

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE

FLIGHT

FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
ORGAN OF THE MARXIST GROUP (TROTSKYISTS)

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EDITORIAL

The Meaning of the New "Left Bloc"

THE I.L.P., the C.P. and the Socialist League are in the process of forming what they call a United Front. The I.L.P. has issued a statement (*New Leader*, Dec. 25th 1936), this being the only official document that we have access to, and we therefore confine ourselves to it. The need for unity is heavily emphasised in the I.L.P. statement, and rightly so. Not only do the workers want it. Without unity the working-class can never conquer, but unity of itself does not mean victory. The question is unity for what. The I.L.P. statement gives a list:

- Abolition of the Means Test.
- T.U.C. Scales of Unemployment Benefit.
- Holidays with pay.
- Pensions of £1 at 60.
- Houses at rents within reach of the Workers.
- Defence of Civil and Trade Union liberties.

The Marxist Group urges every working-class party, every group and every worker to unite for such issues. We would apply to join any combination fighting for such causes. We have urged, and shall continue to urge the workers, wherever they are, to do this. By mass agitation, marches, protest meetings and strikes we can organise the mass force of the working-class, and, by

drawing some of the middle-class in our train, we can bring down the National Government and put a Labour Government in; or so expose the National Government that the workers, by militant action, e.g. occupying the factories as in France, will extort some concessions and prepare themselves to resist the inevitable counter-attack. To discredit us our enemies say that we are against unity. It is a lie. We want unity on the basis of united action in specified ways for specific purposes, as outlined above. This is, and always has been, our programme—the programme of the United Front. But the I.L.P. statement goes much further. It advocates nationalisation of Power and Transport, Land, Banks, Armaments. Take one of these—nationalisation of land. What does that mean? Taking the land away without compensation? If that is what the I.L.P. means then that leads inevitably to a revolution. The Capitalists will never sit quietly and allow their land to be taken away.

And where is "this majority of all sections of the working-class movement," which is ready to fight for seizure of the land without compensation? That is conscious deception or delusion. What does nationalisation of power and transport mean? Does it mean another London Passenger Transport Board with sweated busmen? If so, the Marxist Group tells the workers to have nothing

to do with any such schemes for patching up capitalism. But if it means seizing the railways and the tramways, as the Russians seized them in 1917, then again that means revolution. The I.L.P. has always been the most muddle-headed party in the country, but this is the extreme limit of muddle and confusion. The workers in Britain can be rallied on a United Front to struggle for the abolition of the Means Test, Holidays with pay, etc., but indiscriminate lumping together of vague promises, such as nationalisation of land and transport, so far as it is a programme at all, is not the programme of a United Front, but can only be the programme of a revolutionary party. How many times has the I.L.P. said that these things are settled out of Parliament by armed conflict, that the revolutionary party uses Parliament, but organises itself and seeks to organise the workers step by step for the ultimate armed struggle? The Marxist Group left the I.L.P. a month ago, because we know that Maxton, Brockway, etc., have no political principles and will say anything that suits them at the moment. They have now thrown over the necessity for the Independent Revolutionary Party and are ready to struggle for making the "unity of the working-class possible within the framework of the Labour Party." That is a great treachery and a great crime. Unity of the working-class within the framework of the Labour Party would be a disaster. It would unify the neck of the working class movement for the Fascist Axe of British Capitalism. Transport House is master, and will remain master until the masses have a clear revolutionary lead from a revolutionary party, in which they feel they can have confidence. We have to build such a party. There is no substitute for such a party. But we cannot force the workers to accept our line. Revolutionaries therefore, put forward their policy, and if a worker accepts it they gladly welcome him into their ranks. But if the worker does not, we say, "You disagree with us about the revolution. Very well, but we are all workers together. We agree that the Means Test must be abolished, let us carry on a joint campaign for that, you in your organisation, we in ours, but both members of a joint committee, or Council of Action. We shall see what happens then."

Formerly the I.L.P. used to fight for affiliation on the old basis of the Labour Party, which allowed full freedom of action inside a Federal Organisation. But to-day, although the I.L.P. leaders wish to have freedom of voting they say they are ready not to encourage splits or break-aways. They want to fight for the "democratisation" of the Labour Party and they want a "challenging Socialist Policy." What is a "challenging Socialist Policy?" Will Transport House adopt a challenging policy in this period in which we live? Do Maxton and Co. believe this? We know them. All this means nothing else but a disgraceful capitulation and ultimately a scramble for shelter in the Labour Party.

And even if they get this unity--what? In Austria, the Austrian Labour Party had the whole organised working-class under its command. It controlled Vienna. It had the warning of Hitler, and yet it would not mobilise the masses for attack, fought a defensive fight and was therefore bound to be beaten. In Spain, the workers are fighting. But has Caballero declared for a Workers' Spain? Has he given the land to the peasants? Has he proclaimed independence for Spanish Morocco? Not

he; though Franco drew so much strength from there. The I.L.P. claims that P.O.U.M. is the Spanish I.L.P. P.O.U.M. despite its mistakes, stands for the Socialist revolution. The I.L.P. leadership must know that on November 11th the Caballero Government suppressed the paper of the P.O.U.M. in Madrid, and Caballero is a man far different from a man like Citrine or Bevin. Caballero fights against Fascism when Fascism attacks, but he remains as tied to Capitalism and bourgeois democracy, as all the other Labour leaders. For them it is always Workers' Power and Socialism to-morrow. We stand for unity, but unity in United Front action on specific issues, growing into unity behind the revolutionary party, and we condemn any statement or action which will lead the workers to believe that Socialism can come by unity within what is and always will be, a reformist Party.

If the I.L.P., the C.P. and the Socialist League believe all that the I.L.P. says that they believe, why then this type of unity only, why don't they join and form one party? If they are agreed on all these things that would be the easiest way out. If they are not agreed, the long list is a fake. For the rest of it shows the shameless dishonesty of the I.L.P. leadership towards its own members, and its treachery to the Socialist principles it professes to hold. Let us take them one by one.

No re-armament under a Capitalist Government.

The I.L.P. say that a majority of the working-class parties are agreed on all these things. That is simply not true and the I.L.P. leadership knows it. The Labour Party leaders and a large number in the Labour Party are prepared to accept re-armament even under the National Government. And if the Labour Party got into power, made an alliance with Russia and France and called it collective security, it would re-arm as it would have to as long as it accepts Capitalism. But the C.P. does not agree to this either. The I.L.P. leadership knows that the C.P. of France, following the commands of the Soviet Bureaucracy, is supporting re-armament, urges it violently, and we doubt if the I.L.P. will have the effrontery to call the Popular Front Government, a workers' government. And the I.L.P. leadership knows also that if a Labour Government, or for that matter the National Government as it may be forced to do, forms an alliance with Soviet Russia, the C.P. will support re-armament, will support conscription, will do in Britain all that the C.P. in France is doing to-day. Why then does the I.L.P. talk about unity with the C.P. on a basis of "no re armament under a Capitalist Government"?

The next demand, "Democratisation of the army," is just nonsense. The army will be "democratised" under a workers' government or during a workers' revolution. Not before. That was thrown in to make weight. But it is the next demand which shows us the poisonous corruption of the Communist Party and the Third International and the incredible spinelessness and pliancy of a man like Fenner Brockway. It says: "Resistance to alliance with Germany, Italy or any Fascist Power." What then of an alliance with democratic France? Will the I.L.P. support that? The Marxist Group condemns this statement as the most dangerous in the list. Since when do revolutionary Socialists oppose military or other alliances with Fascist powers and do not make it clear that

they oppose alliances with democratic Capitalism as well? The Marxist Group opposes all alliances made by a capitalist government, and the workers must do this or support the war. The C.P. will be agreed on this new departure of the I.L.P. Of course they are united on this policy for it leaves the back-door open for them to preach the necessity of an alliance with France and the Soviet Union. That is why the I.L.P. phrased this statement as it did. The Marxist Group appeals to the workers, but in this instance particularly to the workers in the I.L.P. to condemn and oppose this hide and seek, this continual bluffing of the workers and the Party by Maxton, McGovern and Brockway. They see the demand of the workers for unity. It is a general demand. An important function of the revolutionary party is to explain how unity in action must be gained, but at the same time point out the dangers of a mad rush for unity which covers up instead of explaining fundamental differences. But the I.L.P. is facing disintegration. It seeks to lean against the C.P. and though it refers in its statement to differences about the League and Collective Security it puts forward this misleading formulation and claims a lying unity. Finally the I.L.P. in usual muddled fashion criticises what it calls the Soviet Union foreign policy. The Marxist Group has no quarrel with Soviet foreign policy. Non-aggression pacts, military understandings with bourgeois states are a necessity for the Soviet Union, especially since the Soviet bureaucracy led the German proletariat to ruin. What we oppose is not Soviet foreign policy, but the using of the Third International to support whatever policy Litvinoff happens to be pursuing, and subordinating to it the class struggle against capitalism. The I.L.P. cannot state this clearly, but at least it has the idea. The C.P. however has to do what the Stalinist bureaucracy says. The I.L.P. will never convert the C.P., it must conform or the C.P. will throw it over. So the I.L.P. dodges round this question. It "retains the right of criticism." But, says the statement, "in as much as the Soviet Union may be involved in very serious consequences on account of its intervention in Spain, we are prepared to subordinate our criticism to the supreme necessity of mobilising support for Soviet Russia in the pressing international crisis."

