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Spain and the Peoples Front

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INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth year* of the existence of Soviet power on one-sixth of the earth was a year of splendid achievements in all spheres of socialist construction, a year which marked the utmost consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the further development and expansion of the truly popular, Soviet democracy. These victories, strengthening as they are the cause of the working class in all countries, rouse millions of the working class in all countries to the struggle for their liberation, and rally the working people of town and country around the proletariat. They inspire all the anti-fascist forces to struggle against fascism and war, for democracy and for peace on the basis of the People's Front.

And in the present international situation the working class in capitalist countries can best honor the great proletarian revolution by being *fully cognizant of and unswervingly fulfilling* its historic role as the advanced class, the initiator and organizer of the People's Front of all working people, of all democratic and progressive forces against fascism and the fascist war incendiaries.

* The present article was published on November 7, 1936 in *Pravda* and in the Communist press of a number of countries. In the present edition the article is published with a number of important additions. — Georgi Dimitroff.

I.
THE CORRECTNESS AND TIMELINESS OF THE
PEOPLE'S FRONT POLICY

The policy of the People's Front of struggle against fascism and war proclaimed by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International has met with a hearty response among the working masses of all countries. The practical realization of this policy in France and Spain has provided clear proof that the People's Front is *actually possible* and has enhanced its popularity.

There is not a single country at the present time where the idea of the People's Front does not daily find more and more adherents among all those who cherish democracy and freedom, among all those who advocate peace among nations. The eagerness for the formation of a People's Front is growing as well in countries where the bourgeois-democratic revolution has still by no means had its last say, as, for instance, Japan, where the fascist-feudal military clique with its rapacious military adventures on Chinese territory and on the frontiers of the great Soviet Union is thrusting the Japanese people into an abyss of most terrible calamities. And it is growing also in the so-called classic countries of bourgeois democracy as, for instance, Great Britain, where the destinies of nations have been traditionally decided by the two parties of monopoly capital – the Tories and Liberals – which, by their reactionary policy both nationally and internationally, are now paving the way for the burial of democracy and peace.

The tremendous historical significance, the correctness and timeliness of the People's Front policy, are perhaps particularly clearly expressed in the attitude toward this policy shown by the enemies of the proletariat, the enemies of democracy and peace, the fascist war incendiaries, and the reactionary forces throughout the world. The governments of capitalist countries, bourgeois parties, statesmen and politicians and bourgeois newspapers have all become seriously alarmed by the decisions of the Congress. The reactionaries of all countries have raised an unparalleled campaign of slander and calumny against the Communist International and against all adherents of the People's Front. In fascist Germany they have even formed a special organization, called "Anti-Comintern", to carry on propaganda on an international scale against the Communist International and to fight against the policy of the People's

Front. At the National-Socialist congress in Nuremberg, Hitler, Goebbels and Rosenberg opened a particularly furious cannonade against the danger of the People's Front, which is menacing the fascist dictatorship, and against democracy in general. While directing the most vehement outbursts against the already existing People's Front in France and Spain, they at the same time thus expressed their alarm and fear of the People's Front movement which is taking shape in Germany itself. The Pope at Rome and the "most reverend" bishops in different countries hastened with epistles and sermons to shield their flock from the "frightful Bolshevik danger" – the People's Front. The question of the People's Front never leaves the columns of the press in the capitalist countries and is the subject of most lively discussion.

The enemy of the working class quickly sensed and understood what a tremendous danger the People's Front, the unity of all anti-fascist forces, constitutes for him. As long as the proletariat is disunited, as long as it is isolated from the other strata of toilers in town and country, as long as it has not established proper relationships and collaboration with the other democratic forces in the country, it is not so difficult, as the examples of Italy, Germany and Austria have shown, for the handful of financial and industrial magnates, for the fascist bourgeoisie, to crush the working class movement, to defeat the various strata of the people one by one, and destroy democracy. The fascists have successfully applied the well-known crafty motto – "divide and rule".

But when the scattered proletarian detachments, at the initiative of the Communists, join hands for the struggle against the common enemy, when the working class, marching as a unit, begins to act together with the peasantry, the lower middle classes and all democratic elements, on the basis of the People's Front program, then the offensive of the fascist bourgeoisie is confronted with an insurmountable barrier. A force arises which can offer determined resistance to fascism, prevent it from coming to power in countries of bourgeois democracy and overthrow its barbarous rule where it is already established.

