

After Munich

By
Georgi Dimitroff

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THE UNITED FRONT
OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT
AND OF THE PEOPLES AGAINST FASCISM

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GEORGI DIMITROFF

also

THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY
OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST
REVOLUTION

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AFTER MUNICH

THE UNITED FRONT
OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT
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By GEORGI DIMITROFF

I.

AT THE time when the Soviet people, freed from capitalist slavery, celebrates the twenty-first anniversary of the great socialist revolution which inflicted a crushing blow on the first world imperialist war, millions of people in the capitalist countries are falling victim to sanguinary fascist brigandage. The fascist miscreants are driving mankind ever deeper into the abyss of a new imperialist war.

Long before the present events, Comrade Stalin repeatedly uttered the warning that the fascist governments were preparing a new imperialist carnage. In January, 1934, from the tribune of the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., Comrade Stalin declared:

"Again as in 1914 the parties of bellicose imperialism, the parties of war and *revanche* are coming into the foreground.

"Quite clearly things are moving towards a new war." *

* Stalin, Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., in *Socialism Victorious*, p. 10, International Publishers, New York.

Subsequently, on March 1, 1936, in a talk with Roy Howard, Comrade Stalin stated:

"In my opinion there are two seats of war danger. The first is in the Far East, in the zone of Japan. I have in mind the numerous statements made by Japanese military men containing threats against other powers. The second seat is in the zone of Germany. . . . At present the Far Eastern seat of danger reveals the greatest activity. However, the center of this danger may shift to Europe." *

In August, 1935, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, guided by Comrade Stalin's Marxist-Leninist analysis of the international situation, characterized the plans of plunder of German fascism in the following way:

"The adventurist plans of the German fascists are very far-reaching and count on a war of revenge against France, dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, annexation of Austria, destruction of the independence of the Baltic states, which they are striving to convert into a base for attack on the Soviet Union, and the wresting of the Soviet Ukraine from the U.S.S.R. They are demanding colonies and are endeavoring to stir up sentiment in favor of a world war for a new repartition of the world." **

The entire course of events has shown how correct the Communists were when they sounded the alarm regarding the oncoming danger of war and issued the timely call to the working people to resist fascism on the basis of a united people's front.

In 1935 Italy attacked Ethiopia. Fascist Germany, in its

* *The Stalin-Howard Interview*, p. 5, International Publishers, New York.

** *Resolutions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International*, p. 41, Workers Library Publishers, New York.

turn, arbitrarily tore up the Versailles Treaty, introduced conscription, militarized the Rhineland and transformed it into a military base from which to strike a blow at France. Then it forcibly occupied Austria, seized the Sudetenland, took possession of all the military-strategic positions of Czechoslovakia, achieved its dismemberment in the endeavor to transform Czechoslovakia into its virtual colony.

In the summer of 1936, the ruling circles of Germany and Italy, having first provoked a fascist putsch in Spain, organized armed intervention against the Spanish republic. They drafted their regular troops and an enormous quantity of military equipment to Spain and dispatched their navies to blockade the Spanish republic, and to secure their domination in the Mediterranean. For two years Italian airmen and German artillery men have been reducing Spanish towns to ruins, slaughtering Spanish women and children, drenching with blood the soil of the Spanish people, whose only wish is to be masters of their own home.

A no less nefarious war for the conquest of China is being waged by the Japanese fascist militarists in the Far East against the Chinese people fighting for its independence.

"All these facts go to show that the second imperialist war has in fact already begun. It has begun surreptitiously, without war being declared. States and peoples have somehow imperceptibly crept into the orbit of the second imperialist war. War has been begun in different parts of the globe by three aggressive states—the fascist ruling circles of Germany, Italy and Japan. War is being waged over a tremendous expanse from Gibraltar to Shanghai. War has already succeeded in drawing over five hundred million people into its orbit. In the last analysis it is being waged against the capitalist interests of Britain, France, the U.S.A., since its object is to secure the re-partition of the world and of spheres of influence to the advan-

tage of the aggressive countries and at the expense of these so-called democratic states.

