

# THE THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

(Concluding Remarks of Speech made by Comrade Harry Pollitt)

OUR Congress discussion and decisions are rendered doubly important because of the character of the report of the Credentials Committee. There has been a revolution in the composition of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and the overwhelming proportion of the delegates who are employed workers gives us the guarantee that these decisions of the Congress are going to be taken to the fundamental places, the factories, the mines, the mills, etc., and to millions of workers in this country.

We also are glad to note the large number of fraternal delegates who have been present, and express the hope that in listening to our discussions on the united front, we have convinced them also that there is need for every one of them to take into their organisations the message of our Congress, and by their personal work and example endeavour to give life and meaning to this part of our Congress discussion.

We are making a very big political extension of our tactics of the united front in this Congress, and the acceptance of the general line in the three resolutions which have been discussed is no mechanical acceptance. There has never been such deep discussion since the Party was formed. In the *Daily Worker* for over three months contributions have been regularly appearing from workers all over the country, and we only regret that our facilities did not enable us to print as many of these contributions as we would have liked. As a matter of fact, we still have some 50 or 60 that it has been impossible to publish.

Another healthy sign of the growth of the Party has been the big demand for the resolutions in all the units of the Party, so that adequate discussions could take place in the cells and locals. The splendid thing about the approach which the Congress has made is that we have corrected the bad beginning that was made, and for which we must accept the responsibility, of tending to look upon the united front only in terms of electoral tactics. The Congress discussion in the paper, and in the

Congress itself, has shown that the united front is our chief weapon and lever in every phase of the struggle, including the electoral field.

Now it has also been brought out very clearly that one of the most important ways of advancing the united front has been the action we can initiate on what are called the small issues. The comrades will remember in 1932 we adopted what was known as the January Resolution. For a long time we seemed to swing in a direction of looking upon small issues as the only things with which the Party concerned itself. Later there was a kind of revulsion against this, and the tendency was to drop the small issues. Experience proves that where the taking up of small questions is related to the work of the Party as a whole, these so-called small issues open up innumerable avenues and doors through which our Party can establish contact with many sections of the working-class movement.

## Success Through Continuous Activity.

A very important point was made in the discussion by Comrade Cornforth, who, in speaking of the experiences in Cambridge, said that "the successes of their united front in connection with the fight against war, were because the comrades in Cambridge had carried through continuous activity." This has the greatest possible meaning for our comrades at the Congress, because if we look back at the Charter campaign, on the Hunger March and National Congress, if we look back on some of the big strikes that we have been engaged in, it is always an outstanding and regrettable thing that during these big fights the Party has played a great rôle (we said, particularly in connection with the Hunger March and Congress, that we would never repeat the mistakes of the Charter campaign), the movement has been carried to a great height and left in a state of suspension. And the key to the avoidance of this mistake is undoubtedly the development of continuous activity, and using contacts we win in the big campaigns, not merely for these campaigns as things in themselves, but as contacts whom we can

interest in a hundred and one things in which they themselves are vitally concerned in the factory, the home, and the working-class locality.

Our Party must also learn to react much more quickly to the topical events that take place, many of which provide an avenue through which we can get in touch with the workers who are not yet ready to work with us on many of the bigger so-called political questions, and get activity going.

For example, who can doubt that in all the mush and slush that was turned out in connection with the Marina wedding, there was a widespread disgust through the working-class movement. We could have effectively used this; we could have been more energetic in pointing out the contrast between riches and poverty, and what could be done in the poverty-stricken mining villages with the money. And we may be sure that just as there was all this about Marina, it is going to be increased in the coming Jubilee celebrations. We must at once seize upon this topical event, not only pointing out the vast amount of money being spent. In some cases the factories in the potteries are already working overtime producing mugs with the photographs of the King and Queen, when there are hundreds of thousands of children who cannot get milk to drink, and this issue we can relate to the specific conditions in our own locality. And therefore we can even now popularise the demand: Not a penny for the celebrations —every penny for the children. And it can become a key with which we will be able to open many doors, and in the opening of these doors, they can be doors where the milk is.

#### Issues To Fight On.

Then there are such questions as the safety of roads. In London it is impossible to take up a newspaper but what we read about the horrible slaughter that goes on week by week and day by day. And in nearly every case the slaughter is not the slaughter of people who would never be missed; it is the slaughter of working women and working-class children in the main. And here again we can take up this issue in the most densely populated parts of London, and when we read of these terrible accidents—for example, the woman and two children who were out shopping. In a hurry to get the dinner they did not see a bus coming. The bus crashed into the woman and two children. The three were killed. It is not only the question of what were the feelings of the masses of the workers in the street. The women knew it might easily have been them, because it was a working-class mother, harassed by the shopping, the safety of the children, her domestic duties. And if we take up the demand for the road safety precautions, for the stopping of the

traffic in order that the women and children may get across the roads, every section of the population with any humanitarian feelings can be drawn into activity of this kind.

