all the bloodshed and misery of the war and by isolating itself from the laboring masses of the people would make itself powerless. But Socialism must demand that the neutral countries apply against Hitler Germany all the sanctions which international law provides against the aggressor: that they do not support Hitler Germany by providing her with credits, arms, raw materials or foodstuffs.

Further, it will be the duty of the Socialist Parties in the neutral countries to maintain during the war the relations with the Socialist Parties of the countries engaged in war on both sides of the trenches and thus keep the International alive and functioning. This task will not be confined, however, to the parties affiliated to the L.S.I. The situation during the war will demand understanding and co-operation between Socialist and Communist Parties. The last war split the working class of the world. A new war, during which the workers of the world will defend the Soviet Union and try to win power in the capitalist countries, will and must reunite them.

A new world war will cause serious economic disturbances even in the neutral countries. The victory of working class revolution in Germany, the taking over of power by the working class in the countries fighting against Germany, the victorious defense of the Soviet Union will rouse the workers also in the neutral countries and make it possible for them to win power.

6. The International must lose no time in making the working masses of the world understand these rules of action in the event of war. Socialist Parties have nothing to win by hiding their intention before the eyes of the capitalist world. They should let it be known that everywhere—even in those countries where in time of peace they fight for the emancipation of labor exclusively by peaceful and democratic means—they will strive in case of war for the seizure of power by the working class, for the overthrow of the capitalist class rule and the abolition of the capitalist system as their immediate aims. To make it clear that war will be followed by revolution is the best means of deterring the ruling classes and their governments. Peace will be better assured by the fear of the capitalist classes than by all covenants and pacts. If the International asserts its will to use war for defeating capitalism, it is doing its best work for peace.

**STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC.
REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1933, OF THE COMMUNIST, published
monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1935.**

State of New York
County of New York (ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared W. E. Douglas, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of The Communist, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher, Communist Party of U. S. A., 50 East 13th Street, New York, N. Y.

Editor, Earl Browder, 50 East 13th Street, New York, N. Y.

Managing Editor, None.

Business Manager, W. E. Douglas, 50 East 13th Street, New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

Communist Party of U. S. A., 50 East 13th Street, New York, N. Y.

Earl Browder, General Secretary, 50 East 13th Street, New York, N. Y.

A non-profit organization—political.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.)

None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the.... months preceding the date shown above is (This information is required from daily publications only.)

W. E. DOUGLAS, Business Manager.

(Seal)

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 21st day of October, 1935.

MAX KITZES, Notary Public.
(My Commission expires March 30, 1936.)

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