"The distinctive feature of the second imperialist war is, for the time being, that it is being waged and developed by the aggressive powers, while the other powers, the 'democratic' powers against whom in fact the war is directed, pretend that the war is no concern of theirs, wash their hands of it, back out of it, laud their own peaceableness, rail at the fascist aggressors and . . . step by step yield their own positions to the aggressors, at the same time asserting that they are preparing to resist." *

Why has this series of sanguinary fascist crimes become possible? It has become possible because the ruling circles of the so-called democratic states have systematically retreated before the fascist aggressors.

Italian fascism was allowed to attack Ethiopia with impunity. It not only enslaved Ethiopia, but also hurled itself against Spain. German fascism was permitted to militarize the Rhineland without hindrance. It made use of this to fall upon Spain. Then it engulfed Austria and crushed Czechoslovakia. The Japanese freebooters were enabled to seize Manchuria and the Northern provinces of China. With growing insolence the Japanese militarists embarked upon a war to conquer the whole of China. Step by step the countries of "great Western democracy" retreated before the fascist plunderers. Step by step the fascist plunderers strengthened their positions, increased their aggression, resorted to new acts of violence, and at the same time used all this to draw the noose ever tighter around the neck of their own peoples.

Yet the governments of the bourgeois-democratic countries possessed adequate means wherewith to bar the road to the fascist offensive and to avert the outbreak of war. They were in a position to curb the fascist aggressors by the joint action

* See *History of the C.P.S.U.*, pp. 318-19, Russian edition.

of the states, members of the League of Nations, interested in maintaining peace. They were in a position to do so by employing Article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant, which provides for collective action against violators of the peace. They were in a position to do so by applying economic sanctions which would inevitably have compelled the governments of Germany, Italy, Japan, which do not possess adequate raw material and financial resources, to retreat in face of the resolution of those who are interested in the maintenance of peace.

Such action to secure the maintenance of peace would have been supported with enthusiasm by all peoples, who want neither the bondage of fascism, nor the horrors of war. Undoubtedly, such action would have been greeted by the masses of the peoples of the fascist countries themselves, who are groaning under the yoke of fascist barbarism. A powerful movement of the people would have been the most effective means against the instigators of war.

However, the bourgeois governments did not put the system of collective security into operation. They did not do so because they *did not want to*. They did not want to do so because their policy is determined by the reactionary imperialist circles which, out of fear of the growth of the working class movement in Europe, of the movement for national liberation in Asia, out of hatred for the land of socialism, sacrificed to fascism not only foreign countries and peoples, but also the interests of their own peoples. In the name of their narrow class imperialist interests they yield the small nations to be rent asunder by fascism, thereby facilitating the further aggression of the fascist governments. They supported German fascism because they wanted in its person to have a *European gendarme* that strangles every democratic movement of the masses of the people.

So as to arrive at agreement with German fascism, the haughty ringleaders of these imperialist circles not only did not spare the prestige of the "great powers" they represent, but also underwent such personal humiliation at the hands of the fascist dictators, as though they were speaking on behalf of countries already defeated in war. And vain are all their endeavors now to cover up their terrible responsibility to the peoples by their lying equivocations to the effect that by bending the knee to the fascist dictators they were saving the cause of peace, were saving Europe and mankind from the horrors of war.

II.

AT ALL the stages of fascist aggression and of the unleashing of imperialist war *only the great Soviet Union pursued a firm policy of peace*. Had the other states accepted the proposals of the Soviet government regarding a collective repulse to the aggressor, peace would have been preserved. Millions of people would not have been hurled, as now, by the fascist war incendiaries, into the bloody shambles of destruction by war.