As the examples of France and Spain have shown, the establishment of the People's Front signifies a change in the relation of forces between the proletariat, on the one hand, and the fascist bourgeoisie, on the other, to the advantage of millions of the working masses. The People's Front makes it possible for the lower mid-

dle classes, the peasantry and the democratic intelligentsia, not only to resist the tutelage and oppression of the clique of finance capital, but also to rise up against it in defense of their vital interests and rights, relying for support on the militant collaboration of the working class nationally and on an international scale. The People's Front offers a way out of the situation which seemed so hopeless to the sections of the lower middle classes which considered themselves doomed to submission to fascist domination. The People's Front helps the working class to avoid the political isolation towards which the bourgeoisie purposely impels it; it creates the most favorable conditions for the working class to accomplish its historic role, namely, to head the struggle of their people against the small clique of financial magnates, big capitalists and landlords, to be in the vanguard in the uncompleted democratic revolutions and in all movements for progress and culture. The class struggle between exploited and exploiters thus receives an immeasurably wider base and assumes a mightier scope.

While the split in the ranks of the working class – the absence of unity between them and the other strata of the working people – paves the way to power for fascism, the unity of the proletarian ranks and the formation of the People's Front ensure victory for democracy over fascism, defend peace against the fascist incendiaries of war, and in the long run pave the way for the victory of labor over capital.

It is difficult to imagine a higher degree of political shortsightedness and absurdity than to contrast the principles of the class struggle with the policy of the People's Front, as some of our overzealous critics "from the Left" do in regard to the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International. We frequently observe the characteristic phenomenon that not a few of the Left Socialists, who have become disillusioned with the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and are moving away from reformism, are frequently inclined to go to the other extreme and become the victims of sectarianism and Leftist excesses. They make the mistake of identifying the policy of the People's Front with the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and demand "a pure working class policy", declaring that the joint struggle of the working class and the democratic sections of the lower middle classes, the peasantry and intelligentsia against fascism constitutes a retreat from the positions of the class struggle.

But this does not at all mean that the People's Front policy is identical with the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie; it only shows that we must patiently explain the class meaning of the People's Front policy to the sincere Left Socialists and help them to get rid of their own political shortsightedness, which can only play into the hands of fascism and reaction in general.

II.

THE DEFENSE OF SPAIN AND THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

As was stated at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, the People's Front will be formed in a different way in different countries, depending on the historical, social and political peculiarities of each country, and the concrete situation existing therein. To imitate uncritically and transfer mechanically the methods and forms of the People's Front in one country to another can only complicate its formation, expansion and consolidation.

However, as experience has shown, it is equally true for the majority of the capitalist countries, that:

First, the formation of the People's Front is possible in the actual struggle today against fascism.

Second, the People's Front will be realized the more rapidly and the sections of the working masses joining it will be the greater, the more determinedly the working class itself acts as one unit, the more quickly its organizations, and, in the first place, the mass trade unions and the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties, bring about unity of action in the struggle against fascism.

Third, the People's Front will spread and strengthen as its program for the defense of the interests of the toilers, for the defense of democracy and peace against fascism and the fascist warmongers, is carried out.

Fourth, the success of the People's Front is entirely dependent upon the extent to which its ranks are consolidated, and upon the extent to which the masses and organizations which take part in it have undergone political and organizational preparation so as to be ready promptly to repulse every blow aimed by fascism, without waiting for its general offensive.

Today when the Spanish people is engaged in a deadly struggle against the fascist rebels, when fascism is raising its head everywhere in the capitalist countries, and in the first place, in France, Czechoslovakia and Belgium, it is the supreme duty of the working class to hasten in every way the formation and consolidation of the People's Front by establishing united action nationally and on an international scale. It is the duty of Communists to do everything necessary, taking into consideration the conditions in their own countries, to help the working class to fulfill this, its historic task.

If we are briefly to formulate the most important, immediate tasks which the whole situation today places before the world proletariat, they may be reduced to the following: To exert every effort to help the Spanish people to crush the fascist rebels; Not to allow the People's Front in France to be discredited or disrupted; To hasten by every means the establishment of a world People's Front of struggle against fascism and war.

All these tasks are closely linked up. The most urgent, though, of these tasks, the very first at the present moment, is that of organizing international aid to the Spanish people for their victory over fascism.