Similarly, experience has shown in the taking up of the issue of the rents and repairs to houses that they are all issues that can give us increased united front activity. Similarly with the question of boots and shoes for the children in the derelict areas. The other morning in Derbyshire I waited half an hour outside a school for a bus, and noticed 55 children that either had their little toes sticking out of the front of their shoes, or their heels out at the back. Similarly in regard to the question of the safety of public buildings. At that school in Liverpool, again it is our people who are killed and maimed as a result of the rotten flooring. We must insist on better safety facilities, linking up this fight with the fight for safety in mine, mill and factory.

Gresford is still in our memory, but what a condemnation of how little we have been able to do in regard to Gresford. After 264 miners were killed, a further 500 volunteered to go down again, not because they wanted to go down again, but because economic conditions forced them to put in an application. We must fight for safety conditions in the mines, and we must see to it that this fight for safety rings from one end of the country to the other, that no miner shall go down any mine unless it has been passed by a Workmen's Inspector, and not only should this apply to the mines but to all factories and mills.

On this and similar questions we have to draw in everyone. I have mentioned these factors because it is significant that special applause was given by this Congress to a student and a teacher delegate who took up such types of issues as we have mentioned.

We must win over the petty-bourgeoisie to the fight for the revolution. We can interest the teacher and student. No teacher wishes to teach children that are cold and hungry, nor does the student wish to draw some picture of a Venetian gondola when he could be designing and drawing new houses for the workers. We can interest the doctor who is treating patients on the panel, who is called upon to diagnose their complaints and is unable to do anything because he knows it is poverty and malnutrition that is the trouble.

It is, therefore, not only the question of the fight for the miner, railwayman, and engineer, we must also endeavour to recruit the doctor, teacher, student, architect, and thus we will grow stronger and stronger and build a strong united front.

We make a great mistake in only looking upon such issues as Part II. of the Unemployment Act, or the fight against Mosley, as the principal

avenues of building up the united front. The stronger we build the mass activity in the locality on the small day-to-day issues, the greater the support we will be able to organise on the bigger political questions.

#### **The Fight Against Part II.**

The reports in the press and the telegrams we have received show that the fight against Part II. has grown stronger in the last days.

We cannot leave the calling of strike action on February 25th (or mass demonstrations on February 24th) to the Cambrian Lodge in the Rhondda. We must not be satisfied with this, or with the calling of the London workers to demonstrate to Parliament. We have now to give a lead that is in accordance with the growing tempo of the situation, and our call therefore must be to take up this demand of the South Wales Miners for a one-day strike on February 25th all over this country as a first manifestation of our serious fighting against this measure of starvation. At the same time we have to see in every local council and in every county council where we have councillors that they must bring the same breath of working-class revolt into those councils as was felt in Westminster when the London workers went there to demonstrate. We must ensure that every Trade Union branch is now going to pass resolutions demanding that the General Council shall line itself up with South Wales and be responsible for the issuing of this national One-Day General Strike call on the 25th February. If we do not do this, then the reformists will make every effort to call it off in South Wales on the ground that that area is fighting alone. We want to learn from the practical experience in Cambridge that the success of the united front depends on continuous activity, and it must be continuous activity that now is initiated by the Party in every factory and every Trade Union branch in this country.

The situation in South Wales assumes tremendous political importance for the whole working-class movement in this country. There is no further need to make reference to the great strides the mass fight against Part II. has taken there. We must learn one or two lessons and point out one or two of the weaknesses in regard to the dangers that beset our comrades in this important political situation; a dangerous situation for the Party unless we can immediately see some of the mistakes we have made, correct them, and then avoid making them in the coming days. The first thing that is to be stressed is that the South Wales experience has revealed that where we have a foothold in the Miners' Lodge, where we have a foothold in the Trade Union Branch, in that place

we can use this as the lever for drawing in the Ward Committees, the Labour Party, the Trades Councils, the shopkeepers and the clergy into the common front. Can any one of us remember in our lifetime any issue that has ever come forward on which shopkeepers, school teachers or clergy have found it necessary to unite their protests together with the working class against the measure that threatens starvation to the workers? We cannot. Much of the success of this has been achieved because of this lever for the winning of the workers in the Lodge and thus being able to win workers for united front activity all over the country. Our experience has also shown in South Wales the necessity, even within the united front movement, of comradely criticism being made of measures of reactionaries that have for their objective the splitting of united action. In the Rhondda our comrades have had to make such criticisms, and because they were made in the correct manner they won not only Lodges, but Area No. 4 of the South Wales Miners' Federation, embracing twenty lodges, and as a result of winning these twenty lodges, the comrades were able to defeat a move made by the Labour Party leaders which could have led to a split in the building up of united front activities in the Rhondda.

At the same time it has to be objective criticism; it has to be constructive criticism, and criticism of such a character that we shall be able to convince every worker that such criticisms are made with the sincere motive of strengthening the working-class struggle.

#### **Tendencies To Guard Against.**

South Wales has also shown that there are two tendencies against which we have to guard. Firstly, the tendency to let everything go by the board in the interests of unity. Secondly, an extreme criticism and attacking of Labour Party leaders on the united front platform. When our Party makes a united front agreement with any working-class organisation in this country, the Party has the duty to see that it is carried out.