The Marxist Group has always emphasised that the defence of the Soviet Union is the duty of every worker, not only for the Soviet Union but for his own sake: for if the Soviet Union goes down we all go down. But we will continue to point with all the vigour at our command that the Third International is to-day hostile to the revolutionary movement and owing to the large funds at its disposal and the revolutionary traditions of October 1917 which continue to surround it, is the greatest danger in the path of the workers to-day. The Stalinist bureaucracy, powerful and comfortable, is finished with revolution and will sell the workers' movement in an attempt to preserve its present position in Russia. We have said this for years and to-day in Spain, the P.O.U.M., because it stands for a Workers' Spain and not for the democracy which the Stalinists preach, is being persecuted by the Communist Party which has allied itself with the Socialist and the left bourgeois to crush the revolutionary left. The I.L.P. leaders know this, but they twist and squirm and try to find excuses for the plain fact that the Stalinist bureaucracy has intervened in Spain on condition that the

workers' revolution is stopped. Even in face of the enemy the C.P. of Spain is calling the P.O.U.M. Fascist as it has called Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev Fascist. These so-called Communists have done it in Spain, they will do it in Britain and any United Front which seeks to hide that will recoil on the heads of the parties which form it and be a trap for the working class movement. The I.L.P. forms a long term agreement with the Third International in Britain, while the Third International in Spain is organising a pogrom of the Spanish party with which the I.L.P. is affiliated in the London Bureau. It is this confusion, this fear of stating the truth and coming out boldly for the Fourth International which makes the I.L.P. exploit the workers' desire for unity and land itself and its followers in this swamp of evasion and folly. Such an arrangement as this is no United Front. It would be a bloc, a long term political alliance by people who know that they disagree, but are trying to pretend that they don't. I.L.P. members will note that it is the I.L.P. which is capitulating. The C.P. have not moved an inch and that is the price the I.L.P. will always pay as long as it continues to allow its leaders to dominate the party, declare against the 3rd International but not for a 4th, call first for workers' action and then change to neutrality on the Abyssinian question, express disquiet at the murder of Zinoviev and Kamenev but refuse to answer why the bureaucracy has to murder revolutionaries.

The Marxist Group will therefore not apply to join this bloc as outlined by the I.L.P. and it warns the workers that no ultimate good will come out of it. The C.P. will swallow the majority of the Socialist League and half of the I.L.P. for its counter-revolutionary policy. The I.L.P. will capitulate entirely to the C.P. or run for shelter into the Labour Party. If the C.P. gets its Popular Front and the British Alliance with the Soviet Union—it will throw over the I.L.P. and if the I.L.P. then talks about turning Imperialist War into Civil War the C.P. will join with the bourgeois and persecute it as murderously as the 3rd International is persecuting the P.O.U.M., and Stalin and the bureaucracy are persecuting Trotskyists and Revolutionary Socialists in Russia. Maxton sees nothing except his parliamentary seat, but Brockway is aware of all this. With full confidence in our political judgment we warn the revolutionaries in the I.L.P. that the leadership will betray every fundamental principle, that their duty to the socialist revolution is to fight these leaders to the end. The longer they wait the harder it will be to build the new party. We condemn this bloc as proposed by the I.L.P.

But although we condemn it, we support, and call upon the workers in the Labour Party to support full freedom for every Labour Party member to decide as he pleases. Before the revolution, as after, we shall fight for full democracy among the workers. That rule was departed from in Russia with consequences that cannot be fully judged even to-day. The workers can learn only on the basis of their experience. All of us wherever we are have a common duty, to loosen the chains of the Transport House Bureaucracy. The Socialist League and every Labour Party member must have full rights to form whatever pact they please and remain within the Labour Party.

We conclude with our concrete proposals: An immediate formation of local committees wherever they can be formed to fight on immediate issues. At the same time all workers' organisations must offer the united front to Transport House and encourage the militant workers in the Labour Party to demand it through their own Labour Party branches. That sort of unity involves no sacrifice of principles, the workers understand it, the aim will be clear and a great working-class drive can be organised. That is our immediate task, workers, and it is enough. In that form of unity the Marxist Group will always

be in the forefront. But while we shall fight side by side with members of all parties for these things we shall not subordinate the principles of the 4th International, the need to build the Workers' Party. For without the revolutionary party, the workers will never be led to a lasting victory.

FOR "THE WORKERS' PARTY"

FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

Executive Committee, Marxist Group.

NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE ANGLO-ITALIAN AGREEMENT

BRTAIN and Italy have made a deal, agreeing—for the time being—that the Mediterranean is big enough for the two of them. German imperialism is the cause of the deal, with its powerful new navy, its hold on Spanish Morocco, its readiness to precipitate a world war in pursuit of its plans of aggression. From the deal with Italy, British imperialists lose their fear of waking up to find the fleet sunk by Mussolini's bombers, backed by the armed force of Germany. They are able to reduce the concentration of the fleet in the Mediterranean; able also to withdraw troops from Palestine, with the easing of Italy's threat to the Canal. For Mussolini too the deal with Britain is advantageous, permitting him to work for a new "Stresa Front" with Britain and France, from which he could bargain with Germany from a strong position. For the future holds out a bogey to Mussolini, in the possibility of a concentration of German troops at the Brenner Pass, forcing him to maintain a great part of his army north of Padua, thus leaving his Mediterranean sphere to the mercy of France and Jugoslavia. Nor does a strong Germany in peace appeal to Mussolini any more than a strong Germany in war, for already Germany has made great inroads into the trade of the Danube Valley and the Balkans, tending to close that great market to Italian product. Germany's industrial might makes Italy a poor competitor in this respect, and a loser for every gain by German production. Add to this the particular and immediate gain for Mussolini, who by the agreement with Britain is able to consolidate his African conquests, without fear of attack by the British lion whose tail he twisted so badly. Note lastly that British imperialism here adds another thrust to the spearhead of its foreign policy, namely the turning of German might away from Western European alignments, and towards adventures against the Soviet Union.

Those who put their faith in the Franco-Soviet Pact as a means of protection of the Soviet Union would do well to remember that in matters of foreign policy, M. Delbos, Foreign Minister in the Popular Front Government of France, has stated recently that Britain and France stand *closer together than ever before*.

THE STRIKES IN FRANCE

FRENCH workers at any rate place more value on their own militancy than on hypothetical aid for the working class from imperialist France. They are operating another

great wave of strikes. Strike follows strike, in spite of the appeals of Popular Front leaders for "security" of "the country" against German Fascism. Regardless of the armament interests of their imperialist masters, the French metal workers fight for their class interests. At mass meetings throughout France the call for soviets echoes. But the Popular Front prefers "collective security"! Desperately working into the small hours of the morning, Leon Blum strives to reconcile the irreconcilable, to unite employees with employers, to merge proletarian militancy with capitalist security. Sooner or later he must openly fail, crash, and give way to another bourgeois government, which may discard the velvet glove of negotiation for the mailed fist of wholesale and violent repression. How will the French workers then reply? Judging by their present spirit, their reply will be equally impolite and vigorous. By all the signs, France is approaching civil war, in which both the Radical Party and the Popular Front will be torn asunder. The rôle of the latter in hindering workers' preparations for civil war will then become plain for all to see. The Popular Front will be seen as a Front against the workers; a stop-gap government for capitalists in their preparations for civil war; a Bonapartist regime, holding a balance for the moment between the forces of fascism on the one hand and the revolutionary proletariat on the other.

TROTSKY GOES TO MEXICO

IF any further justification for the warnings of Trotsky is needed, events in France will fulfill that need. Meanwhile Trotsky himself, formerly confined in isolation by the "Labour" government of Norway, has gone to Mexico, the only country ready to admit him. Might not his "dangerous thoughts" take wings into the minds of countless toilers, were visas granted to him! Lenin's comrade-in-arms has left an indelible mark on capitalist authority. Unlike his miserable detractors of the bankrupt Third International, the Foreign Offices of the capitalist world know Trotsky for what he is—their implacable and unbreakable enemy. Small wonder, for is not every line of his writings a call for socialism through the class struggle! He is ill, he is hounded and persecuted, he is confronted with colossal tasks, but he does not waver. He remains true to the principles of internationalism.