The historic importance of the struggle against fascism in Spain has been expressed concisely and at the same time most clearly in the words of the leader of the working people of the world, Comrade Stalin, in his telegram in reply to the greetings of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain:

“The liberation of Spain from the yoke of the fascist reactionaries is not the private affair of the Spaniards, but the common cause of all advanced and progressive humanity.”

The course of development in all the capitalist countries in the near future will depend a great deal upon the outcome of the struggle of the Spanish people against the fascist brigands. The action undertaken by the fascists in Spain has shown once more that fascism is not only the bitterest enemy of the proletariat, the enemy of the Soviet Socialist Republics, but the enemy of every form of liberty, of every democratic country, even if its political and economic regime does not go beyond the bounds of bourgeois society.

Fascism means the destruction of all the democratic rights won by the people, the establishment of a kingdom of darkness and ignorance and the destruction of culture; it means nonsensical race theories and the preaching of hatred of man for man, for the purpose of kindling wars of conquest. Death and destruction are being spread today in Spain by the rabble who form the Foreign Legion, by the duped Moroccan troops led by fascist generals, and by the ammunition and military units sent to Spain by the fascist rulers of Germany, Italy and Portugal. The combatants of the republican army fighting at the walls of Madrid, in Catalonia, in the mountains of Asturias, all over the peninsula, are laying down their lives to de-

fend not only the liberty and independence of republican Spain, but also the democratic gains of all nations, and the cause of peace against the fascist war incendiaries.

The special significance of the Spanish events consists in the fact that they have demonstrated the mighty power of united proletarian action, the power of the People's Front in the struggle against fascism. For it is now quite clear to everybody that if there had been no united action brought about between the Communist, Socialist and Anarchist workers in Spain, if a broad fighting front of the Spanish people – from the Communists to the Left Republicans – had not been formed, the fascist generals would long ago have established their dictatorship. They would have wreaked bloody vengeance upon the workers and other toilers and upon all democratic elements all over the whole of Spanish territory. They would have doomed the country to an orgy of medieval reaction and the Inquisition, would have placed it under the heel of German and Italian fascism, would have handed over to them the most important strategic points in the Mediterranean, and have turned Spain into a military base for carrying out their robber war plans.

But in Spain the fascist rebels and their inspirers from Berlin and Rome have encountered that force which is barring their way. They have encountered *the armed resistance of the People's Front*. The Spanish people by their heroic struggle are today demonstrating how democracy is to be defended against fascism. The victory of the Spanish people is to the interest of all who do not want to suffer fascist barbarism in their country. The victory of the Spanish people will be the victory of the whole of world democracy, the victory of progress and culture over fascist reaction, the victory of the peace front over the fascist war incendiaries. It will strengthen the People's Front in France and strike a heavy blow at fascism in all countries. The heroic struggle of the Spanish people serves as a striking and convincing warning to the fascist forces of darkness in those countries where they are feverishly preparing for fascist coups d'état, that the time has passed when fascism can make use of disunity in the ranks of the working class and other toilers, when it can catch the people unawares, when it can deceive the politically backward sections of the population and seize state power. It shows that under conditions when there exists a firm People's Front and international solidarity of action among the working class, it will be impossible to establish fascist rule over a people prepared to defend

their freedom and independence. Thus, the cause of democracy and peace in Europe, the struggle against fascism and war in all countries is linked up in a thousand ways with the interests of the People's Front in Spain, whose courageous fighters have taken up arms to defend the republic and are ensuring the victory of the Spanish revolution.

III.

THE PEOPLE'S FRONT AND THE FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM

Everything that has happened during the recent period and primarily the lessons of the Spanish events point to the fact that the time has come when we must defend democracy by every means, including the force of arms. These are the lessons that must be learned and well remembered by all workers and other toilers, by all those who do not want to become victims of fascist bondage and savage violence.

It is not at all that the supporters of democracy and peace are, in general, advocates of armed struggle, but that fascism kindles the flames of civil war against the democratic regime of the country, brings about destruction and death, and compels the people to defend their lives, their freedom and independence by taking up arms.

It must be understood that it is not a case now of some far distant menace of fascism, but that fascism, which has already set up its terroristic dictatorship in such big countries as Germany and Italy, and is seeking to do the same in Spain, is preparing to crush the working class movement and to destroy democracy in other countries, and that it kindles the flames of world imperialist war.