During the onslaught on Ethiopia, the Soviet Union, as distinct from other countries, consistently operated the economic sanctions established by the League of Nations in relation to fascist Italy. From the very beginning of the military intervention against the Spanish republic, the Soviet Union declared for resolute collective action by all the countries belonging to the League of Nations, against the German and Italian violators.

On more than one occasion the Soviet country came out against the policy of so-called non-intervention, which in fact meant the application of a blockade on republican Spain and

has enabled the interventionists to introduce their troops and military supplies for the annihilation of the Spanish people, and get off scot free.

When the Italian pirates began to sink merchant ships in the Mediterranean, the Soviet government resolutely demanded an end to the piracy and brought about the conclusion of the well-known Nyons agreement which was directly aimed at the protection of peaceful merchant navigation. At the Assembly of the League of Nations and in its commissions, in the so-called Non-Intervention Committee, everywhere, only the Soviet Union has unreservedly defended the just cause of the Spanish people.

At the Brussels Conference summoned in connection with the onslaught of the Japanese militarists on China, the Soviet Union insisted on the operation of a policy of collective repulse to the Japanese invaders. The Chinese people knows that it has in the Soviet people its unswerving friend, the advocate of the sovereignty, integrity and independence of China.

When German fascism moved its troops into Austria, the Soviet Union proposed to the governments of the other states that they take joint action against the arbitrary conduct of the fascists.

Everybody is aware of the position adopted by the Soviet Union when German fascism was brandishing the knife over Czechoslovakia, when the Polish and Hungarian vultures fastened their claws into the living body of the Czechoslovak people. In accordance with the agreement concluded with Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union showed to the whole world that it was ready to come to the assistance of Czechoslovakia and to fulfill its obligations as provided for in this treaty. The Soviet government also warned Poland that an attack by it on Czechoslovakia would entail the automatic cancella-

tion of the non-aggression pact between Poland and the Soviet Union.

The whole world knows how the Soviet Union answered the invasion of Soviet territory at Lake Khasan by the Japanese samurai. By a crushing lightning blow at the Japanese provocateurs, the army of the land of socialism showed *how to employ armed force to guard the cause of peace.*

The Soviet Union pursues its policy in the interests of the genuine defense of world peace, in the interests of the working people of all countries. Its peace policy corresponds to the aspirations of all peoples. The Soviet Union is the powerful buttress of the struggle against wars of conquest, the unfailing defender of small nations and weak countries against fascist aggression and imperialist enslavement. In its struggle for peace the Soviet Union bases itself on the might of victorious socialism. Every new socialist factory is a new fortress in the struggle of the peoples of all countries against fascism. Every flourishing collective farm is a new blow at the dark forces of reaction. Every success of the socialist country strengthens the power of the working people throughout the world. The culture and science of the Soviet country are placed at the service of the whole of mankind. The land of socialism is the staunch bulwark of the liberation struggle of the working people throughout the world, the most important factor in rallying the forces of the international working class and of the anti-fascist people's front. *The moral and political unity of the Soviet people increases the great vital force of international solidarity among the working people.*

Amid the general anxiety, confusion and uncertainty as to the morrow that reign in the capitalist world, only the Soviet people look calmly into the future. Steadfastly and confidently the Soviet Union is completing the construction of socialist society and advancing to communism. Every day brings to the

working people of the capitalist world ever new proofs of the *correctness of the path* being followed by the great Soviet people under the banner of Marxism-Leninism. The entire tremendous struggle of the Party of Lenin-Stalin for socialism, for the socialist industrialization of the country, for the collectivization of peasant farming, the struggle against the host of enemies, the rooting out of the Trotskyite-Bukharinite agents of fascism in the U.S.S.R.—all this is increasingly assuming its place in the minds of the international working class as their very own cause, the cause they hold most dear.

The whole of working mankind is vitally interested in the all-around consolidation of the Soviet Union, in the resolute strengthening of contacts between the great Soviet people and the working class and peoples of the capitalist countries. Herein lies also the most important guarantee of the successful struggle against fascist aggression, for world peace.