THE PUBLIC ORDER BILL

EVERYWHERE the bourgeoisie seeks to silence the voice of revolution. The latest effort of the National

Government in that direction is the Public Order Bill, which guarantees to tie up the public in a state of paralysis for an indefinite period, at the discretion of the police and the Home Secretary. Public meetings and street processions can be arbitrarily forbidden; innocent but too energetic citizens who open their mouths in protest against injustice can be locked up; names and addresses of people can be taken by the police anywhere, under penalty of arrest; searches can be made without warrants; the property of workers' organisations confiscated in the

event of contravention of the Bill. Through the worn sock of parliamentary democracy, the iron heel of capitalist rule shows itself. The bounds of legality close more and more upon the labour movement. From this, from the general international situation, from the convulsions of British capitalism, a lasting revolutionary movement will be born, to take the place of the century old reformist movement. And in that birth, every serious participant counts.

THE MARXIST GROUP AND THE TRADE UNIONS

For stronger Trade Unions and Trades Councils.

For control by the rank and file worker.

THE MARXIST GROUP, starting an independent organisation, is formulating its principles in basic documents. The following is a draft proposal not yet finally accepted on work in the Trade Unions.

We shall in the course of coming issues publish the whole series of documents:—

The Trade Union movement is the strongest weapon the working class has in its hands. It has a double function, for its reorganisation, so that the control rests not as at present in the hands of a reactionary leadership, but with the rank and file.

The Trade Union movement is the strongest weapon the working class has in its hands. It has a double function. It represents the economic struggle of the workers against the Capitalist class, and it acts as a school of political education. It is primarily industrial in character. As it develops, however, from the struggle of individual trade unions against individual capitalists to the combined struggle of the whole movement against the ruling class it takes on a political significance. It represents the organisation of the exploited class against the exploiters, and a militant Trade Union movement would hasten the destruction of the capitalist state. **THAT IS WHY THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT MUST BE BUILT UP.**

The Trade Union movement, however, as at present constructed is crippled by its leadership. Why are so many strikes carried out against the wishes of the leadership? Because the leadership is bureaucratic and because it is in its own interests to keep the working class, whom it is supposed to represent, from enforcing its demands by mass action which would inevitably undermine the capitalist structure of the state. The leadership is bureaucratic because it has dug itself into a privileged position from which it is impossible to remove it with the present structure of the unions.

This leadership wishes to keep the working class quiet because its own position depends upon the maintenance of

the capitalist system. If capitalism were removed there would be no place for a reactionary leadership.

Trade Unionists must insist on a leadership which voices the demands of the workers as a whole. This would rally the unorganised workers to the Trade Unions and would greatly strengthen the movement. This cannot be achieved by merely removing the present leaders. Other leaders will behave in the same way if the structure of the unions remains the same. The structure must be altered so that the membership itself decides what the policy shall be and has the power to remove its leaders at short notice.

How many Trade Unionists have had an opportunity to decide what the attitude of the movement should be towards War? How many decided what it should be in the Abyssinian Question? How many decided what should be the policy towards the civil war in Spain?

The local Trades Councils are organisations which are able to voice the demands of the workers on these and other important questions. This is because the Trades Councils are not bureaucratic in structure. They are organised on a local basis AND EACH INDIVIDUAL TRADE UNIONIST HAS A VOICE IN THE DECISION OF WHAT THE ATTITUDE OF HIS TRADES COUNCIL SHALL BE.

WE MUST THEREFORE FIGHT FOR THE IMMEDIATE RECONSTRUCTION of the TRADE UNION MOVEMENT ON DEMOCRATIC LINES AND FOR THE REMOVAL OF A LEADERSHIP WHICH CONSISTENTLY THWARTS AND MISREPRESENTS THE DEMANDS OF THE WORKERS, including:

the forty-hour week with no reduction of pay; paid holidays;

equal pay for equal work for women;

non-contributory insurance;

the betterment of working conditions and higher wages.

For stronger Trade Unions and Trades Councils.

For control by the rank and file worker.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE

1937

IN LANCASHIRE, mills long closed are busy making bandages. The prices of glycerine has gone up twice during the last few weeks. It is wanted for armaments. For months now the tinned beef factories are working three shifts. All round the London docks, grain and timber are being stored. The British bourgeoisie are telling us all that we must be a fitter nation. So kind of them to be so suddenly interested in our health. Meanwhile Lloyd's from the beginning of this year will not be taking any more insurance against War. The rottenness of capitalism was never so patent. First it cannot give work to millions. Then it re-employs some but for making instruments to kill and bandages to cure. And when the ruling class does get interested in the health of the people, it is to make us fitter for killing. Capitalism and imperialist war, or proletarian revolution for Socialism. It is better to wade up to the ankles in blood for Socialism, than up to the knees for Imperialism with the certainty of another war after. For until we make the revolution, they must fight. They would rather not fight. But to protect their property and privileges, they fight. Revolutionaries will fight, but never for Collective Security, for League of Nations or any of the lies that Stanley Baldwin, Lloyd George, and Harry Pollitt want us to fight for. We shall fight for the Workers' State of Soviet Russia, for a Workers' Spain, and fight also to turn the Imperialist War into Civil War. A revolutionary should never discuss Imperialist War without posing the Socialist alternative—Civil War.

A CO-OPERATIVE FIGHT

THE pamphlet on Legal Limitation and Co-operative Progress by R. A. Palmer has created a great deal of interest in Guild rooms and Board rooms. His utterly defeatist attitude, however, is not generally shared. "The legislation required to clear the paths for future development can only be secured through the House of Commons, and obviously by adequate Co-operative representation there." This is the only lead Mr. Palmer gives after a very careful and detailed analysis. So you see, we wait until the next election, if there is one, in four years time, and the Co-operative movement, if it has not been wiped out by the National Government, will then try to secure the election of Co-operators to Parliament. But, Mr. Palmer, what did the Co-operators in the Labour Government do about it? You yourself answer that question on page 7 of your pamphlet when you detail the effects of the Coal Mines Act and the Road Traffic Act.

There are other ways of fighting governments than by waiting. The early Co-operators had to fight much more difficult battles than these. Had they followed Mr. Palmer's advice, they would be waiting yet.

In the meantime, a new attack has been prepared, more vicious and more comprehensive than any before. Mr. Spen is sponsoring a Bill which Co-operators are fighting to "regulate" the retail trade. But *Reynolds News* of December 12th, 1936, gives only four inches to this matter, without an analysis of the Bill or any lead. Every

workers' organisation must be rallied to deal a vital blow at this Bill and to the National Government, which must be taught that the working class will not tolerate any restriction of its activities.

UNIONS AMALGAMATE

THE forthcoming amalgamation of the two great trade unions of the distributive workers opens up great perspectives for a tremendous organisational drive in private trade. Lately both unions have considerably increased their membership and prestige as a result of their adoption of a more courageous policy and an amalgamation on that basis would give a much needed lead to the British Trade Union Movement.

The attitude of the Co-operative movement should be quite clear on this issue. There should at once be a great campaign of meetings organised by the local societies, the Co-operative Union and the two distributive unions: 1) to expose the private trades and multiple firms; 2) to recruit members for the NUDAW and the NUSAWC on a basis of immediate struggle for better conditions; 3) to recruit new members for the Co-op, not on the basis of Divi hunting, but by mobilising a violent opposition to the sweating private trader. Such a campaign would have the effect of reversing the present policy of using the bad conditions under which employees of Multiple firms work, as an excuse by Boards of managers for worsening the condition of their own employees. There is no need to wait for the amalgamation to go through before this campaign is inaugurated. The spirit of unity must be helped by the adoption of this proposal at once by all sections of the workers' movement. Lastly the rank and file members of the unions concerned, before passing the final rules of the combined union, must watch most carefully for every opportunity to democratise the working of the union and remove the bureaucratic cyst which has grown upon and weakened such amalgamated unions as the Transport and General Workers.

THE CROWN — AND THE COOLIES

THE "constitutional crisis" met with a pathetic response from the official Labour Movement. In sharp contrast to the attitude of Attlee, Citrine and Co., which failed to evoke any considerable protest from the rank-and-file, we offer this example of what might have been done had our Labour Movements possessed the class-consciousness of the coolies of Singapore. No sooner did the news reach Singapore, to the consternation and disgust of the British population there, than hundreds of coolies went on strike for increased wages! The coolies, lacking the political knowledge and organisational experience of our "advanced" selves, nevertheless knew how to utilise the opportunity afforded them by this blow to the prestige of their oppressors. To those comrades who ignored the class considerations and wasted their efforts on considerations of morality (bourgeois morality) and individual freedom (a luxury which cannot be extended to the workers), we offer this example for their careful consideration.