The war undertaken by fascism against the Spanish people cannot be considered as a casual isolated act. No, this war is a link in the chain of the fascist offensive on the international arena. No illusions must be harbored as to the war undertaken by fascism against the Spanish people being the last. Fascism is preparing to strike at democracy in France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, at the democracy of England, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and other countries. Everywhere the fascist reactionaries are feverishly working, from within and without, to prepare, organize and, at a convenient moment, to carry out fascist rebellions and coups d'état. In order to prepare for a new imperialist war, to seize foreign territories and to subject other nations, in order to ensure the unbridled rule of the most reactionary rapacious elements of finance capital and to organize a crusade against the Soviet Union, fascism needs to smash up the working class movement and destroy European democracy – as it needs air and water.

All adherents of democracy must not forget that the fate of anti-fascist democracy in Europe is indissolubly bound up with the fate of the working class, with the establishment of the People's Front.

Democracy will inevitably perish under the blows of the fascist offensive, if it will not rely for support on the working class and the broad masses of the working people, if it is not prepared to defend itself against fascism by every means at its disposal.

The policy of retreating before fascism, both nationally and on an international scale, brings grist to the mill of fascism; it brings destruction to the nations, it means the end of democracy. This policy is equally harmful for those who retreat before fascism inside the country and those states which retreat before it on the international arena.

The fascist rulers of Germany are systematically blackmailing the countries of bourgeois democracy, and the present rulers of those countries succumb to the influence of this blackmail. But it must be realized that the brazen fascists are becoming the more insolent the more concessions are ceded to them and the less the resistance they meet. The fascists are using their well-tried method of provocation. In Germany they fired the Reichstag and then shouted that the Communists had done it. In Spain they started a rebellion against the parliamentary regime, against the lawful republican government, and then shouted that the People's Front was to blame for the civil war. The fascists put fear into the hearts of the spineless liberals and flabby democrats, while the democratic jobbers, fearing for their profits, the ministers, politicians and leaders from the ranks of various liberal and democratic parties, who cling to their soft seats, as well as not a few people from the Socialist and Amsterdam Internationals, give way to this intimidation and do their utmost to find means of conciliation with fascism. They try to persuade us that such a "middle" policy can be adopted whereby "the wolves would be satisfied and the sheep go unharmed". *But concessions will not feed the fascist wolves. This kind of policy will not check them. Actually it only leads to demobilizing the forces and the will of the working masses.*

The Spanish events provide a particularly vivid example in this respect, too. It is now clear to all that the fascists, and first and foremost the fascists of Germany and Italy, who have raised the revolt with the Spanish generals as their catspaws, counted upon the young Spanish republican government not offering them any serious resistance; they expected that it would not be difficult for them to subject the country and take over its natural wealth and the islands having strategic importance.

In resorting to military action in Spain the fascists had before them the examples of the recent past when their criminal acts had been allowed to pass off unpunished. The introduction of compulsory military service in Germany, the militarization of the Rhineland, the seizure of Ethiopia by Italy and the earlier seizures of parts of China by Japan, which took place with the connivance of the bourgeois democratic countries and the League of Nations, have whetted the appetites of the fascist bullies and encouraged them to attempt a new robber raid. The fascists would never have dared to kindle the flames of civil war in other countries, to send arms, airplanes, tanks, flotillas of warships and, lastly, army units, had they been promptly and firmly checked. They would have been compelled to retreat if, at the very beginning of the fascist rebellion in Spain, they had encountered the mighty force of the international working class movement marching in a united front, if they had encountered resistance on the part of the bourgeois democratic governments, if these governments had not supported the blockade of the Spanish republic by their fraudulent policy of non-intervention.

We often hear the argument advanced by people who pretend to be adherents of democracy that the establishment of the People's Front only leads to increased fascist aggression, that it hastens the armed action of fascism. From this they draw the conclusion that if you want to avoid the barbarous rule of fascism, do not form a People's Front, but try to come to terms peacefully with Hitler and Mussolini and your own Hitlers and Mussolinis in each country. But nothing could be more misleading and harmful for the proletariat and the people in the bourgeois democratic countries than to follow the sheepish wisdom of these woe-begotten democrats. It amounts to the absurd, stupid, foul moral: "Don't vex the beast if you don't want it to attack you." And this monstrous moral is being taught to the Social-Democratic workers precisely after the cruel defeat of the working people of Germany and Austria! For in Germany and Austria, as is well known, the leaders of Social-Democracy and the trade unions had absolutely refused to undertake any joint action with the Communists, their excuse being that the united front with the Communist Party would alienate the middle strata from the working class, would strengthen the position and the aggression of fascism, would hasten on its general offensive and lead to fascist victory and the annihilation of democracy.