Some of our comrades in South Wales are making the mistake of telling the workers that these united front bodies are already Soviets. We should not introduce the question of Soviets in such a way. Immediately the Labour Party leadership, who are looking for a way out, seize upon this issue, and use it to try and show that the Communists are out for some other motive, and not the driving forward of the immediate fight. It is absolutely wrong to say that we are forming Soviets in South Wales. Let us keep to the name of Councils of Action and all that this name implies at the present stage of the struggle, and we shall not go far wrong.

The next mistake we have to avoid is the danger

of driving the Labour Party—and, comrades, we want to keep the Labour Party in the united front—away by endeavouring to overload the united front organisations with Communists.

Why do I lay such stress on this point, comrades? I do so because we are bold enough to believe that we can already see, as a result of what we have been able to set going in South Wales, the breaking through of the ban on united front activity placed by the leaders of the Labour Party. We are bold enough to understand that if we can achieve this, if we can make it stronger, if we can draw more and more in, then it is not a question of a transformation of the position of the united front in Britain, it is a change in the international united front; it is a change in the relation of class forces within the 2nd International; it opens up the perspective for the possibility of the establishment of a united front on an international basis; and it means, if it can be realised, an enormous weapon in the stemming of the capitalist attacks on the workers, and of the advance of fascism and war.

Therefore, a great responsibility rests upon our Party, because the reformists also look upon questions as we look on them, in this sense, that when they see a mass situation developing, they understand its class significance, and their move, unless we have such mass backing in the factory and union, is a move that is not calculated to strengthen it, but to try to canalise it into peaceful so-called Parliamentary channels.

In the *Daily Worker* this morning we had a report that yesterday in South Wales, Ernest Bevin, the leader of the T.U.C., the most powerful Trade Union leader in this country, and who has in his control the most powerful trade union in the country, is speaking on the same platform as our Comrade Lewis Jones. We are glad. But we also know that when the National Labour Party and Trade Union Congress leaders sent Bevin down into South Wales, it was not for the purpose of developing the mass movement that has developed in Merthyr to-day, or for the calling of a strike on February 25th, but to give the workers the perspective of some other peaceful-fighting-at-election-times method to abolish Part II. Our job is to give them a welcome, but a welcome that has behind it such a class note and demand that even those leaders dare not ignore the significance of the new mood of the revolting masses.

Our speeches on the united front platforms must be models of what speeches should be. Every speaker who goes to united front meetings has the duty of carefully preparing what he is going to say. The day has gone past when comrades who have made no preparation can get up and leave it to the spur of the moment. We are a serious

revolutionary political Party; when we speak it has to give the lead, and everyone of us, whether in Lodge or Free Trade Hall, or on the street corner, must speak with heavy responsibility, and more especially still in united front meetings. And when we speak in such a meeting, what should be our line? It should be to explain the situation as clearly and simply as we possibly can, to show what the demands are to meet the situation, and then to show what has to be done in order that these demands can be won. And if our speeches were modelled on these three points they would be concrete, popular and a lead for every worker in the audience, so that they would nudge each other and say, "that is right, that is what we want and what we are waiting for and want to get," so that when the meeting is over the workers will carry our words amongst their mates. It is a very good rule to remember, comrades, in united front activity. The formulation may be a little wrong, but I would rather that the comrades worked on this formulation. **THE MAIN ENEMY OF THE WORKING CLASS ALWAYS IS, HAS BEEN, AND WILL BE, THE CAPITALIST CLASS**, and the capitalist class at the moment is represented by the National Government, and our job is to harness the workers against this main enemy, and expose those inside the working-class movement who abet this enemy by their refusal of the united front.

Alongside this there is the indispensable need for independent Party activity. I know that the comrades in South Wales are doing gigantic work, but you must spare some of your forces for the holding in South Wales of Communist Party meetings, at which the Communist Party shall give the whole programme and policy for which this Party stands. Out of such an exposition we will recruit members to the Party now, not when the fight is finished, so that in South Wales out of the mass revolt thousands of new class-conscious workers shall stream into our Party and make it impossible for the reformists to behead the movement, as they did after Schiller and after the last annual conference of the S.W.M.F. The carrying out of these points is of importance not only for South Wales but for the whole of our Party, and this not only opens up the perspective for a general strike on the 25th of February, it also opens out the perspective for big changes in the whole of the political situation in this country.

#### **About the Discussion on Economic Struggles.**

Now some remarks on the discussion on economic struggles. That discussion together with the Credentials Committee report reveals big advances which our Party has made since the time of the 12th Congress, and it was of special importance to note how many comrades in the discussion

revealed the new opportunities they had for the development of the Party influence, as a result of their holding of Trade Union positions.

May we say in introducing this question that in local organisations, in district organisations of our Party, in the cells, D.P.C.s, L.P.C.s, any comrade who is prepared to report to the C.C. that they have in their cell, unit, or local, any members eligible for trade union membership, who are not in them, who refuse to join them—comrades, the time has come when, small as this Party is, it is better to be without such false revolutionaries.

Having said that, we must say this: where in any local there are comrades whose economic position is of such a character that it is impossible for them to pay trade union dues, we all have the responsibility of helping such comrades in such positions to be in the unions.