THE MOSCOW TRIAL

SLOWLY the truth about the Moscow Trial is penetrating into the minds of people in Western Europe. Friedrich Adler, the secretary of the Second International, has written a pamphlet, *The Witchcraft Trial in Moscow*, published by the Labour Publications Department, Transport House. Labour Party readers, for 2d, can thus get an account which shows the trial to be a clumsy frame-up. Adler also prints a photograph of Abramovitch at a Brussels conference in August 1928 at the same time when Abramovitch in a trial in 1931 "confessed" that he was in Russia and was performing acts hostile to the Soviet State. The Stalinist bureaucracy by solitary confinement, threats of reprisals on wife and children and constant moral and physical pressure extorts these confessions. And the prisoner who refuses to confess is not tried. Adler heads one section "The OGPU 'Frames' Trotsky." But Adler asks a question which he does not answer: "Why are the Moscow rulers unable to dispense with the witchcraft trials, why are they unable to introduce those forms of political penal trials which we unwaveringly demand from the Fascist rulers?" He does not answer it. Leonard Woolf in the *New Statesman* of December 26th, 1936, thinks that the Stalinists do it because they know no better. That idea is entirely false. The bureaucracy is holding down the workers and now that the standard of life is rising, the pressure against them for political rights and against their privileges is so strong that they can rule only by terror.

ANOTHER EXPOSURE.

FROM America comes the first detailed analysis of the trial, in *Behind The Moscow Trial* by Max Schactman. A brilliant study that, by the keen sifting of evidence, and the correlation of the trial to the political development of the USSR under Stalin, will cause every honest worker who reads it to think very seriously. The trial is placed in its political perspective, and a biographical examination of the careers of the accused is given. A brief, but clear history of terrorism under Czarism, and its repudiation by the Bolsheviks is included.

Schactman's analysis of the official reports of the trial reveal such glaring discrepancies in the evidence, such self-contradictory stories by the accused, as to show that the trial was "the greatest frame-up in history." A few only of the examples must suffice here. Smirnov, one of the accused, was in a Siberian prison from January 1933 to his execution, and yet confessed to playing a prominent part in the "terrorist centre": "History will record the fact that Stalin put a bullet through the head of a man for the crime of directing the work of a non-existent plot, while in the cell of a very existent Stalinist prison."

The famous meeting of Holzman, Sedov (Trotsky's son) and Trotsky took place in Copenhagen in 1932 in a hotel that had been demolished in 1917 and not rebuilt until 1936: then there are four distinct versions given of the period (nothing so definite as a date was given) when the "Zinoviev-Trotskyist Centre" was formed, from the Autumn of 1931 to the end of 1932, and literally dozens of similar discrepancies. The book shows, by quotations from the Soviet press, that thousands of workers have been arrested in the last four or five months for Trotskyism; that "of the men who directed the Russian move-

ment, who made possible the October revolution, who founded the Communist International, virtually every one has been charged to one degree or another with participation in a terrorist plot against Stalin. More than two hundred persons!" Schactman argues that Stalin's bureaucratic position, both on the international and domestic fields, has aroused a wide-spread discontent in the USSR, that only massacres and executions can overcome.

This is a book that the Stalinists will not, dare not, because they cannot, answer. The author concludes his book with the proposal, which has the support of prominent working-class leaders in many countries, that an international body be created by the world labour movement, before which Trotsky would appear as a voluntary witness, to investigate all aspects of the Moscow Trial. Stalin is mortally afraid of such an investigation. The book is published by the Pioneer Publishers, New York, but may be obtained from our Publications Department, c/o Robert Williams, 97 Kings Cross, W.C.1, London. Price 6/-.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Comrade,

I have been reading your paper and welcome a journal which stands for the revolutionary class struggle and not the disgusting policy of the Communist Party which wants workers to fight for a League of Nations. I have two criticisms to make. The first is that there is not enough attention paid in the paper to the actual day-to-day work, e.g., the role of the Trade Unions. The second is that although I sympathise with your view that the policy of the Communist Party in Germany caused the defeat, I think you overstate the case when you say: "Stalin wanted the Fascists in power because he wanted to keep up the antagonism between France and Germany, and so, in his misguided view, save Russia from attack." Surely that is an overstatement. You say you have proofs. But there can be no proofs of that.

Fraternally, EX-C.P.'ER.

Our comrade will see that in this issue we deal with the Trade Union question. Later issues will deal fully as far as our space allows with the day to day struggles of the workers. In regard to the Russian bureaucracy and the German revolution, we agree that the formulation was sharp. But it is the truth and a truth that the workers must know. We print in this issue the evidence. We ask our comrade to study it carefully and then write us again. The danger of the Third International is that it can deceive the workers as Hitler, Mussolini, Mosley and Baldwin cannot. Stalinists are fighting in Spain, but while they are fighting Fascists, they are ready to organise the murder of revolutionaries in Spain, as Stalin is murdering them in Russia. Why is this? It is the most profound question of the revolutionary movement to-day. We have to trace it and Germany was the beginning. Once the advanced workers understood why this is so, our task of laying the foundation of the new party will be immeasurably easier. We are grateful for your letter and will meet your criticisms squarely. We know our basic line is correct. We do not set up, like the Stalinists, a church with Stalin as Pope and Pollitt, Cachin and the rest High Priests, who can neither say nor do wrong.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

BEWARE OF THE POPULAR FRONT!

(THE LESSON OF GERMANY)

IN the last issue we stated that the Popular Front is just another method of getting the workers to serve the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. We said that in Germany the workers movement was sacrificed in the same way. We challenged the C.P. to deny this, and promised to print the proofs in this issue. Here they are:

In 1922, Germany, rebuffed by France, signed the Treaty of Rapallo with Russia. But in 1925, Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Belgium sign the pact of Locarno, whereby all agree to guarantee the settlement of the Treaty of Versailles as far as France and Germany are concerned. *But the Fascists are against it! They say that Germany must get back all she lost in the last war; that she must be rich, powerful, etc. They are against the Treaty of Versailles.* The Social Democratic Party in Germany however (the German Labour Party), is for Locarno. It prefers an alliance between Germany and France and Britain, to an alliance between Germany and Russia. It supports Versailles. And the Social Democrats in Germany are very powerful. They have the government of Prussia in their hands, which is the largest state in Germany. The Stalinist bureaucracy therefore hates the German Social Democracy bitterly, and they therefore direct the C.P. of Germany to attack the Social Democrats as the main enemy. Certain sections of the C.P. are against this policy. Comintern leaders insist. For proof—on page 98 of *The Communist International between the 5th and 6th World Congresses* (C.P.G.B. 1928) we see the following:

“The Essen Conference had also to fight deviations. A group of comrades had set its face against the thesis adopted by the conference to the effect that the left leaders in the S.D.P. were the chief enemy.” On page 94 the attitude of the Stalinist bureaucracy to the S.D.P. of Germany is plain. “On questions of international policy the attitude of the German Social Democracy is in line with that of the Second International; recognition of, and collaboration with the League of Nations, and bitter denunciation of the Soviet Union. German Social Democracy represents the ‘Western orientation’ and it takes advantage of every opportunity to extend the cleavage between the S.U. and Germany.”

Every C.P. had therefore orders to fight Citrine, Bevin, Ramsay MacDonald, Leon Blum; call them dirty Social Fascists, etc.; but above all in Germany the C.P. was to attack them, for there they were most dangerous to the Soviet foreign policy. There were other reasons for this policy, but this was the main cause, and to maintain this they were prepared to let Hitler come to power. Here is the proof. In August 1931 Braun and Severing were the leaders of the Labour Government in Prussia. Hitler and Goebbels were winning great support but the law was such that although it was certain that at the coming elections the Fascists would have the largest single party in the Prussian Parliament, unless they gained an absolute majority—i.e. a majority over all other parties combined—the Social Democratic Government would continue in power. The Fascists wanted the law changed and the only way to do this was by a referendum—a house to

house vote. If the Fascists won they would become the Government of Prussia and once there, they would have had the most important part of Germany in their hands. Now what would any worker do? Oppose the referendum, and fight for a United Front of all workers, Communist Party and Labour, to keep the Fascists out. The C.P. of Germany actually started to do this. But the Stalinist bureaucracy which is concerned first and foremost with its foreign policy and not with the workers' struggle for Socialism, made the C.P. leaders change the opposition it had begun and support the referendum. Here is the proof:

On page 42 of the *Guide to the XII Plenum* (Modern Books), a Stalinist publication, is an extract by Piatnitzky, then the secretary of the Third International. He says: “You know, for example, that the leadership of the party opposed taking part in the referendum on the dissolution of the Prussian Landtag. A number of party newspapers published leading articles opposing participation in that referendum. But when the Central Committee of the Party jointly with the Comintern arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to take an active part in the Referendum, the German comrades in the course of a few days, roused the whole party.” It is clear that Thaelmann and the others were doing their best. If left to themselves they would have followed their own common sense and though exposing the Social Democrats, would have fought side by side with them against the Fascists. But even though they had already begun to oppose the referendum, Moscow made them change for the reasons we have explained.

Comrades, we of the Marxist Group (the Trotskyists) are for socialism, we will defend the Soviet Union with our lives, for it is a workers' state. But it would be the greatest cowardice and treachery not to expose this crime of the Stalinist Bureaucracy, which was prepared to sabotage the German Revolution for its own purposes. Luckily, the workers refused to obey Party orders and did not vote. The referendum failed. And that is the only reason why Hitler and Goebbels did not come into power in Prussia in 1931.

