

# For a United Front May Day!

(Statement of the Central Committee, Communist Party, U.S.A.)

*The Communist*, April 1936

*Down Tools – Demonstrate in the Streets; For the Unity of Action by All Toilers in Defense of Their Living Standards, Their Civil Liberties, and in Defense of Peace*

TO ALL WORKERS, TOILING FARMERS, NEGROES, MEN, WOMEN, AND YOUTH:

On May First the workers of the entire world will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of that day which was born out of the struggle of the American working class for the eight-hour day. May Day is the day when the workers of the world demonstrate their international solidarity. On this day they close ranks and press forward to new struggles.

*Let us down tools on May 1.* Let us go out into the streets and demonstrate that, in this seventh year of the crisis, we refuse to go hungry. Let the rulers in Wall Street and Washington hear that we will fight for bread for our families, for peace and against the forces of reaction. Let the unity of labor defeat the menace of fascism in this country. *Let unity between Socialists and Communists blaze the way to unity of all toilers.* Let us make this the May Day of the united front, of a united working class.

## UNITY OF LABOR TO SMASH FASCISM

The riders of reaction are abroad in the land. Hearst, the Liberty Leaguers, all the reactionary forces of Wall Street, have launched a bitter attack against our democratic rights, our civil liberties, against our working class organizations. Their aim is to make the United States one vast concentration camp, to make of the workers the serfs of the open-shoppers.

Let the workers demonstrate in the streets on May Day against these reactionary forces. Let the whole country ring with the giant voice of labor. Let the bankers and industrialists and their puppets in the Supreme Court know that under no circumstances will the American working class permit them to establish fascism in this country.

## TO FIGHT FOR BREAD IS TO FIGHT THE BANKERS

Our demonstrations must be a living defiance against reaction. We must serve notice that we will not yield an inch to the pressure of reac-

tion. We must show through the united front that labor can and will 'prevent the victory of fascism.

The bankers and employers have waxed fat under the New Deal. Their profits have multiplied by hundreds of per cent. While they hoard their millions, the children of the workers are deprived of milk and bread by the high cost of living. The New Deal has turned out to be a raw deal for the American workers.

They boast of recovery, of the upturn in production. But this recovery has only brought increased profits for the manufacturers and bankers. For the workers it has brought back-breaking speed-up, wages have been cut, and food and rent have soared sky-high. There are still twelve to fourteen million workers unemployed.

In this, the richest country in the world, half the population is living below the poverty line. Yet the reactionaries – Hearst and the Liberty League – are demanding that all relief be cut off, that nothing should be done to aid the distress of the working population. And Roosevelt steadily gives in to their demands.

#### EVERY CITY A UNION TOWN

Make of May Day a day of struggle *for higher wages, for the six-hour day, for the five-day week without reduction in pay, for the end of company unions and yellow dog contracts.* On that day the organized workers must extend their hands in fraternal greetings to the unorganized. We must pledge that we will help to bring millions of unorganized workers into the trade unions and build a powerful American Federation of Labor, based on industrial unionism. *Make every city a union city.*

We must demand that the unemployed receive adequate relief, that wherever a factory is closed, *the government must open it up and put men back to work* at union wages. The demands of the unemployed for the passage by Congress of the Frazier-Lundeen Unemployment, Old Age and Social Insurance Bill must be echoed by all labor. The interests of the unemployed and the employed are the same. A blow against one is a defeat for the other. *Let all workers, employed and unemployed, young and old, demand genuine social insurance, demand that the aged be well taken care of, and that the youth shall be given jobs and the right to education.*

May Day is labor's day. But it is also the day of all those oppressed by reaction, of all deprived of jobs and homes. The bulk of the farm population is bankrupt and is being steadily reduced to a landless peasantry. Labor and farmer, join hands on May Day and demonstrate for

the needs of the toiling farmers. Demand immediate and adequate relief; lighten the tax and debt burden; demand fair prices for the farmers at the expense of the monopolies and speculators; demand land and farm implements for the poor tenants and sharecroppers.

#### THE NEGRO PEOPLE

Labor must extend its hand to the Negro people, doubly oppressed and exploited by the white rulers. The life of the Negro people has been turned into one big horrible Scottsboro. *White labor cannot be free as long as black labor is enslaved.* May Day must become a day of struggle against lynchings and discrimination, and a day of struggle for the full political, social and economic equality of the Negro people.

We must resist the efforts of the bosses to profit from child labor. No child should have its life warped and stunted by back-breaking toil in factory or mill. *We must fight for the abolition of all child labor.*

On May Day we must have in our ranks all working women and all the wives of workers and farmers. We must defend them against the attacks of the reactionaries who wish to reduce them to beasts of burden, to make them mere breeding animals for the warmongers. We must fight for their special interests and needs. *Let us demand full equality for women.*

#### NEEDS OF THE YOUTH

The youth of America, the flower of the country, has no prospect of jobs or a future. Let us demonstrate on May Day for the vital needs of American youth. *Let us demand the immediate adoption by Congress of the American Youth Act.*

May Day will come this year at a time when the peace of the world is threatened more than at any time since the end of the last World War. Italian fascism is trying to enslave the people of Ethiopia and is sacrificing the lives and welfare of hundreds of thousands of Italian toilers. Japanese militarists daily rob the Chinese people of new territory and are making feverish preparations to attack the Soviet Union. In Europe, Hitler stands ready to unleash Nazi hordes against the small nations of middle Europe and is trying to establish the domination of German imperialism with blood and iron. *The fascist warmongers are striving to form an alliance of all the capitalist powers for a "crusade" against the U.S.S.R. – citadel of socialism and the hope of the working class of the world.*

#### THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

Let us on May Day show our unbreakable determination to fight for peace. Let us unmask the diplomacy of the Roosevelt government, which preaches the policy of the “good neighbor”, but forces the Latin-American countries to pay tribute to Wall Street. In the name of peace, Roosevelt is carrying on gigantic war preparations and has given the militarists and jingos a billion-dollar war budget.