The fight for trade union positions must be a fight that is made on policy, and when our comrades are elected, the people in that branch must know what the policy is that our comrades have been advocating. One half of the trouble is this, that we take the positions many times, but no one in that branch has a clear idea of the policy which we have been advocating. In the new posts to which we are being elected, many district committee men in the A.E.U. and committee men in other unions, would be in a much stronger position if they could say that "When I was elected here I was elected because I said I would fight for this programme, and I am here to fight for that, but I want you to fight with me." In this way a new significance would be given to the comrades who are being elected in such positions.

There also arises from this the need, as Comrade Campbell explained, for the development in every industry of a concrete programme applicable in that industry, a popularisation of that programme now, in order that at the coming Trade Union Conferences of the Shop Assistants, N.U.D.A.W., Loco-men at Whitsun, Engineers in June, Railwaymen and Miners in July, already support for our policy and resolutions will have been won. This year sees the Biennial Conference of the Transport and General Workers' Union. Already we ought to be popularising a programme that can receive the support of every Transport and General Workers' Union Branch in this country.

I want to reinforce Comrade Campbell's plea for special attention to the problems of winning support of the lower trade union functionaries, and alongside this comes the burning need for an alternative programme to that of the T.U.C. programme, a programme upon which we can unite in common action and struggle Trade Unionists in every industry and in every factory all over the country. It may be that the best way would be

to consider the formulation of a series of national demands applicable to every trade union in the country. It may be that we could approach this through the Trades Councils, get the endorsement of a Trades Council and let the Trades Council become the initiator of the programme, and thus make an impression upon the T.U.C. agenda and upon the congress itself. We cannot wait until July or August until we commence to prepare for the agenda of the congress. We cannot wait until two or three weeks before the congress, we have to start now. We have to popularise what it is we want, because if we have mass support outside the congress then we can have a small fraction there with the knowledge that it has the backing of hundreds of trade union branches and that it is not speaking in the name of a tiny fraction of class-conscious trade unionists, but it is speaking for the workers as a whole. This is an urgent necessity for us to see.

#### **The Question of Trades Council Work.**

Bound up with this question is the Trades Council work. It is not an accident that the General Council first of all directs its efforts at the weeding out of the revolutionary workers in the Trades Councils. They do it because they understand in the present conditions, and with the perspectives we have, that the Trades Councils are going to be more and more unifying centres of the economic struggles of the working class and therefore they want to make these institutions safe for Mondism and not for class struggle.

In Manchester an improvement has been made in Trades Council work; in other parts of the country improvement has been made, and what can be done is being proved by good examples all over the country.

This is all to the good, this is what we want; but we are still losing opportunities of getting delegates on the Trades Councils. The more delegates we get the stronger we can make them and the more difficult it will be for the bureaucracy to get their line across. We must mention the fact that our trade unionist comrades very seldom get together in an important meeting to discuss what is to be the line, what are to be the arguments put up; seldom do we have a meeting of comrades, and seldom do we consider it necessary to have an exchange of opinion so that the fraction leader, when he speaks, speaks with the judgment of the comrades in that trade union. If we do this then we can put a clear line and the same line throughout the whole of the Trade Union movement. We must have well-organised functioning fractions. Only in this way can the Party really win the whole of the workers behind the policy of the Communist Party. We want to support the strong plea that

was made by Comrade Moffatt and Comrade Allan in connection with the campaign for trade union unity. Those of us who were among the old guard members mentioned in the Credentials Report have memories of the terrific propaganda carried on in this country for the amalgamation of the unions in the past, and the splendid work that was done, but we are not using these same propaganda methods for developing unity of unions and action to-day. It is necessary that the Communist Party of Great Britain shall become the champion of trade union unity on a class basis, in order that the workers can build up mighty class trade unions and win in their economic struggles. While insisting on every eligible member being in the trade union, we have got to do something else. We are not a trade union Party, we are a revolutionary political Party. We are not a Party that looks on every question from the point of view of a miner, an engineer, a railwayman, and we are not a Party that appreciates the leadership only in terms of its policy in a particular industry and place of work. We are a political Party which advances a line that is in accordance with the interests of the whole working class, but we have dangerous tendencies that have to be checked in our Party: the tendency to separate completely our trade union work from our general political line, and nothing could be more fatal.

One of the reasons for the absence of a great mass campaign for trade union unity is because we become so largely boxed up amongst railwaymen, miners, etc., without any common unified lead that can drive forward the activity and the work of our comrades as a whole.

#### **Not a Ginger Group, But Political Leaders.**

We were delighted to hear the remarks of our Comrade Cooke in the discussion this afternoon. We repeat this because it was as important as anything spoken in this Congress:

"The workers see us as great strike leaders, they see us as a ginger group in the Trades Councils, they see us as militant trade unionists, but they don't see us as political leaders."

This wasn't said by Gallacher, Pollitt or Stewart. This was said by a comparatively new member in our Party, who in making that contribution must have been expressing what he himself had strongly felt, even before he came into our Party.

Let me again repeat what the 2nd Congress of the Communist International had to say about the rôle of the Communist Party:

"The Communist Party is the Party of the working class. The Communist Party has no other interests than those of the working class. It differs from the general mass of the workers in that it takes a general view of the whole historical march of the working class and at all turns of the road it endeavours to defend the interests, not of separate groups or professions, but of the working

class as a whole. The Communist Party is the organised political lever by means of which the more advanced part of the working class leads all the proletarian and semi-proletarian masses."