It was as a result of this policy that the German and Austrian people suffered heavy defeats, followed by countless horrors and calamities. On the other hand, we see that the People's Front in France has barred the way against fascism, while it is precisely owing to the People's Front that for five months now the Spanish people have been heroically defending their liberty and independence. In this grave struggle the chances for victory will be the greater the more the Spanish working class is able to maintain to the end the firm unity of the People's Front, the more it is able to subordinate the historically formed differences between the Communists, Socialists and Anarchists to the greater interests of the people, to the cause of suppressing the fascist rebellion, the more determinedly it resists the attempts at taking dangerous leaps over the inevitable stages of the revolution advocated by certain short-sighted sectarians, light-minded visionaries and Trotskyist provocateurs. Finally, the quicker and more resolute the support afforded to the Spanish people by the world proletariat and the whole of progressive mankind, the sooner will the Spanish people finish with the fascist rebels.

An analogy, it is true, is not always proof, but frequently it throws a clearer light on a given situation. We can definitely assert that if, at the time of the Leipzig trial when the sword of brutal Hitler fascism hung over the heads of the accused Communists, the anti-fascists of all countries, and we in court, had adhered to this wiseacre policy of "don't vex the beast", German fascism would not then have suffered such a moral and political defeat, the heads of the falsely accused Communists would not have remained on their shoulders, and the "St. Bartholomew Night" prepared by the bloodthirsty fascists for the thousands of prisoners of fascism in the jails and concentration camps would not have been averted.

No, the policy of "Don't vex the beast" is an unworthy policy! It is a policy which under all circumstances is fatal for the working class, for democracy and peace. On the contrary, the fascist beast must be muzzled. It must be confronted by the mighty organized fist of the People's Front. It must be muzzled in iron so as to prevent it from biting. It must be struck at and finished once and for all, in order to save the democratic gains, won by the people, and safeguard peace.

This, of course, does not mean that we should fall prey to the provocations of the fascists, who, while using all means to kindle

the flames of civil war inside the country and imperialist war abroad, seek to deceive the masses of the people and create the impression that it is precisely the parties of the People's Front and the states which support peace that lead to civil war and military complications.

In the contemporary political history of Europe we have two most important and instructive examples showing different attitudes toward fascism that led to diametrically opposite results.

While in Germany the Social-Democratic leaders refused to establish united working class action and, precisely because of this, facilitated the advent of the fascists to power, we have a different example in France. The French proletariat, thanks to the joint action of the Communist and Socialist Parties and the policy of unswerving struggle on the basis of the People's Front against the fascist danger, brought it about that fascism has been effectively repulsed, and the fascists have not succeeded in establishing their rule. This is the greatest victory of the proletariat and democracy in Europe after the coming of fascism to power in Germany. And the working people of other capitalist countries can and must learn much from the French proletariat. But these successes in France are only the first successes. They must be consolidated; they demand that the offensive against fascism proceed further. Every attempt to discredit and break up the People's Front must meet with the most resolute resistance on the part of all workers, all anti-fascists. The mustering of the fascist forces within the country, the growing fascist aggression in neighboring countries, the Spanish events which are fraught with lessons to be learned, indicate dearly to the workers and all anti-fascists that they must increase their efforts tenfold in the struggle against fascism, that they must forge an even stronger and more stable united People's Front.

There is no ground to doubt that this line will be followed persistently and firmly as the only correct line in the struggle against growing fascist aggression. But maintaining the People's Front in France does not mean by far that the working class will support the present government at any price. The composition of the government may change, but the People's Front must remain and grow stronger all the time. If, for some reason or other, the existing government will turn out to be unable to put through the program of the People's Front, if it will take the line of retreat before the enemy at home and abroad, if its policy will lead to the discrediting of the

People's Front and thus weaken the resistance to the fascist offensive, then the working class, while still further strengthening the bonds of the People's Front, will strive to bring about the substitution of another government for the present one, of a government which will firmly carry out the program of the People's Front, will be capable of dealing with the fascist danger, will safeguard the democratic liberties of the French people and ensure its defense against foreign fascist aggression.