III.

IT WOULD be a most *dangerous delusion* at the present time for the laboring masses and the peoples to believe the false pro-fascist legend that it is peace that has been secured at the price of the predatory dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, that German fascism has by this act of violence completed the fulfillment of its program of aggression in Europe and that the peoples may sleep in tranquillity without grievous thoughts about new onslaughts by fascism, which menace their liberty and independence. Only accomplices in the fascist crimes, only deceivers of the peoples or hopeless political blockheads can spread such a legend. No person in his right senses will deny that it is precisely since the Munich plots that the effrontery of the fascist aggressors has immensely increased. And it could not be otherwise. For German fascism has been

presented by the reactionary British and French bourgeoisie with new, exceptionally favorable military-strategic and economic positions for the further development of its aggression.

The fact should be clearly appreciated that the question has already passed beyond the bounds of the arbitrary revision of the Versailles Treaty by the fascist states. *What is at issue is a new repartition of the globe.* What is at issue is not only the redistribution of the existing colonial possessions. Fascism is placing on the order of the day the question of the *repartition of Europe itself*, of the colonization of a number of European states and the imperialist enslavement of a number of European peoples.

The fascist beasts of prey themselves do not consider it necessary to conceal the course of their plunderous endeavors. The map circulated by the fascists after the occupation of the Sudetenland clearly demonstrates the plans of German fascism. It turns out that according to the schedule outlined in this map, the spring of 1938 was to see settled the fate of Austria; the autumn of 1938—of Czechoslovakia; the spring of 1939 is to see a blow struck at Hungary; in the autumn of 1939 the object of plunder is to be Poland; preparations are being made for a blow in the spring of 1940 at Yugoslavia; in the autumn of 1940—at Rumania and Bulgaria. In the spring of 1941—France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Switzerland are to be the objects of a fascist onslaught; in the autumn of 1941 fascist Germany plans its attack on the U.S.S.R.

Further, we learn from this map that German fascism "magnanimously" places at the disposal of fascist Italy a big part of Spain, the Southern districts of France, Greece, a big part of Turkey, Syria, Palestine and North Africa.

Naturally, there is a great deal in this that is undoubtedly the fruits of unrestrained fascist fantasy. It suffices, however,

to observe the disruptive activity of German and Italian fascism in the British and French possessions, as well as in Europe and in other parts of the world, to become convinced that the fascists are really working to put these or similar plans into operation.

German fascism is inundating Alsace-Lorraine with its agents. On France's Pyrenean frontier the German fascists are engaged in intensive activity to establish bases for a blow at France. Fascist agents are inflaming separatist movements among the Slovaks and Ukrainians in Czechoslovakia, are conducting disruptive work in Jugoslavia, Rumania, in the Balkans. They are preparing the next blow against Lithuania and the other Baltic states. The intrigues of German fascism in the Scandinavian and other countries, the provocative putsches in the Latin American countries, the extensive espionage activity in the U.S.A.—all these are links in the general chain of the fascist offensive. The Polish fascists, who have flung themselves like jackals on the torn body of Czechoslovakia and are baring their teeth at Lithuania, are themselves, by their policy of plunder, subjecting the independence of Poland to the menace of a blow from insatiable German fascism.

But the fascist plunderers are reckoning without the host. The peoples have by no means yet said their decisive word. The fascists may rob and run riot like brigands in the Middle Ages, because they have not yet met the host fully armed. This host is the peoples and, primarily, the working class. When one day they gather their forces and deal a determined blow to the plunderers, the world will see all the emptiness, swagger and conceit of these "bold Aryan warriors," who scare the lives out of cowardly hucksters in the countries of bourgeois democracy.

Never yet, since the end of the world imperialist war, has

the hatred felt for the warmongers been so profound and strong as at the present time. A wave of popular indignation against the vile deeds of fascism is rising in all countries. The movement to repulse the fascist aggressors found clear expression in the days when the plotters in Munich were tearing to pieces and sacrificing to fascism the cultured democratic Czechoslovak republic. Millions of peoples rose in its defense in the most important countries of the world.