When once we fully understand the rôle of the Communist Party and apply it in our daily activity, then we can help build mass militant trades unions embracing every worker; then successful big economic struggles, and the defeat of Mondism will be possible, thousands of trade unionists recruited for the Party, but this is only possible if the work in the unions is carried out on the basis that was laid down when the C.I. held its Second Congress in 1920.

We believe that if the suggestions which have been outlined are put into operation then there is ever greater advance. These suggestions, if put into operation now, can win greater support. To-morrow the Congress will debate a manifesto which will give the lead on the urgency of the united front to every working man and woman in this country. The programme it will put forward is of general interest and its demands of a general mass character. But the general importance of its demands must also be related to the local circumstances and concrete situation.

What have we to do when this Congress is over? We have at once, on the basis of the Congress, to approach every local Labour Party, every trade union branch, and every trade union functionary and endeavour to win their support. We must popularise this programme amongst the workers. We must try to get resolutions of support in every organisation where we are, and where workers who want united action are also members.

What do we drive for in this campaign? The winning of the workers to support our proposals. What do we do if they are rejected? Take it lying down? No, we explain to the workers what it was we proposed. We ask them to campaign against it, come and record against it in the consciousness that we can overcome and overrule this first rejection that may be made by the Labour leaders. We try to draw in all workers' organisations and candidates into every type of united front activity. In every demonstration, in every strike, we invite the local trade union officials, Labour candidates, to come and take part, we invite local Labour Parties to participate, and upon this basis the class forces can be built up. This is our tactical line. We are not going any further. Unconditional support of Labour does not arise; in this Party Congress our tactics are being formulated on the basis of present conditions. Further tactics will depend on the success of the united front drive and on the objective situation that may then prevail.

The development along these lines, the daily activity, will result in the building up of a movement that grows day after day on the basis of class struggle, and then at the urban elections and the general elections we could succeed in sweeping away the representatives of capitalism and secure the return into local councils and into Parliament itself, not only of Communist Councillors, Communist M.P.s, but a majority of Labour Councillors and Members of Parliament, who undertake the fight to carry into life THE DEMANDS OF THE UNITED FRONT.

#### About Lancashire.

One final word on this section. That alongside with this goes our Party's preparations for a careful selection of candidates, the putting forward of those candidates whose return would mean an enormous strengthening of the forces of revolution in this country. In this connection, I have a by-election in mind, in which we gave a classic example of how not to run an election. The results were very poor. The Party centre asked for an explanation, and the explanation given was: "Our candidate was perhaps not the best type. He was dogmatic, sectarian and not very easy to get on with. He was not a member of a trade union and he did not believe in the united front." This is playing with the bread and butter of working men and women. The workers were right in rejecting such a candidate. The workers should not have given this man a single vote, whatever may have been the consequences to the local Communist Party. When we put a candidate forward, he is not only a fighter, but a fighter who knows what the policy of the Communist Party is. Not only that, but he is respected for his devotion to the working-class movement—for his ability to state the case, and for his ability to fight. And if we select our constituencies and candidates with that in mind, if we put forward organisers who are not afraid to make war on the comrades who say it is a propaganda fight—"what is the use of canvassing and addressing envelopes"—if we can find organisers who are prepared to make merciless war on our rotten methods in elections, they will receive the fullest support of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

A few words about Lancashire. Why did we hold our Party Congress in Lancashire? For two chief reasons: to give our Party in Lancashire a demonstration that the Communist Party considered Lancashire a key place where we have to grow and develop, and, secondly, in order to give the comrades help. The Party has a right to demand from the Lancashire comrades a change, and a big and fundamental change. No case-hardened Bolshevik could have been in the Free

Trade Hall last night without being moved by the magnificent demonstration. There are some important things about that demonstration. I know scores of comrades in this Congress who have never seen such a Communist Party demonstration, who realised one of their little dreams last night, and many delegates said they never were as proud of being in the Party as last night. But what was the importance of the demonstration? It takes place in one of the key districts of Britain where our Party is the weakest in Britain, and speeches were made to that audience last night on the lines that have been made in this Party Congress, and the points in those speeches which dealt with the fundamental questions of the revolution and the building of a mass Communist Party, were seized even more eagerly in that meeting than in this Congress.

What does it prove? It proves that we are lagging one hundred miles behind the Lancashire workers. Where is there another town in this country where 120 workers from North-East Lancashire would have chartered a special train to come into Manchester to attend a Communist demonstration to which workers would come from all over Lancashire? Is it beyond our capacity to organise these 120 in Lancashire for work now in the present situation? We refuse now to believe that it is.

Therefore we want to say one or two things to the comrades which we hope they will take in the spirit in which they are said.