A heavy responsibility falls on Thaelmann and the German leaders, but Thaelmann, Cachin and Thorez in France, Pollitt, Pat Sloan and the rest of them are so dependent on Moscow for the funds to run the party, edit papers, pay salaries, make propaganda etc., that they have to do what the Stalinist bureaucracy says, even if they feel that perhaps it is wrong. Some of the German workers were seriously disturbed by this policy and came to Thaelmann. But once these C.P. leaders get the line from Moscow they will say anything to support it. On page 717 of the *Communist International*, December 15th, 1931, Thaelmann himself tells us the following:

“We must admit that even among the revolutionary workers sentiments were expressed to the effect that after all the Braun-Severing Government was a lesser evil than a Hitler-Goebbels Government in Prussia.” Every worker knows that this is simple common sense. A Labour Gov-

ernment is not a good government, but it is a better government for the workers than a Mosley Government. Thaelmann however goes on: "To say the least, this meant inadequate class consciousness, and for this too we must take responsibility." He had begun by taking the correct line, but once Moscow had told him to support the Fascist referendum he was prepared to talk obvious nonsense like this. All of them, Pollitt, Campbell, Page Arnot, are the same. It is the curse of the Communist Party. They will say anything to support a line from Moscow.

Stalin and the bureaucracy had failed to crush the Social Democracy even though it meant forming a United Front with the Fascists which would bring them to power. But they persisted in making the C.P. of Germany attack the Social Democracy as the main enemy. On October 14th, 1931, Remmele, one of the official leaders of the German C.P. made a speech in the Reichstag in which he said, "Herr Brüning put it very plainly. Once they (the Fascists) are in power, then the united front of the proletariat will be established and it will make a clean sweep of everything." (Violent applause from the Communists.) From that day the German C.P. under the direction of Moscow was prepared to let Hitler come in. What they told the workers was that after Hitler came in, then the workers would make a revolution. Moscow did not want them to fight and preferred Hitler to the Social-Democracy. It is true that the Stalinist bureaucracy did not clearly understand what Fascism would mean to the German workers, though the Trotskyists warned day in and day out. But when the whole world saw what had happened, the Stalinist Bureaucracy changed the policy. French Fascism wanted an alliance with German Fascism, but the French workers and the French Radicals (Liberals) were hostile to Fascism. The Stalinist bureaucracy therefore started on a new tactic—a Popular Front for Democracy and the League of Nations and collective security—all this in order to build up support for their policy against German Fascism which was more and more openly hostile to the Soviet Union.

We shall show in our next issue how the Stalinists have sabotaged the class struggle and strikes in France, in order to have France ready to fight Germany. They are at the same game in Britain. All their talk about unity and the Popular Front is to get support for the British-Soviet French alliance, disguised as the League. The Liberals want such an alliance and to get the Liberals in, the C.P. will sacrifice the workers' demands.

Workers, it will ruin us here if our eyes are not opened in time. Do you think we, the Trotskyists, wanted to form a Fourth International and a Workers' Party in Britain? We are for unity, for only by unity can we conquer the capitalists. But if we follow the Communist Party we shall be sacrificed as the German workers were sacrificed.

[Next month we shall show with abundant evidence how the Soviet Bureaucracy made the C.P. in France sabotage the stay in strikes. Once the workers know the origin of the Popular Front they will condemn it and support the Workers' Front.]

THE MARXIST GROUP (*Trotskyists*)
for "THE WORKERS' PARTY"
for THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Read

UNSER WORT

The journal of our German section

LA LUTTE OUVRIÈRE

The journal of our French section

LA LUTTE OUVRIÈRE

The journal of our Belgian section

THE VANGUARD

The journal of our Canadian section

Read also

THE SOCIALIST APPEAL (America)

and

THE RED FLAG

(H. Boyd, 238 Edgware Rd., W.1.)

Send to Robert Williams, 97 Kings Cross Rd., W.C.1, for any of the above.

The following booksellers and newsagents also stock **FIGHT** and other Trotskyist literature:

Bibliophile, Little Russell Street, W.C.1.

Burn and Terry, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.

Colletts, Charing Cross Road, W.C.

Johns, Torrington Place, W.C.

Librairie Internationale, 73 Russell Square, W.C.

Librairie Internationale, Percy Street, W.C.

Lahr, Red Lion Square, W.C.

London School of Economics Bookshop, Aldwych.

London Weekly Mail, New Bridge Street.

Parton Street Bookshop, Parton Street, W.C.

Preis, Little Russell Street, W.C.

Solosky, Charing Cross Road, W.C.

Strauberg, Coptic Street, W.C.

Socialist Bookshop, 35 St. Bride Street, E.C.4.

Trotsky has arrived safely in Mexico and for the time being has an asylum. But we warn the working class movement that his life is not safe; at any moment we expect that in addition to the diplomatic pressure which the Soviet Union bureaucracy used to drive him out of Norway, there is every reason to believe that attempts will be made to encompass his death and thus strike a blow at the Fourth International. If this is attempted, we shall hold the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Third International responsible.

On the Job No. 1

THE BUILDING WORKER

THE Building Trade, with its registered employees of nearly one million is the second largest body of workers in the country. For this reason the life and condition of the workers in this industry are of great importance to our movement, not only because we are concerned with improving the life of the workers in general but because as building trade workers we realise that any improved conditions for us can only come about by united action on the part of the whole of the workers in this particular trade.

Generally it is regarded that the building worker receives a fairly high wage in comparison with engineers for instance. But it must be recognised that there is no guarantee whatever that the building worker will receive a regular weekly wage.

What are some of the grievances of the building workers? Of major importance is the question of "wet time," which means that the worker only gets paid for the hours he works—thus providence is a direct drain on the workers' pockets. Not only rain but cold and frost result in loss of wages. The whole question of a guaranteed week is one of urgency to the building workers.

The question of the dilution of labour is also of great importance. Due to the nature of present day building it is quite easy for inexperienced workers to enter the trade. In the main we find that they have been drafted in from the distressed areas. Some receive training at Government training centres and become "craftsmen" immediately, while others come direct from these areas into the trade. This leads to terrific antagonism on the job between the local workers and those from the distressed areas. This is intensified in the suburban areas because of the fact that quite a number of these distressed area workers have taken on jobs at less than T.U. rates.

We as revolutionaries recognise that they do this because of their economic condition. The cutting off of benefit under the means test, resulting in terrible poverty, leads a man to leave home and seek a job elsewhere. He is thus forced to accept any wage for the sake of a job. It is not sufficient for us in the building trade to condemn these workers because of the conditions which have been forced on them because of long unemployment. Rather than play the game of the Capitalist class and conduct a struggle against these workers, we must recruit them to the unions, pointing out in a friendly manner the dangers of a lack of organisation. We must hammer home, too, the connection between political struggle against the Means Test and the industrial struggle on the job for better conditions. And also we must stress the great need for united action of employed and unemployed for the betterment of working class conditions.

There is at the moment a boom in the building trade, although there are still approximately one-eighth unemployed as compared with one-third in 1932—the year of the crisis. There is ample work for every building worker if the present need is to be satisfied. Approximately two million houses are required to abate overcrowding, a thousand new schools should be built under the new Education Act. "Luxury Flats" are the vogue in London.

Now is the opportune moment to press for better conditions. But some will say "that we are bound by the five years agreement"—which has fixed wages at a set figure for that period making no allowances for increased cost of living as was the case under the old sliding-scale agreement.

Although there has been a great increase in food prices the building worker is denied the right to ask for an increase in wages. Bread is dearer, so is cheese, butter, meat and bacon and there will be further increases in flour, beef, fish, cocoa, cheese, lard, etc., all staple working class necessities. A number of trades affecting 4 million workers are making applications for increased wages, and even with the present leadership appear to have a fair chance of success. Despite our agreement, if the general feeling which exists in the trade was co-ordinated, a serious attempt could be made to change the state of affairs.

How can this be done? Only by finally bringing together the building workers in *one union* embracing all sections of the trade. *That is our policy.* At the moment we have some attempt at this in the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, but unfortunately the unions within the Federation are all fighting for their sectional interests and do not see their struggle as part of the common struggle against the employers. The A.S.W. has recently handed in notice of withdrawal from the Federation. This is indeed regrettable. We must fight for unity of all the 12 unions into one co-ordinated whole.

The immediate task is the creation on the job of all embracing works committees which should be representative of all the unions concerned. Their immediate function should be the securing of 100% T.U. organisation, they should then press through the works committee and their Trade Union branches for the fusion of all building unions, for pressure on the leadership to conduct an immediate campaign for:

- 1) Payment for "wet time." 3) Holidays with pay.
- 2) Guaranteed week. 4) Increased wages.

This will be a programme around which the whole of the workers in the trade can rally. It will be a struggle on behalf of the *workers as a whole* and not merely of one particular craft.