In Great Britain for many days big meetings took place which demanded the defense of Czechoslovakia. A number of the biggest trade unions, social organizations, representatives of the intelligentsia, outstanding public figures came forward with the demand for a collective repulse to the fascist gangsters. They insisted on the unification of the forces of Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union to aid Czechoslovakia. Very influential British newspapers published tens and hundreds of letters from their readers protesting against the betrayal of Czechoslovakia by the British bourgeoisie. Thousands of such protests were sent to newspaper editors. The Executive Committee of the Cooperative Party, speaking on behalf of five million members, demanded of the British government that it call parliament and come to the aid of Czechoslovakia.

After the return of the British National Council of Labor delegation from Paris, where a conference had taken place with the leaders of the French trade unions, several thousands of mass meetings were held throughout Great Britain, directed against the policy of bowing and scraping to German fascism. The protest movement grew daily.

In the United States of America, despite the resistance of pro-fascist circles which proclaim the policy of so-called isolationism, the movement in support of Czechoslovakia attained particularly big dimensions. Representatives of organizations

of 21 nationalities (Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Rumanians and others) sent messages to the President of the U.S.A., demanding that the Kellogg Pact be fulfilled, and that the system of collective security be put into operation in defense of Czechoslovakia. Similar demands were put forward by representatives of social, trade union, and other organizations, and by many outstanding men of science and culture. In a number of towns "Save Czechoslovakia" Committees were established. The meetings organized to protest against the new onslaught by fascist Germany attracted enormous numbers of people. In some of the biggest centers of the country (Chicago) huge demonstrations took place in which hundreds of thousands of people participated.

In France a wave of indoor and outdoor meetings, of demonstrations against the Munich agreement took place throughout the country. Not only trade union and public organizations, but also authoritative military circles declared the need for supporting Czechoslovakia.

Even in such countries as Jugoslavia, Bulgaria and Poland, where an openly reactionary regime exists, the masses of the people found ways and means of expressing their sympathies for Czechoslovakia and of coming forward in its defense against the German onslaught. From distant Australia, representatives of trade unions addressed the Czechoslovak people with a promise of aid in case of war with Germany.

The Czechoslovak embassies in the European capital received an enormous number of letters containing expressions of these sentiments. *Thousands of people expressed their desire to volunteer for service in the Czechoslovak army.*

There was not a single cultured spot in the world where the just indignation of the progressive sections of the population against the Munich plotters did not find expression.

The popular movement attained particularly great dimen-

sions after the Munich agreement. The masses are more and more realizing the real meaning of the policy of the ruling cliques which is directed towards retreating before fascism. The smokescreen created by the pro-fascist circles and their representatives in the ruling spheres, assisted by a number of reactionary leaders of the Second International and of the International Federation of Trade Unions, and designed to convince people that peace was allegedly saved in Munich, is beginning rapidly to dissolve.

And now it is easy for everybody to visualize what a tremendous force could have emerged from these movements if the working class of the most important countries, primarily France, Britain and the U.S.A., and the organizations of the international proletariat had taken united and determined action against the robber agreement arrived at in Munich. *This force could have prevented the Munich agreement, could have rendered impossible the crime committed against Czechoslovakia and could have driven the unbridled fascist robbers far back.*

IV.

IF A DEEP and careful analysis is made of what has taken place after Munich it reveals two basic trends in international political development.

First, the further conduct of the policy expressed in the Munich plot, the *policy of agreement* between German and Italian fascism, on the one hand, and the imperialist cliques of Great Britain and France on the other; an agreement directed against the vital interests of their own peoples, against the poorly protected nations and countries, against the international labor movement, against democracy and peace, against the great land of socialism.

Second, the development of the movement of the working class united front, of the united front of the peoples against this bandit agreement, against fascist aggression, in defense of world peace.