Under the guise of neutrality the Roosevelt administration allows the shipment of materials for war to the fascist dictatorships – Italy, Japan, Germany. Our own reactionaries and jingos – Hearst, Coughlin and the Liberty League – encourage Hitler and Japanese militarism to attack the Soviet Union. *Let us press onward and build a real working class blockade against all munitions shipments and the shipment of all war materials to the fascist war machines.*

We cannot trust Roosevelt’s smooth words about neutrality. His policy is helping to pave the way so that the bankers can drag the United States into the next world war, just as his predecessor, Wilson, went to war to protect the profits of the House of Morgan.

#### DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET UNION

We must demonstrate our determination to join hands with workers throughout the world in the fight for peace, in the fight against the instigators of a new world war – fascist Germany and militarist Japan. *Let us unite with the toilers of the whole world to keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world, to save humanity from the horrors of a new world slaughter. Let us on May First, the traditional day of socialism, pledge ourselves to defend the only country of socialism – the Soviet Union.* Let the American working class show that it stands solidly behind the peace policy of the Soviet Union, the only country which plans no aggressive action, which wants to enslave no people, which has no capitalists trying to coin money out of death and destruction.

On May First, the day on which the working class demonstrates for its own class interests, *let us raise high the banner of struggle for independent working class political action.* The three years of the New Deal have shown the workers and farmers that they cannot depend on the two old capitalist parties to fight for their interests. The Democratic Party and the Republican Party may have differences as to how the loot taken from the toilers should be divided. But they are the parties of Wall Street, owned and directed by the banks and monopolies.

#### FOR A FARMER-LABOR PARTY!

Do not rely upon Roosevelt, who uses high-sounding words against the reactionaries but who on every issue retreats before them and carries out their dictates. Do not believe those labor leaders like John L. Lewis, who ask you to line up behind Roosevelt and to abandon the building of a Farmer-Labor Party. This is the road to disunity. This will keep the people chained to the Democratic and Republican Parties, to the parties of Wall Street. This will weaken the independent force of labor and its alliance with the farmers and city middle classes. This leaves us completely at the mercy of Roosevelt and the Liberty Leaguers.

*If we are to make the rich pay the cost of tire crisis, if we are to relieve the workers and farmers of the unbearable burden of taxation, if we are to give work to the unemployed and hope to the youth, if we are to prevent the victory of fascism in the United States, if we want to defend and preserve peace then we must build the people's front against war and fascism – a Farmer-Labor Party.*

As we march through the streets and raise our voices in protest against fascism, let us extend the hand of solidarity to the victims of class war in the United States and throughout the capitalist world. Let us demand the freedom of Tom Mooney, the Scottsboro boys, the Sacramento prisoners, and all those framed and imprisoned by the capitalists for their struggle against reaction and their efforts in behalf of the working class.

RELEASE ERNST THAELMANN!

Let the Nazi rulers hear us demand on May First that they release Ernst Thaelmann, Carl Von Ossietzky, and the tens of thousands of other anti-fascist victims of fascist terror in Austria, in Italy, and wherever the white terror rages. Let us demand the freedom of Luis Carlos Prestes, imprisoned and tortured because he fights to liberate the Brazilian people from the domination of Wall Street. Let us demand the immediate and safe release of the German Reichstag deputy Ewert and his wife from the torture chambers of Brazilian white terror. Let us support the fight of the Latin- American peoples for their national independence, and their struggle to free themselves from the yoke of American imperialism.

As we march on May Day let us remember that we live in the richest land in the world. There is wealth enough for everyone. Not a single man, woman or child would have to go hungry if the warehouses were opened, if the closed factories started to operate again, if human needs were put above the privileges of profit.

FOR SOCIALISM, FOR A SOVIET AMERICA!

No capitalist country is so ripe for socialism as the United States, where the toilers have built up the greatest productive plants in the world. *Inspired by the great victories of socialism in the Soviet Union, where unemployment has been abolished, where hundreds of nationalities live in peace, where the greatest culture in the history of the world is being built, let us resolve that we in the United States will fight for the victory of socialism, for a Soviet America.*

Workers, farmers, Socialists, Communists, trade unionists, unemployed, down tools on May Day. Demonstrate the power of the American working class. Make of labor's May Day parades a mighty fist challenging the tyranny and greed of the bankers and open-shoppers. Let this May Day become the day from which the American working class will advance to new victories.

*Down tools on May First! All out into the streets! Build the mighty united front of the working class on May First!*

*For the six-hour day, for the five-day week without reduction in pay! For higher wages, against the high cost of living!*

*Make every city a union city! For a powerful American Federation of Labor based on industrial unionism!*

*For unemployment, old age and social insurance (the Frazier-Lundeen Bill)!*

*For full social, political and economic equality for the Negro people! Jobs and schools for American youth! Demand the passage of the American Youth Act!*

*For a people's front against war and fascism! For a Farmer-Labor Party!*

*Keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world! Against Roosevelt's billion-dollar war budget!*

*Support the peace policy of the Soviet Union! Defend the Soviet Union – the Land of Socialism!*

*Follow the example of the Soviet Union! Forward to a Soviet America!*

CENTRAL COMMITTEE,  
COMMUNIST PARTY, U.S.A.  
*Wm. Z. Foster, Chairman,  
Earl Browder, General Secretary*