The cotton industry is often stated to be the most technical and difficult to understand in the country. But there is one thing every cotton worker understands, and there is one thing every reader of the *Daily Worker* understands, that nowhere else in this country has such a drive gone on against the conditions of the working men and women as there has gone on in Lancashire. Now, at the present time, can we be satisfied in this Congress with the campaign that our Party is waging against the new cotton agreement, because from all possible signs we are doing nothing? It may be that we are, but if we were we would have heard about it in the Congress discussions. Here is a new agreement that is known to every employer in the weaving industry in Lancashire; that is known to every trade union leader in Lancashire; there is not a weaver at the looms who knows what this agreement is. The greatest secrecy surrounds it. That means that the basis is being prepared for putting it over. Therefore, comrades, we have to carry out an immediate campaign. Our Party in the weaving centres has somehow or other, by one way or another, got to reach the workers in these mills, got to point out the secrecy, got to

point out that in two weeks, Naesmith is going to report to the Amalgamation and get the Amalgamation to agree as the employers have already agreed. The mass pressure that our Party created some time ago resulted in a coming together of militant weavers in Lancashire, and later the Weavers' Committees of Nelson, Barnoldswick, Skipton and Colne. But there is a danger of these four particular Weavers' Committees only conducting a struggle on behalf of the higher-paid section of the weavers, without regard to the interests of the lower-paid section. And, therefore, every ounce of influence that we have in these four weaving centres should now be exerted to get these four Weavers' Committees out into the other areas of Lancashire, giving the lead for united action and showing that they are not fighting to defend merely Skipton, Colne, Barnoldswick and Nelson, but to defend the conditions of the whole of the weavers.

A deputation of these four Left Committees is going to London to see Parliament, but we have also got to point out that once before a deputation went and that is as far as it got, and because they never carried the struggle a stitch further, the More Loom Agreement came into action, and a continual worsening of conditions has taken place.

#### **Organise the Ferment Developing In Lancashire.**

Let us press for deputations to the weaving offices, elect deputations from the mills, demanding the legislation of an agreement which embodies the uniform price list, the Colne coloured list and the enforcement of the payment of the fall-back wage which exists in the present More Loom Agreement. Let us organise mass deputations, not only to the weaving offices, but let us seriously see that when this meeting of the Weavers' Amalgamation takes place a great mass deputation of weavers, elected in the mills and weavers' meetings, are present to express their complete opposition to the proposed new agreement. We have got to do it. We have got to put that issue.

Comrades, we must at once organise an aggregate of every Party member in the weaving industry. Every point about the agreement appearing in the press must be explained. We must demand meetings at the mills. We must demand requisition meetings in every centre in N.E. Lancashire on this question. We must ask, Why this secrecy? What do you know about the agreement which is going to apply to the industry? In Barnoldswick, Nelson, Colne and Skipton we must wage a campaign now, so that they will take the initiative in getting out to the other lower-paid areas as a demonstration of solidarity. Can such a line be carried through? We believe it can. You cannot expect this ferment which is going to grow in

Lancashire on the question of the agreement to be separated from the ferment already in existence against Part II. of the Unemployment Act. Comrades, an entirely new situation has arisen. As a result of Part II. every worker is beginning to develop an entirely new outlook, is beginning to say: "What about our having a go?"

How did the mass movement start in Wales? It hasn't suddenly developed where thousands of women march into Merthyr. It started from the question being put in one or two small Communist meetings, in one or two miners' lodges. They responded, and so the movement grew and grew. It may be that one well-prepared and organised meeting in Nelson or Burnley may be the spark which will set Lancashire ablaze against this new agreement. We must look at it with a real full sense of responsibility.

The comrade who has spoken in the discussion on this resolution can provide us with some splendid examples of what can be done by steady, patient work in the mill. He is a comrade who has learnt very fast. A few years ago he was a comrade who was deeply bitten with sectarianism of the worst possible kind. He is a comrade who has learnt in struggle. He has done magnificent work. We ask that comrade to go from this Congress with our message and our demands, and we have the fullest confidence in him and those who are with him that what the comrades have done in Rhondda we can do in North-East Lancashire.

Isn't it a serious and disquieting statement which we have heard from this platform that the only place where Mosley is attempting to make a solid basis is Lancashire? And what an insult to every tradition this county stands for! Don't make Mosley into a bogey! Don't let Mosley become a little excuse for not effectively mobilising the masses against Mosley. It is not coincidence that he is more active here at this moment than anywhere else. He is active here in Lancashire precisely because of the character of the new agreement that the trade unions and employers are attempting to get over. His line confuses the workers at this particular time—his is propaganda against the class struggle, strikes, etc. It is our job, simply and patiently, to explain all the things that fascism stands for, and the significance of his propaganda in Lancashire now. In this way we shall be able to turn the anger of the workers against him, to rally the builders, spinners, card-room operatives, engineers into the struggle of which the weavers are the present focal point.

#### **Against the New Slave Agreement.**

When 120,000 weavers have had their wages cut, when they have been compelled to operate under

harsher and harsher schemes of rationalisation, it has not been long before the spinners, card-room operatives, builders and engineers and the rest of the working class of Lancashire have to follow suit. Therefore, let us make a big drive into the Trades Councils. Let us demand that the Manchester and Salford Trades Council become active in regard to the struggle in North-East Lancashire. Let us demand that the Lancashire and Cheshire Trades Councils become active in regard to the struggle in North-East Lancashire. Let us demand that the Lancashire and Cheshire Trades Council Federation takes it up, let us put it on the agenda: Here is a new slave agreement, we are here, delegates from working-class organisations, what are we going to do to stand by the weavers? Maybe we won't pull it off, but the fact that our Party puts forward these proposals, popularises and explains them, will make the weavers know and understand that there was one political Party, one working-class organisation, which had a line and a policy and did all in its power to help them to get victory, and that in itself will be a beginning.