An example of the division existing between building workers is that of the seven strikes at the new Earls Court Exhibition, all within a few months, and all representing the demands of different sections. They have all been unofficial strikes led by *organised* workers on the job. If this job had been working on the lines outlined above, i.e. with an all-inclusive works committee, we should not have had sectional strikes but united action for an agreed programme of demands. It is vitally necessary to gain the support of workers on other jobs in such a situation, because no section has any basic demands which are separate or distinct from any other section's. We must fight against any localisation of such struggles.

I have only briefly touched the question in this article. It is intended in a future issue to have a detailed review of the Building Industry and the housing problem.

A.A.B.

AID FOR SPAIN. THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL SPANISH COMMITTEE.

We have to prepare ourselves here in England for greater efforts to assist our Spanish comrades than we have done in the past. There is a great deal that can be done. One of our comrades, John Bryan, a militant trade unionist, an active Trotskyist and member of the Chelsea group, has joined the Spanish Government Marine where, in view of his long training in such matters, he will be fighting as a torpedo expert, in the international marine force. Every assistance strengthens the struggle of the Spanish workers for a Workers' Spain. The victory of the Spanish workers is our victory. This appeal is to everyone who reads this note and who can do so, to help the International Column.

WE HAVE TO COLLECT MONEY IMMEDIATELY. WE HAVE TO COLLECT FOOD, WARM CLOTHING AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES.

For collecting money, sheets are available on application to the Fourth International Spanish Committee, c/o Robert Williams, 97 Kings Cross Road, W.C.1. Again, will comrades who are prepared to form groups or sub-committees to collect supplies communicate IMMEDIATELY giving details so that we can unify our efforts.

STOP PRESS. Five more comrades have volunteered to do all they can to help the P.O.U.M. Militia.

SPAIN : The Sharpening Struggle

THE civil war in Spain has again proved the tremendous power and fighting spirit that lies within the working class. For despite the help from Italy and Germany, despite the mercenaries of the foreign legion, and the thousands of Moorish troops, Franco has been blocked by the Spanish workers. His defeat is certain unless Hitler supplies him immediately with a large new force of men and arms.

The question of the moment is what will Hitler do. The likelihood is that he will quickly send further numbers of "volunteers" and then state his readiness to negotiate on non-intervention with France and Britain for a financial loan and economic help. Italy, having already come to terms with Britain over preserving the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and recognition in Abyssinia, showed a willingness to desert Hitler and Franco. In fact, Germany was already grumbling that Italy had left her to pay for the Spanish civil war, when Mussolini with the "gentleman's agreement" in his pocket, landed another 6,000 'volunteers' at Cadiz.

The imperialist interests of all the capitalist governments are again uncovered, as well as the hollowness of their patriotism and their readiness to help each other to keep the working class subdued in all countries.

Inside Spain the class issues also show more clearly. With the checking of Franco for so long outside Madrid and victories elsewhere, the morale of the workers has heightened, and from the experiences of the civil war, they are pressing on to a new stage in the struggle. This is especially apparent in Catalonia, the great industrial centre of Spain. The period of the Popular Front is over. The Liberals are scuttling. During the past weeks, Companys, a Liberal Minister in the Catalan Government,

tried to flee the country on the pretext of attending a conference in Paris. Anarchist workmen at the frontier sent him back, so that his position is to some extent that of a hostage. But the fact that he attempted to escape shows that he not only no longer felt able to manoeuvre in the government for the benefit of his class, but that he had become anxious for the safety of his own skin. Taradellas, another Liberal, President of the government, also found his position too precarious. He resigned, protesting against the "extremist" elements that are taking control in Barcelona. Extremist elements means the workers' revolution.

A transitional regime exists in which the law of the workers holds in the factories. Industrial collectivisation has been undertaken but is not clearly resolved, because the problem of the nationalisation of the banks on which it rests has not been tackled. The decree for the collectivisation of industry, making legal the action of the workers in taking over the factory control, is weakened by various provisions such as compensation for previous capitalist owners. Yet the workers' control in Barcelona, incomplete as it still remains, is impossible for Liberals to stomach. While they last in the government, they are seeking a way out by trying to negotiate with Franco for a separate peace on condition that he grants complete independence to Catalonia. They want Madrid to fall, since they feel that then such a scheme would have a better chance of success.

But the workers distrust them and their power and influence is feeble, and would be completely finished if it were not bolstered up by the Communists and the Socialists, who want the Liberals with them in the fight for capitalist democracy. The workers, however, are pressing forward, and the question of the next stage of

the revolution, the question of who is to take full power is being sharply posed. The transition period holds within itself too many contradictions to be stable or long lived, and the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat is already taking shape.

At this critical period in the revolution, the Communist International shows its counter-revolutionary rôle. The Spanish section has issued a manifesto in which it denies the class struggle altogether, stating that the revolution "has ceased to be a civil war and has now become a national war against German and Italian expeditionary corps." At the same time, it launches an attack upon P.O.U.M. (The Workers Party of Marxian Unity) with a viciousness that far exceeds the attacks of the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks upon the Bolsheviks in 1917. Two months before October, when the final struggle was developing, the leaders of the other working class parties joined with the Liberals in lies about Lenin being a German agent, made the Bolshevik press illegal,

and forced Lenin into hiding and sent Trotsky to prison. To-day, the Communist Party not only calls the revolutionary workers of P.O.U.M. "fascist provocateurs" and suspends their journal, but it has organised pogroms against them. While it calls for solidarity with Liberals for capitalist democracy, it strikes at the unity of the working class by encouraging its own militia to shoot down revolutionary workers who aim to establish a Soviet Spain. In the light of revolution, true colours are seen.

We have expressed our attitude towards P.O.U.M. in previous issues of FIGHT. We recognise it as *the* left party now fighting in Spain, which the workers must support. There are Trotskyists within its ranks. We give it our support while continuing to point out its weaknesses and mistakes, which we hope may be overcome by serious political discussion and by the experience of the revolution itself. But against the pogrom attacks of the Spanish Stalinists we stand with P.O.U.M. We stand with the Spanish fighting workmen who wish to go forward to the seizure of power.

The Colonial Question

KENYA

BOTH for the study of Imperialism to-day and for the future relations of Socialist Europe with Africa, Kenya is a key colony. The Africans in Kenya were a happy people until the white man came. They lived a simple life, but prostitution, venereal disease and poverty were unknown. They had one of the most democratic systems in the world. They had developed such an admirable system of cultivation that an early visitor to the Kikuyu, one of the tribes, spoke of their country as "one large garden." True there was disease and superstition, but not the dreadful European diseases and superstition one finds everywhere.

It was in the eighties that the Imperialists started to take an interest in Kenya. It is a country with a fine climate where white men can live. So white men settled there and took the land of the natives away. That is all there is to it. They took the best parts for themselves and drove the natives into the worst. A few thousand whites own over five million acres. But they cultivate only 600,000 acres of it, about twelve per cent. Meanwhile they have over two million natives packed close on the worst land in reserves where they average nearly 150 to the square mile.

But the white man wants not only land but labour. The Government therefore imposes a hut-tax, 12 to 20 shillings per year. The African to get this money has to work for the settler. He has therefore to accept any wages the settler offers and the standard wage is 8 to 18 shillings per month of 30 working days. The African is registered, finger-prints taken, he has to agree to a contract. He can be fined and imprisoned for what his employer considers neglect of duty. But the African must submit because he has to pay the government tax; otherwise he goes to gaol. He must find work if even hundreds of miles from home. Thousands leave the villages and are away from home and families for eight months in the year.

They live in the towns, fall into the hands of prostitutes, drink cheap gin and then go back to the villages, having been deprived by the worst aspects of European civilisation. They try to combine and have revolted sporadically, but the British Government sees to it that they have only a little Bible education from missionaries, and keeps them under such control that if more than five people meet together they can, and have been, arrested.

This is the business of the British worker for many reasons. First, it is because of Kenya and other East African colonies that Britain nearly came to war with Italian imperialism over Abyssinia. Germany wants colonies to exploit. It is these colonies that are one of the chief causes of Imperialist war, the burden of armaments and the slaughter of millions. Secondly British Imperialism draws strength from investments in these colonies. It is true that a few workmen get better paid jobs from the profits, but for the most part the profits go into the pockets of the capitalists, to spend in Southport, Brighton and the Riviera, or to go elsewhere looking for markets and giving still further cause for war.

As long as British capitalism has colonies the British worker must face the certainty of Imperialist war. The only way is to end capitalism. Before we consider how this is to be done, let us see first how this will affect the worker and the Colonies. Lenin in the extract quoted last month, said that the colonial peoples need not pass through the capitalist stage. The socialist state can assist them to pass from their primitive conditions straight to the socialist form. And he is quite right. For that would benefit both the Colonials and the British workers. However admirable a form of life primitive communism is, thoughtful Africans realise to-day that in the modern world, this has no place. The African must adopt Western technique in production. To do this he must learn Western ways. But as soon as the African is given an opportunity to develop freely for his own benefit and not for profit,

his capacity to produce rises enormously. This has been rested particularly in the cocoa industry of West Africa. With a constantly rising standard of living, he will be able to offer far more splendid opportunities to British Socialism, and a constantly rising exchange can be effected to the benefit of both. Take coffee for instance. The British settler produces at enormous cost and prevents the Kenya African from producing because he can produce so much cheaper. If the African gets a chance, he can produce as much as a Socialist Britain could take, for under Socialism he would not have to depend on how much the worker could afford to buy, but would produce as much as he could in exchange for what the British worker could produce.