Alongside with maintaining and strengthening the People's Front in France, the unfolding of united action among all sections of the British working class against fascism and war deserves special attention. Great Britain plays a tremendous role in the whole of the political life of the world. Her position most definitely influences a number of bourgeois-democratic countries and the international situation in general. The whole situation today raises with particular force the question of the role of the working class of Great Britain nationally and on an international scale. This fact imposes on it particularly important obligations with regard to the struggle against fascism and for the preservation of peace, and also with regard to the task of establishing international unity of the working class movement. The British working class won democratic rights earlier than the working people of other countries. The democratic regime they won has made it possible for them to influence the policies of their country to a greater extent than is the case with the proletariat of a number of other countries. The British workers possess powerful means for the struggle for democracy, to safeguard peace against fascism and, in particular, against the fascist brigands in Spain and the German, Italian, and Portuguese interventionists.

There is no doubt that the working class of Great Britain, with the glorious traditions of the Chartist movement and the general strike of 1926 behind it, the proletariat in whose midst the First International of Marx and Engels was established, and which possesses powerful, united trade union organizations, will find in itself sufficient strength and willpower to overcome all obstacles on the way to creating a united People's Front of struggle against fascism and war, and to fulfill with honor its international obligations in defense of democracy, culture and peace.

IV. THE UNITED FRONT AND THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

The decisive role in the task of establishing a mighty People's Front belongs to the working class. It can and must rally around itself all working people, all the forces of democracy, all anti-fascists. At the present juncture, when we are faced with furious fascist aggression directed as was particularly clearly demonstrated by the Nuremberg Congress of the bestial German fascists *against every kind of democracy*, when everything must be done to save the Spanish democratic republic, when over the world hangs the ominous threat of a new world imperialist war, *it is not only impermissible to allow the forces of the proletariat to be divided, but it is impermissible and criminal to allow any slackening in the work of establishing the united front.* This slackening only plays into the hands of fascism. It may cause the proletariat and democracy to suffer new heavy blows.

The working class must no longer tolerate a situation such as this: at a time when in Spain the Socialist and Communist workers are fighting and dying together at the front defending not only the liberty and democracy of the Spanish people, but the democracy and culture of the whole of Europe against fascist barbarism, there are to be found leaders of the Second, Socialist, International who bring all their influence to bear to widen the split in the proletarian ranks.

At a time when the fascist rebels in Spain are slaughtering Socialist and Communist workers who are fighting shoulder to shoulder at the front, when they are spreading death and destruction throughout the country, the leadership of the Socialist International persistently refuses to organize aid for the Spanish people jointly with the Communist International. The secretary of the Socialist International, Fritz Adler, finds nothing better to do than to write long articles in defense of the counter-revolutionary, Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorists, who have been aiming at the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. The trial of these foul murderers and traitors to the land of socialism, who had established direct connections with the German fascist secret police, was made use of by some of the leaders of the Socialist International in an attempt to break up the united front.

There are a number of countries with Social-Democratic governments or coalition governments in which Social-Democratic

ministers, leaders of the Social-Democratic parties and of the Socialist International, are taking part. But not only do these governments not make common cause with the Soviet Union in its position on the Spanish question, the only position which is in accord with the interests of the Spanish people and with the cause of the defense of democracy and peace, but by the manner in which they act they lend support to the hypocritical policy of non-intervention and actually hinder the cause of effective resistance to the fascist interventionists and murderers of the Spanish people.

Of course, the responsibility for this policy, which is most detrimental to the interests of the world proletariat, lies with the Socialist leaders who are carrying it out. *But it would, be against the historical truth if we were to keep silent concerning that share of responsibility which falls upon all leaders and members of the Socialist and Amsterdam Internationals.* For the leaders speak and act on their behalf, as their representatives. Inasmuch as they allow such a policy to be pursued, *they cannot disclaim responsibility for it.* They must become cognizant of the common duty history places upon them together with the Communists to do everything to bar the way against fascism and to safeguard peace.

In the formation and extension of the People's Front of struggle against fascism and war, the greatest significance is attached to the united front of the working class itself in the main capitalist countries, to united action on the part of the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties, as well as the trade unions of different political tendencies and, on the international arena, to joint action of the Communist, Socialist and Amsterdam Internationals. All obstacles in the way of this united action must be removed as rapidly as possible. To this end the Communist Parties and all supporters of proletarian unity and the People's Front in the ranks of the Socialist and Amsterdam Internationals have a tremendous amount of intensive daily activity ahead of them.