The first trend leads to the division and enslavement of Spain and China, to the enslavement of other peoples, to the intensification of colonial slavery, to the further unleashing of imperialist war.

The second trend leads to the victory of the Spanish and Chinese peoples over the fascist invaders, to the consolidation of the liberty and independence of the small nations, to the curbing of the fascist aggressors and to the guaranteeing of world peace.

There can be no doubt that it is precisely this second trend that corresponds to the interests of the working class and of the peoples of all countries. But for it to triumph, it is necessary that reaction at home be curbed in the lands of bourgeois democracy, that the policy of capitulation to the fascist aggressors be stopped; governments are necessary that base themselves on the masses of the people, that reckon with their interests and their wishes, governments that are ready to fight against the fascist enemy from without.

But the ruling circles of Britain and France are endeavoring by every possible means to hinder this. They understand only too well that their betrayal of Czechoslovakia, *the further operation of the agreement with fascism*, on the one hand, *and the intensification of reaction at home* on the other, *are two sides of one and the same medal*.

For the ruling circles of Britain and France to be able to carry through the policy of agreement with fascism, they need to tie the working class in their countries hand and foot. And they have already begun a drive against democratic liberties, against the working class and its organizations.

In France the Radical Party Congress showed quite clearly how the French partners of the fascist aggressors are proposing to carry through the offensive—planned in Munich—against democracy and peace, against the interests of the proletariat and of all working people.

The drive against the social gains of the working people won on the basis of the People's Front, the new financial decrees, which place tremendous burdens on the backs of the working people, the attacks on the People's Front, the plans of recognizing Franco, and of agreement with fascist Italy aimed at strangling the Spanish republic, the encouragement of disturbances by the fascist bands of Doriot and de la Rocque, the unleashing of the anti-Communist campaign—all these are links in a single chain. The ruling circles of the French bourgeoisie are trampling underfoot, in the most shameless fashion, the national interests of the French people against whom their age-old enemy, German imperialism, is preparing its blow.

In Britain the partners of German fascism are seeking for ways whereby to crush the voice of the opposition press and of criticism, so as to prevent the concentration of the democratic forces, to hinder the advance of the labor movement. They are intensifying the exploitation of the working class under the guise of work for "national defense." They have endorsed the seizure of Ethiopia by Italian fascism.

At the time when ever new transports of interventionist troops and equipment are being conveyed to Spain, they insist, with unparalleled cynicism and despite the obvious truth, that Italian fascism is recalling its "volunteers." They calmly permit the sinking of British ships by the fascist interventionists. They are preparing the enslavement of the Spanish people by a new robber agreement with Hitler and Mussolini. They are encouraging the reactionary forces in other countries

in every possible way, by deliberately weakening the defensive power of the peoples of these countries against fascist aggression.

The most important lesson of the recent events is precisely that *unless the reactionary imperialist cliques and capitulators in one's own country are curbed, it is impossible to curb the unbridled fascist invaders, it is impossible to conduct a successful struggle in defense of the liberty and independence of the peoples and universal peace.*

The defense of world peace, the defense of the peoples against armed fascist aggression cannot be achieved by wordy pacifist declarations and invocations. *What is needed is active struggle, resolute resistance.* The onslaught of armed fascism must be countered by the mailed fist of the peoples.

The working class and its Communist vanguard is the most resolute and consistent adherent and champion of peace. But this does not at all imply that it stands for peace at any price, that it is willing to hand over its own people and its country to the fascist vultures "in the interests of peace." He who desires the establishment of real and lasting peace must employ all possible forces and means to fight against the fascist plunderers and enslavers. He must resolutely oppose the policy of agreement with the fascist aggressors, and cast aside capitulators and accomplices of the fascist aggressors, who mislead the people with their false pacifist homilies.

In the light of the international situation that has developed after Munich the proletariat and working masses of all countries are directly confronted with political tasks of tremendous importance.