How is this to be achieved? The African is bitterly resentful when English revolutionaries talk about "giving" him freedom. He does not want to be given anything. His freedom is his own and he wants assistance to be able to fight for it. Over and over again in Kenya and other parts, the Africans have revolted. But they have a real chance of success only when British Imperialism is being attacked at the same time by the British revolutionary workers. The African has been deceived by the Labour Government which oppressed him just as much as the Tories. For some time he trusted the Communist Party but as soon as the Stalinist bureaucracy began to seek the friendship of Britain and France, they made the Third International change its propaganda and to day it is telling Africans and Indians to fight for democracy against Fascism. We of the Fourth International say to the Africans that capitalism is capitalism even if it is democratic, and while we shall defend the democratic rights of the workers against Fascism we are out to bring

down the capitalist system. And we tell Africans that when they get the opportunity, perhaps during the coming war, they must strike at British Imperialism. For them and for us the enemy is the same. That may be some time off. But what can we do now about it? There is a lot that can be done. Some of the African peoples, the Kikuyu of Kenya for instance, have representatives in London. Negro seamen live in London and can make contacts with Kenya and other parts of Africa. We can build up a real solidarity by fighting the cause of Africans, Indians, and other colonials here and by letting them know that we look to them to help us in the struggle.

The best way to begin is by gaining knowledge. We can put workers in touch with Europeans and Africans and Indians ready to provide speakers and to meet those who want to co operate in other colonial work. The British worker should remember that Franco would never have been able to attack the Spanish workers and peasants, if the Popular Front Government in Spain had called on the Moors to seize their independence. A Moorish deputation went to the Popular Front asking for concessions. The Popular Front Government, being a capitalist government, refused. And the Moors, bitterly disappointed, listened to Franco.

Let us establish solidarity at once on the principle theoretically held and now proved in practice in Spain, that a revolutionary movement in this country can never achieve final success unless in close understanding and co-operation with the revolution in the colonies. If you wish to help or wish for help on the Colonial Question, write to: Robert Williams, 97, Kings Cross Road, London, W.C.1.

[Next month we shall publish an article on India.]

Documents of the International No. 3

The Fourth International and the T.U.s

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

(Draft Thesis Not Yet Finally Adopted)

1. The Fourth International sets itself the task of leading the working masses of all countries along the road towards the final victory of Socialism. It therefore earnestly strives to get into the closest contact with the toiling masses and fully adopts the Bolshevik principle: a Communist must work everywhere the masses are.

The strongest mass organisations of the working class, so far as compass is concerned, are the reformist Trade Unions. One of the most pressing and important tasks of all the organisations and every individual member of the 4th International is work inside these Trade Unions in order to break the influence of the reformist bureaucracy and to lead the masses of the T.U. members upon the revolutionary road.

The question "when and how" the organisations of the 4th International will succeed in establishing firm

roots in the working class, acquire a wide mass influence, and so finally become themselves mass organisations, depends, in the first instance, upon how far they understand to win the confidence of the masses organised in the T.U.'s and firmly establish themselves there.

Revolutionary work in reformist Trade Unions is inseparably bound up with revolutionary work in factories themselves. Without systematic persevering work in the Trade Unions, it is impossible to acquire or maintain any influence upon the workers in the factories.

From the masses organised in the reformist Trade Unions must be won the new and most active forces for the 4th International. Neglect of this task signifies bringing the 4th International itself and all its sections into stagnation and isolation, and thus condemning them to impotence.

2. The 4th International adopts those principles and resolutions which the Communist International, under the leadership of Lenin, i.e. up to the 4th World Congress, adopted with regard to the attitude and behaviour of the Communists towards the reformist Trade Unions. Lenin himself summarised the Communist principles of Trade Union work in "*Left Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*."

Insofar as the T.U. resolutions of the Leninist Comintern need to be corrected and supplemented, applies only to directly practical and tactical questions; but the principal significance of these resolutions has been completely confirmed and justified through the course of historical development, and not least through the further development of the (Stalinist) Comintern itself.

The decline and degeneration of the Comintern and its final open passing-over into the camp of social-patriotism are reflected openly in the position of the 3rd International towards the reformist Trade Unions and the working masses organised within them. The policy of the Stalinist Comintern has vacillated with regard to Trade Union work between giving in to reformist bureaucracy and an ultra-left sectarianism (the RILU Red International of Labour Unions—and the independent Red Unions) long ago castigated by Lenin, in order to end, to-day, in open capitulation before the reformist bureaucracy. (Jouhaux).

Just as the complete isolation of the Communist Parties from the organised working masses, due to the policy of the RILU, signified the road of disaster of the working class (the catastrophe in Germany), the present policy of the Comintern with regard to work in the Trade Unions is instrumental in putting shackles on the workers and in driving them along the road to further defeats (e.g. the capitulation before Reformism and the support given to the reformist bureaucracy: strikes in France, beginning in Brest and Toulon up to the last great strike wave).

Whereas Stalinism has broken openly with Leninist principles and with the Leninist tactics and practical work in regard to the Reformist mass trade unions, first by the ultra-left, adventurous RILU policy which assisted in driving the German proletariat into the fascist concentration camp, and now by its capitulation before Jouhaux and before the Jouhaux' of all lands thereby forcing the working class on the road of Germany,

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND ALL ORGANISATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH IT DECLARE UNCONDITIONALLY—AND CONFIRMED BY THE GREAT HISTORICAL EVENTS — FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE LENINIST PRINCIPLES AND TACTICS IN RELATION TO THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS AND THE MILLIONS OF TRADE UNION MEMBERS.

3. The policy of independent red unions—the RILU etc.—has suffered a complete collapse. The independent red unions were not directed against the Reformist bureaucracy, but proved very rapidly to be instruments by which the Communists became isolated from the mass of trade union members and by which they also lost speedily their influence in the workshops. Thus, the Communists were incapable of influencing the working class, of driving

forward the radicalisation of the masses and of giving it a direction and a goal.

The organisations of the Fourth International are intent on freeing from their isolation the small number of independent unions which still exist, and on inducing them to re-unite with the reformist mass organisations. Only in this manner will it become possible for those revolutionary workers still belonging to independent trade union organisations to gain firm roots in the great mass of the workers and to attain a revolutionary influence over them.

As far as the organisations of the Fourth International are concerned, Trade Union unity is *not* identical with: Unity of the Reformist bureaucracy. It is necessary to carry on everywhere a bitter struggle against the unity of the bureaucracies. Only in this struggle can be achieved and realised real trade union unity: the unity and solidarity of the working class in its fight against capitalist exploitation and against the entire capitalist form of society. The trade union bureaucrats—no matter whether they are of the reformist or stalinist variety—are interested in upholding the capitalist form of society; thus, the struggle against the capitalist system necessitates, above all, a struggle against the treacherous trade union bureaucracy which has the aim of holding back the revolutionary development of the masses, of handicapping their preparedness for struggling, and of frittering away the struggle itself. The bureaucracy's demand to the masses to uphold order and discipline is nothing but a request coming from this quarter not to infringe the "order and discipline" of capitalist society and of the bourgeois state apparatus. This has been proved over and over again by the recent French strike wave and the occupation of the workshops.

Trade Union unity is to us not a fetish and not a means for the defence of the interests of the bureaucratic machine, but it implies the necessity of gathering together the proletarian masses for a united struggle and for united resistance, even against the wishes and against the sabotage of the reformist bureaucracy.

5. In times of rising revolutionary militancy, new tremendous masses flow to the Trade Unions. This mass influx strengthens to a very great extent the importance of the trade unions for the struggle of the working class. The German development of the post-war period and the French events give sufficient evidence of this type of development. However, while the masses flowing into the trade unions are full of preparedness to struggle and full of hope to be able to prepare and carry through the decisive struggle against the capitalist form of society, the trade union bureaucracy aims at holding back these masses from just these very decisive struggles and at placing on them the shackles of bureaucratic-bourgeois discipline. The antagonism existing between the hopes and the will of the revolutionary masses, on the one hand, and the interests of the trade union bureaucracy on the other, cannot be reconciled. There remain two solutions only: either, owing to the pressure of the masses, the manoeuvres of the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy itself, are swept aside and eliminated altogether—or, the united force of the trade union bureaucracy and the bourgeois state apparatus succeed in breaking and sabotaging the revolutionary force of the masses.

In this situation it is the duty of all organisations of the Fourth International to place themselves with the utmost energy and without delay on the side of the revolutionary masses, to unite with them and to assist them

in their struggle against the sabotage and treachery of the bureaucracy. The Trade Union fractions of the Fourth International have the task of organising the resistance of Trade Union members against the reformist bureaucracy, of showing these masses the revolutionary way out and of leading them finally along the road of the revolutionary struggle.

