

Unity for Peace

WITH the world balanced on the precipice of war, the people of the United States and those of all American countries are finally crystallizing their position against the fascist war-making powers. All subterfuges to evade the issue have been smashed by Hitler's violent demand for the unconditional surrender of Czechoslovakia and thereby of world democracy, backed up by the greatest mobilization ever witnessed in what is still technically "peace-time." World democracy is choosing between the alternatives: "Unite or surrender."

The carefully guarded but nonetheless clear calls of President Roosevelt for world unity of the democratic forces, have encouraged and strengthened the forces of peace everywhere. Together with the unequivocal and positive peace policy of the Soviet Union, implemented from day to day by Maxim Litvinov and backed by the will of 180 million strong, united Soviet people, led by Joseph Stalin, this presents the hope for world peace around which are rallying all the peace forces of the world.

It is on this background that we must evaluate the speech of John L. Lewis on September 11, at the International Congress Against War and Fascism meeting in Mexico City. With this background the speech emerges as one of the great, really historic utterances in the present tragic moment of world history.

"We meet here," declared Lewis, "to give common expression to our purpose of preservation of democratic institutions against the menace of interests who want to destroy them. Democracy has always had its enemies. Now they have organized themselves under the black flag of fascism.... Between

us and fascism there can be no peace. We join hands with all other workers in this hemisphere and the whole world to fight against our common enemy."

In these words spoke the conscience and will of American labor. Lewis emerged, with this speech, not merely as the greatest American trade-union leader, not only as one of the most potent representatives of American democracy, but as a leader of world democracy. American labor takes its rightful position in the vanguard of the world struggle against fascism and war.

Leon Jouhaux, head of the Confederation of Labor of France, spoke from the same platform with Lewis and in the same terms, on behalf of the great united labor movement of his land—the backbone and sinews of the *Front Populaire* which snatched France from the jaws of fascism by uniting Radicals, Socialists and Communists into a bloc of the majority of the people.

Ramon Gonzales Pena, of the United Labor Federation of Spain, and Minister of Justice in the Spanish republic, stood side by side with Lewis, representing a people which has been pouring out its blood in torrents for the same cause.

From almost all Latin American countries, the outstanding leaders of labor, the most able and trusted, were there to utter the same sentiments, to express the same determination, to make the same pledge.

Vicente Lombardo Toledano, head of the Mexican Confederation of Labor (CTM) and leader of the Mexican people, was the chief organizer of this historic gathering.

President Lázaro Cárdenas of Mexico welcomed the congress, and branded the fascist war-makers as the "avowed enemies of civilization." Ramon Gonzales Pena hailed Cárdenas as "the first President who declared before his Parliament that it is a legitimate undertaking to sell arms to the Spanish republic."

And fifty thousand Mexicans joined with the delegates, in

the Stadium of Mexico City, to cheer this alliance of the American peoples for peace and democracy. Fifty million workers of the Americas will join with the same enthusiasm when the call reaches them sharply and clearly.

That is the task now, to carry the historic call of the International Congress and the historic words of John L. Lewis, to the broadest masses of the workers, farmers and all the common people.

How pitifully bankrupt, how shamefully treasonable, are revealed the hysterical denunciations of William Green, who jabbered slanders against the congress in Mexico City in the jargon of Mr. Dies and the rest of the fascist Red-baiters. At the moment when Hitler threatens the whole world with slaughter and destruction, they can find nothing better to do than echo the slogans of the "Anti-Communist Alliance" of Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado.

The peoples of America are uniting with world democracy to halt once and for all the advance of fascism, to preserve peace and democracy.

Now we must emphasize a hundredfold that high aspirations are not enough, splendid words must be followed by deeds. *Unity for action!*

Unity for action means, first of all, the lifting of the criminal blockade from republican Spain. But it means more than that. It means help, serious, practical help, to the Spanish people. And first of all, it means that the United States must come forward to help feed the heroic but starving Spanish people. Our country has such a surplus of foodstuffs that its disposal has become an embarrassing problem. Send our surplus food to Spain!

Unity for action means, to stop the shameful traffic with Japanese imperialism in its murder of the Chinese people. An embargo against Japan must be laid, to be lifted only when

the Japanese armies have retired from the Chinese republic!

Unity of the workers, unity of the peoples, unity of all the forces of democracy, within the United States and on an international scale—this is the slogan of the hour!

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