These tasks may be briefly reduced to the following:

To frustrate the policy of the bandit agreement between the fascist aggressors and the imperialist clique of Britain and France;

To offer resolute resistance in the countries of bourgeois democracy to reaction which is raising its head and is aimed at the social achievements of the working people, at democratic liberties, at the labor movement;

To ensure the victory of the Spanish and Chinese peoples over the fascist vultures;

To protect the Czechoslovak people and the peoples of the small countries against foreign enslavement;

To render all possible assistance to the working class and to the peoples of the fascist countries in their struggle against the dictatorship of the fascist gangsters and incendiaries of war.

All of these tasks are indissolubly connected. But particularly important is the Spanish question. Under no circumstances must a *repetition of Munich* be permitted. The application of the villainous Munich method must not be permitted with regard to the Spanish people.

All the necessary forces are at hand for the solution of these tasks. *All that is necessary is that these forces be brought into action.* It would be difficult in post-war political history to find another such moment, as the present one, when the interests of the working class, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia, when the interests of the small nations, of the dependent and colonial countries, when the interests of culture and science, the interests of peace and democracy so coincided and merged in a common current against fascism, the worst enemy of mankind. *This is quite a real basis for the establishment of the united front of the working class and of the peoples of all countries against fascist barbarism and the incendiaries of imperialist war.*

V.

THE decisive role in the establishment of a powerful united front against fascist aggression and brigandage belongs to *the international proletariat*. The entire course of historical development brings the working class forward as the initiator, organizer and leader of this front.

The working class is the most advanced class and the paramount force of modern society. Its vanguard unit has won victory over the dark forces of tsarism and capitalism on a sixth part of the earth, and has built up a new, socialist society. The international working class is supremely interested in finally smashing the chains of capitalist exploitation and slavery throughout the world. It is the most irreconcilable enemy of fascism and of all reaction, the most resolute and consistent fighter against all oppression and enslavement of peoples, against all kinds of wars of plunder.

The working class is the backbone of the people. Thanks to its decisive role in the productive life of the country, to its numbers, its concentrated and organized character, it is the staunchest bulwark of the liberty and independence of the country.

The working class is the only class in modern society that is armed with the most advanced science of Marxism-Leninism, with the great teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, that illuminate the path of struggle against the forces of fascism and war, against fascist barbarism and capitalist slavery.

All this places a *historic responsibility* on the working class. If it is to fulfill its role of initiator, organizer and leader of the common front of all the anti-fascist forces of the world, *it must realize its own strength and be able to utilize this enormous strength to rally together all who work by hand and brain.*

Of exceptional significance is the counsel of the great Lenin that the working class needs, first and foremost, to acquire *faith in its own forces*, to smash the accursed illusion that the peoples are unable to manage without the leadership of the bourgeoisie, without this class deciding their fate. *The working class must become profoundly imbued with the consciousness of the need resolutely to take the lead of the popular movement against fascism.*

The treachery towards Czechoslovakia and the Munich plot once again show most convincingly that the working class cannot place the conduct of *foreign affairs and the defense of the country, uncontrolled*, in the hands of a bourgeois government, at the mercy of the imperialist cliques and the financial magnates.

Life imperatively demands that it become the task of the working class itself to get the solution to these questions. The question of war and peace must be decided by the masses of the people and primarily by the working class. The masses of the people have been regarded in the capitalist countries merely as an instrument in the hands of the ruling classes. They have been hurled into the abyss of war in the name of the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie. And there is the desire once more to use them in the way that pleases the taskmasters of the capitalist countries. But the working class is vitally interested not to place its fate, the fate of its country, in the hands of the ruling classes. *It is time that the wide masses of the proletariat and the people understood that in modern capitalist society there is no force other than the working class that is capable of taking on itself the leading role, the role of true, staunch and thoroughly consistent fighter against foreign fascist invasion.*

The ruling classes, headed by their imperialist upper clique, have, in the past, made, and now make, the starting point

their own mercenary class interests. History knows of dozens of examples when these classes betrayed their peoples, their country to foreign enslavers, so as to maintain their position as exploiters and property privileges. The Munich agreement is a new and graphic example in this respect.