In the present situation, where the reformist and Stalinist bureaucracies have met in the swamp of social-patriotism and class collaboration ("People's Front"), the task of preparing the overthrow of the capitalist order is left solely to the organisations of the Fourth International. It depends, in the first degree, upon their present and future work whether the working masses will commence upon the road of revolution or whether they will be strangled by the reformist bureaucracy. In these circumstances it would be tantamount to emasculating the Fourth International and to condemning it to insignificance, if any available forces were left out from work within the reformist trade unions (and thus in the workshops). Therefore, any tendency to neglect the work inside the trade unions must be combatted always as decisively as possible. The experiences gained by the trade union policy of the Comintern and the RILU which led to its political collapse, must place upon all organisations of the Fourth International the obligation to work systematically and intensively inside the reformist trade unions and to regard this work as the central point of their tasks.

6. Revolutionary work in the trade unions necessitate concrete consideration of the needs and demands of the working masses. It is not sufficient to proclaim and constantly repeat abstract revolutionary slogans. Trade union work means intensive guerilla warfare for the interests of the workers and against the interests and manoeuvres of the bureaucracy. This struggle must not be carried out in isolation from the respective trade union fractions of the Fourth International; all efforts must rather be made in the direction of interesting the broad masses in the trade union movement and of gaining their co-operation. By their own practical experiences the masses in the trade unions must recognise that the day-to-day interests of the proletariat are best and most decisively defended and represented by the organisations of the Fourth International. This is the only method whereby the confidence of the workers can be won, and this also lays the foundation for making these masses receptive to our slogans for great and decisive actions.

The organisations of the Fourth International must aim at a trade union struggle which is carried out before the eyes of the widest masses; they must aim at including the vast number of trade union members in the organisational life of the unions. For this purpose a close connection must be established between workshop and trade union. Issues concerning the trade unions must be made public issues of the workshop, i.e. of the working class in its entirety, and vice versa. Only by this method will it be possible to place the trade union bureaucracy under constant proletarian control, and only by this method is it possible to expose their manoeuvres and their secret diplomacy.

7. It is the task of the organisations of the Fourth International to take a definite stand for the creation of

a close connection between the employed workers and the unemployed. It is necessary to fight energetically against the efforts of the reformist bureaucracy to isolate and exclude the unemployed from participation in active trade union life. Any division between the employed and the unemployed workers serves only the interests of the bourgeoisie—and, also, the interests of the reformist bureaucracy which does not refrain from playing off the unemployed against the employed workers, especially when it is its object to sabotage and strangle strikes and similar action. The proletarian solution of the unemployed question is to avoid any division between the unemployed and the employed workers and to create closest unity of action between the two.

The organisations of the Fourth International work in the existing unemployed organisations, or participate actively in the task to build such organisations. In them, they put forward their policy of bringing these organisations in close contact with the mass trade unions. The unemployed are to be drawn into any action of the working class (picketing at strikes, etc.).

8. All organisations of the Fourth International have the obligation to urge that every one of their members is organised in a trade union.

Inside the trade unions the supporters of the Fourth International have to organise themselves in special trade union fractions which, in turn, have to be co-ordinated locally and on a national scale centrally. These fractions may be divided into inner cells consisting solely of organised supporters of the Fourth International, and into wider fractions comprising all sympathisers.

The trade unions fractions have to be closely linked with the daily life of the trade unions and have to take a stand in regard to each and every question connected with trade unionism. They also must aim at establishing a lively contact with the workshops, with workshop committees, works' councils, etc.

Notwithstanding the decisiveness to be applied in the struggle against the reformist bureaucracy, care must be taken that the bureaucracy is stopped from excluding revolutionary forces from the trade unions. The closer the link between the members of the Fourth International and the working masses, the more difficult will it be for the bureaucracy to carry out expulsions. When expelled, members and organisations must remain in contact with the trade union fraction and the workshops. Systematic and intensive campaigns must then be waged among the masses in the workshop and trade union for their re-acceptance.

9. The organisations of the Fourth International create an *international trade union commission* with the object of striving for international co-operation of the individual national trade union fractions and development of their struggle and of building and educating by this manner a nucleus of qualified trade union functionaries of the Fourth International capable of carrying into the broad masses in the trade unions the idea of revolutionary internationalism and of the proletarian world revolution.

For this purpose the international trade union commission of the Fourth International issues regularly an international bulletin dealing with trade union matters.

Doctrine and History for the Youth No. 2

THE LENINIST ATTITUDE TO WAR

WHAT is our attitude to War? We say to the Youth that it is "Turn Imperialist War into Civil War." I shall not attempt to explain it. Lenin has done so in words which are the simplest and clearest that we know stating our position. Here they are:

'Every war implies violence against nations, but that does not prevent the Socialist from being in favour of a *revolutionary* war. The class character of the war — that is the fundamental question which confronts the Socialist who is not a renegade. The Imperialist war of 1914-18 is a war between two coalitions of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the partition of the world, for the division of booty, and for the strangulation and spoliation of small and weak nationalities. Such was the view of the war which was given in 1912 by the Basle Manifesto, which has since been confirmed by facts. He who abandons this point of view is not a Socialist, and if a German, under Wilhelm, or a Frenchman, under Clémenceau, says "I am justified, and indeed it is my duty as a Socialist to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy"; he reasons not as a Socialist, not as an Internationalist, not as a revolutionary proletarian, but as a *bourgeois nationalist*. For this reasoning leaves out of sight the revolutionary class-struggle of the workers against capitalism, and abandons all attempt at appraising the war as a *whole* from the point of view of the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat; that is, discards Internationalism and adopts a miserable and narrow-minded nationalist standpoint. My country is being invaded, all the rest does not concern me—that is what such reasoning amounts to, and this is why it is bourgeois nationalist narrow-mindedness. It is the same as if somebody, confronted by an individual outrage, were to reason: socialism is opposed to outrage; therefore I prefer to be a traitor rather than go to prison. The Frenchman, the German or Italian who says—"socialism is opposed to outrage on nations; therefore I defend myself when my country is invaded"—this man is *betraying* socialism and internationalism, since he only thinks of his own country, places above all his bourgeoisie, without reflecting upon the international connections which make the war an *Imperialist* war, and his bourgeoisie a link in the chain of Imperialist brigandage. All Philistines and "yokels" reason just like these renegades, the Kautskys, the Longuets, the Turatis: "my country is invaded and I do not care about anything else."

As against these, the socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, reasons differently. He says: "the character of the war (whether reactionary or revolutionary) does not depend upon who was the aggressor, or on whose territory the enemy is standing. It depends on *what class* is carrying on the war, and what is the politics of which the war is a continuation. If the war is a reactionary imperialist war, that is, is being waged

by two world-coalitions of the imperialist predatory bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie, even of the smallest country, becomes a participant in the brigandage, and my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare the *world proletarian revolution* as the only escape from the horrors of the world war. In other words, I must reason, not from the point of view of "my" country (for this is the reasoning of a poor stupid nationalist philistine who does not realise that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

This is what internationalism is, and this is the duty of the international revolutionary worker, of the genuine socialist.'

LENIN.—*The Proletarian Revolution.*

There is little to add to that to-day. The "Communists" say "that circumstances have changed" and they sing loud alarms about the growth of Fascism. Fascism is German capitalism, as the Kaiser's government was German capitalism. The German worker is more oppressed by Fascism than he was by German militarism. That is undoubtedly true. But that is no reason why we should fight for British capitalism against German capitalism. We remain internationalists. There is the question of the U.S.S.R. We must defend the Soviet Union for we have to prevent the Workers' State from sliding back to capitalism as it certainly will if it is conquered in war. But how do we do that? By joining with Baldwin or Duff Cooper or a Popular Front Government? Never. Not even if Colonel Harry Pollitt in full uniform asks us to do so. Any combination of workers and capitalists means that the workers will be deceived. The bourgeois will begin the war perhaps allied to the Soviet Union. But they know what happened after the last war. They know that revolutions will certainly follow this coming war, and they know that *if the Soviet Union is still in existence after the war* the workers will be inspired to sweep capitalism away. All of the bourgeois know this, British democracy and German Fascism. So that as soon as the war is at a stage where one side feels that it has the victorious position it will make an offer to the other side to come to terms at the expense of the Soviet Union. The bourgeois did it in the last war. They will do it in the next when the existence of the Soviet Union will be a far more dangerous example to the workers than it was at the end of the last war. The Fourth International principles demand that while Litvinov and Stalin can make alliances with the bourgeois and bargain and intrigue with them, we the revolutionary workers can only defend the Soviet Union by keeping up the class struggle and aiming to bring capitalism down. If capitalism goes on the Soviet Union must perish; so in peace and war we have to struggle to bring down capitalism. The position of Lenin remains unassailable.

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