Already the Seventh Congress of the Communist International was fully aware of the fact that it is no simple task at all to put an end to the split in the ranks of the working class. All that the enemies of the working class, their agents and henchmen have done over the course of long decades for the purpose of dividing the forces of the working people, cannot be eliminated with a wave of the hand and by mere wishes. Our whole experience since the Congress has shown still more clearly that the road to united action on the

part of the working class nationally and on an international scale *is far from being a straight, smooth, paved road*. It is a pretty hard, zigzag road, often thorny and steep. Open and covert enemies of unity never cease to throw up different kinds of obstacles and barriers along that road. Every step has to be taken after great effort, by stubborn work and struggle. There are the misguided ones who must have things explained to them patiently, so that they may become convinced. There are the waverers and those of little faith who have to be urged on all the time. There are saboteurs and double-dealers who must be ruthlessly exposed. There is a persistent struggle to be waged against the cunning sophists, the crafty politicians and practiced demagogues, who do their utmost to persuade the rank and file, the politically inexperienced workers *that two times two are not four, but three*, that the united front of the working class does not increase their power, but supposedly only leads to increased fascist aggression. And at the same time it is necessary to be on guard not to fall prey to the provocative maneuvers of the enemies of unity, but untiringly extend a brotherly hand to all organizations of the working people, inviting them to joint struggle even when they have avowed opponents of unity at their head. For every Communist, every class-conscious worker, must not forget for a minute that the opponents of unity of the international proletariat, the Citrines or whatever else they call themselves, would be extremely gratified if, in the face of their sabotage and provocation, the Communists themselves would give up the struggle for unity and refrain from consistently carrying out the People's Front policy. This would only make it easier for these leaders to carry on in their role as splitters and would save them for the time being from the severe verdict of the proletariat and of history. We must know how to carry on an unabated, ideological struggle against reformism and other anti-Marxist tendencies in the ranks of the working class movement, and at the same time fight persistently for the establishment of the united People's Front, and carefully avoid any disruption of united action in the daily struggle against fascism and war.

Twenty-two years ago, on the eve of the world imperialist war, when he was gathering together the forces of the working class for the coming struggle for socialism, the great Lenin spoke of the tremendous importance of unity in the ranks of the proletariat:

“The workers really need unity. And the thing that must be understood above all else is that, apart from the workers themselves, *no one* will ‘give them unity, *no one is in a position* to help their unity. Unity cannot be ‘promised’ – that would be an empty boast, self-deception; unity cannot be ‘created’ out of ‘agreement’ between little groups of intellectuals – this is an error of the saddest, most naive and ignorant type.

“Unity must be *won*, and only by the workers themselves; the class-conscious workers themselves are capable of achieving this – by stubborn and persistent work.

“Nothing is easier than to write the word ‘unity’ in letters a yard high, to promise unity, to ‘proclaim’ oneself an adherent of unity. But in reality, unity can only be advanced by work and the organization of the advanced workers, of *all* class-conscious workers....

“This is not easy. It requires work, persistence, the rallying together of all class-conscious workers. But without such work, there is no use in talking of the unity of the workers.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII, p. 408, Russian edition.)

These remarkable words of Lenin are particularly valuable and instructive for the working class of all capitalist countries at the present period.

V.
BUILD THE UNITED PEOPLE'S FRONT AGAINST FASCISM
AND WAR

The whole course of events since the Seventh Congress of the Communist International provides indisputable confirmation of the vital necessity of an earliest possible realization of its historic slogans regarding working class unity and the People's Front of struggle against the worst enemy of mankind – fascism. The Communist International and the Communist Parties of the various countries, backed by the masses of the working people, will not cease for one moment to exert all their power in the fight to bring about this unity. They will not fall prey to any provocation whatsoever directed towards widening the split in the ranks of the working class and breaking up the People's Front. And despite the opposition of the saboteurs in the Socialist and Amsterdam Internationals, the world proletariat will bring about its militant unity.

In the struggle against fascism and war, not empty words, not platonic wishes, but action is needed. To achieve this action it is necessary to bring about the unification of all the forces of the working class and to carry out unswervingly the policy of the People's Front.