Just as in South Wales there is need for independent Party meetings, so there is need for them in Lancashire. Especially just now. And so there is a need in Lancashire for a campaign for the *Daily Worker*. You cannot reach with your limited forces every mill in Nelson, every mill in Burnley, but I say there is no reason why we cannot reach every mill with one copy of the *Daily Worker* this week, and two next week, and if you will now send in material, your county is going to be the cockpit of the struggle, and we can guarantee the *Daily Worker* will feature it, and will help you with all the full force and authority of the Party.

Also, Lancashire comrades, where are we in the Part II. fight? Where is the N.U.W.M. in Lancashire? With the highest percentage of unemployed in the country; the highest percentage of the longest unemployed in the country, we have very little activity. If we cannot build now, we can never build. All this propaganda in the press, that the researches of the Preston County Council have revealed that Lancashire will not be as hard hit as any other part of the country, is the same sort of stuff that is being put forward in other parts of the country. Lancashire will be as hard hit by Part II. as any other part of the country, and we can mobilise the same mass struggle. One final word after last night's demonstration in the Free Trade Hall, to get out of the idea that you are some small sect. You had a demonstration which other comrades would have given their right hands to have staged, the comrades in London and Scotland and elsewhere would have given their right hands to have organised a demonstration that could call to the Manchester Free

Trade Hall on such a night as last night, over three and a half thousand workers; when the Party that could sell £50 worth of tickets to workers to hear the Communist Party message, and raise a collection of £86 10s., and recruit over 100 workers for the Party, is a Party that ought to be on the map.

#### **Work Among Women.**

Just one or two other questions. Is there one of us who listened to the reading out of the telegram from Merthyr to-day without a feeling of shame that our Party has done very little amongst the working women? And, comrades, it was a demonstration that the Party did not deserve. The lack of women delegates here, the difficulty of finding women comrades for leading work, is out of all proportion to the objective situation that we are facing. And we make a special plea that when we now go forward to explain the united front proposals and demands of our Party that we shall in every local and district of this country give special attention to formulating ways and means whereby we can draw working women into this activity; that when we campaign for safety in the mines, who is more affected by it than the miners' wives; or for wage increases, who are more interested than the women who are looking forward to getting the increases? When we look at Birmingham, Spondon (outside Derby), the I.C.I. at Billingham, when we note some of the new industries growing up in the South of England, and those tens of thousands of girls and women working in industries which to-day produce artificial silk stockings, and to-morrow high explosives, this is a challenge for us for organising more effective work among the working women and housewives than ever before.

This women's demonstration in Merthyr to-day should be an inspiration to everyone of us that we get similar demonstrations everywhere. The idea that women are the weaker sex, that they cannot fight well! We have got a lot of telegrams from South Wales about mass demonstrations, about 100,000, 60,000, 40,000, but the only news that has come through where a deputation has vented its wrath and hostility amongst those with whom it came into conflict was that demonstration organised by the women.

#### **The "Daily Worker."**

In the discussion, comrades, very few have referred to the *Daily Worker*. I know comrades meant to have mentioned it. I know comrades would have mentioned it if they had spoken for hours, as I am allowed to speak. At the same time, comrades, the fact remains that it has not

been mentioned, and the political reason why it has not been mentioned is that we take it too cheaply. And just as the telegram from Merthyr had a certain effect, I say that the challenge of to-day's *Daily Worker*, produced under the conditions that we have to work under, is a splendid issue which should fill everyone in this Congress with a revolutionary pride that such a paper can now give the lead of this Congress of the Party to tens of thousands of workers all over the country.

I am not going to say anything in addition to the suggestions made in the opening report about the necessity of developing the circulation. We appreciate more than words can express the services some comrades render to our paper. There has never been a story like it in the history of working-class journalism. Those comrades who to-morrow will be on Bilston station at 3.30 a.m., the comrades who will be waiting on stations in South Wales and in Scotland, picking up the paper to be distributed to the newsagents, and when it does not come because we have missed the trains, quite correctly curse us. We do not miss the trains because we want to do so, and we give you an assurance that every time we miss the train, then the comrades responsible feel like taking a day off because they know what is going to happen to them.

We have gone through the month of January, and we never thought that we could do it, and day to day we never thought we could get the paper off the machines. We had to buy a new rotary that has been a job to get into working order. The electric fuse was blown out at the critical moment, the casting moulding machinery did not work properly. We have been working under terrible conditions, but we have not been doing half enough to justify the trust which countless men and women place in our paper. It has been a difficult time for all connected with the production of the *Daily Worker*, but a paper that can raise £28,900 in five years from working men and women has got something to live up to to justify that trust.

We have a job to widen its circulation—give us 6,000 a day more and we will give you an eight-page paper every day—that is the proposition, give us 20,000 a day more and we will give you a Sunday edition, and that is what is wanted as much as we want anything.

Comrades, we must see when we give the report of the Congress to our areas that we give a big place to the *Daily Worker*. We must see that the newsagents show posters. This is only a small thing, but the comrades in London were able to increase the sale of the *Daily Worker* by means of getting newsagents to display a poster of the paper. Tell us a newsagent who will display a poster, and we will send him the finest poster

stand he has ever seen in his life, and he will not want to cover it up with the *Daily Despatch*, but he will be proud to show the poster, and it will get increases in his circulation.

#### Finance.

Now just one or two words about the question of finance. Let us try and get in the habit that when we plan a campaign we also plan how we are going to raise the money to carry it through. I am a funny sort of fellow, I do not like the names of our locals stinking in the nostrils of the business men of each town. I do not like to see letters coming into our Central Office from printers who have been defrauded by people who object to being defrauded themselves. This is no bourgeois morality. I know some districts where you cannot go to any printer because you have done everyone of them down, because sooner or later it puts you up against the wall, and we get into these messes because we do not plan ways and means of raising the money. If we plan the ways and means the workers will help us to find it.

How many of the locals have a hall worth calling by the name? Our little local in Nantyglo in South Wales, the most depressed and derelict village in South Wales, our little Communist local, put the point to the miners and their wives: "We cannot get a hall, everywhere is barred to us. With your help we will build one," and these men and women gave £90 in order to help build a hall, and we have got a hall, and it is one of the nicest and cleanest little halls that can be found in this country.

Comrades, if these comrades can do it, well, we can do it in other parts of the country. We make a special appeal that this question of the raising of money shall really be tackled.

And also, comrades, we must put comrades in charge who know what money is. And if a shilling goes down on one side of the sheet, it has got to be accounted for. Because if there is laxity in financial matters, there is laxity in political matters as well.

Every member a dues paying member—that is a good slogan; and every district paying for its dues to the Party Centre—this is another slogan.

Within recent years a healthier attitude has developed. We need a still more healthier one, and if we get that we will get a healthier attitude on all questions.

#### To Popularise the Party's Programme of Soviet Power.

Finally, the whole success of carrying out our Congress decisions now depends upon the following factors: (1) the mobilisation of every unit and member to make the drive for the united front;

(2) the popularisation of our Party's programme of Soviet power. And I wish to recall Comrade Grady's (Wigan) speech about the need for local programmes showing what Soviet power would do, and only regret that I do not have one to show you.

The little local of Ashton-under-Lyne produced last summer a little penny pamphlet, *What Soviet power can do in Ashton-under-Lyne*. It is a magnificent contribution to endeavour to win the Ashton workers for Communism. It correctly relates Soviet power to the specific conditions in Ashton. But now that the Congress discussion and amendments have strengthened our present draft, here is our answer to the capitalists and reformists alike, here is where the Communists have a plan to solve unemployment, to give new hope to the derelict areas, to show how a new workers' Britain can be built, and the popularisation of the line contained in the draft, together with the drive for the united front go together, and will lead to the building up of the Party.

Further, comrades, the Central Committee will have to give far more attention to the whole question of Party education and Party training. We are going to make a new experiment in the setting up of a National School, where, for a short time, we can take a number of comrades from various parts of the country and try to equip them in a better manner than their facilities afford, for carrying on their work. We want more professional revolutionaries in our Party.

And the fourth question is the question that has been hammered in the last discussion, the question of recruiting for our Party, not as an afterthought. The Second Congress of the C.I. stated:

"The aim of all Party work, the fundamental basis of all the organising work of the Party, must be the creation of Communist groups."

This is our task: how we recruit out of the daily activity, out of the personal contact, out of the workers we have known for years, how we spread the Party literature, how we give arguments and facts to try to bring them into the Party; and if we make this test of the Party work then we will soon see a tremendous change.

#### **The Problem of Organisation.**

And the last point is attention to the organisational problem. We need to end the tendency in our Party to despise comrades who are only thought to have organisational approach and an organisational line, because everything depends upon the correct organisation to give life and meaning to the political line. And I close in quoting an important section of Comrade Stalin's report at the last Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and a quotation of Comrade Lenin on the same point. I believe we can make no better ending than this:

"Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning; they merely express the desire to win, but it is not victory. After the correct line has been given; after the correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on the manner in which the work is organised, on the organisation of the struggle for the application of the line of the Party, on the proper selecting of workers, on supervising the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading organs. Without this the correct line of the Party and the correct solution are in danger of being severely damaged. More than that, after the correct political line has been given, the organisational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, its success or failure."

What does this mean? It means that from now on more than nine-tenths of the responsibility for the failure and defects in our work rest not on objective conditions, but on ourselves and on ourselves alone. And Comrade Lenin said:

"The main thing in organisational work is the selection of people and the supervision of the fulfilment of decisions."

If it was necessary in 1934 for Comrade Stalin in the Soviet Union, where the revolution is accomplished, where they have already done miracles in socialist construction, to tell the C.P. of the Soviet Union that everything depends upon organisational preparations, how much more necessary for our Party, where the revolution is not yet on the order of the day? And therefore, comrades, bearing this point in mind, acting upon this, our Congress discussion and resolutions are now our guides to go into action with a clear line and a clear aim, the mass united fighting front, a mass Communist Party and mass circulation of the *Daily Worker*, and the successful carrying through of the workers' revolution.

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