The working class has not, and cannot have, any interests save those of the people in the struggle against fascist aggression. This follows from the very position of the working class in bourgeois countries. Every blow to the country, to the people dealt by the fascist brigands, is primarily a blow at the toiling masses, at the working class. The example of Czechoslovakia is extremely eloquent testimony of this. The capitulatory sections of the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie, who played no small part in the yielding of their country to be plundered by German fascism, are rapidly finding a common language with this brutal enemy of their country. The blows of fascism are falling with full force on the people, on the working class.

The necessary lessons must be drawn at once from all this. And the Communists will not tire of explaining to the masses, and primarily to the working class, its role and obligations in the defense of their country against fascist aggression.

But for the working class to rally together and consolidate the popular movement against fascism, it must first and foremost *establish unity in its own ranks*. The enemies of working class unity, the enemies of the anti-fascist people's front, whoever they may be, whatever the masks behind which they conceal themselves, *must be ruthlessly exposed and ousted as accomplices of reaction at home and of the fascist aggressors*.

At the present exceptionally responsible moment, one must not limit oneself to the mere propagandizing for working class unity. *Today, already, unity must be established in practice, sweeping aside all obstacles in its path*. One must not delude oneself with the idea that working class unity can be brought

about *without a struggle against its opponents in the ranks of the labor movement itself, against the enemies of the land of socialism, against the bearers of bourgeois influence into the ranks of the proletariat, against the Trotskyite and all sorts of other agents of fascism.*

There are quite a number of people in the ranks of the Socialist Parties and the trade union organizations who stand for working class unity, condemn the policy of retreating before the fascist aggressors and are ready to oppose them—a stand demanded for the defense of the interests of the working people, by the interests of the peoples whose liberty and independence are menaced by fascism. And the number of such people is growing and will continue to grow. But they only consider it possible to lead their organizations along the path of the united front, along the path of struggle against the fascist aggressors and their accomplices within their own countries, providing it meets with the agreement of the Citrines, the Spaaks and other such leaders who are stubbornly opposed to both the cause of unity and the policy of struggle against fascist aggression.

These people think they can persuade their leaders to change their policy by admonitions and exhortations. But this is an illusion, a dangerous and harmful illusion. These reactionary leaders have bound themselves so firmly to the chariot of the imperialist bourgeoisie, that to hold up the establishment of united working class action against fascism until they deign to give their agreement to it, only means *to lose precious time*, means to sacrifice the interests of the working class, of democracy and peace. *The enemy does not wait.* At every step it makes use of *the absence* of international working class unity.

The present international situation imperatively demands that the working class, despite the existence as yet in their midst of various ideological viewpoints and party-political

trends, find *a common language* as soon as possible in the struggle against fascism, and put into operation *a single international policy* that bars the way to the fascist plunderers and incendiaries of war, and guarantees the cause of peace between the peoples.

The fulfilment of the idea which is maturing in the ranks of the labor movement regarding the calling of an *international workers' conference* of representatives of the organizations of the working class of all countries would be an exceptionally important, practical step on this road. Such a conference is necessary for the defense of Spain and China. It is necessary for the protection of the social gains of the working class and of democratic liberties. It is necessary so as to rally together all forces of the international proletariat against the wrecking course adopted at Munich. An international workers' conference would outline specific measures to secure that the declarations regarding aid to the Spanish and Chinese peoples do not remain mere wishes, but be really carried into life. The representatives of the wide proletarian masses would jointly discuss how *in deeds* to effect an *embargo* on goods dispatched to the fascist murderers of women and children in Spain and a *boycott* of the goods of the fascist aggressors, how *in deed* to *secure the necessary food* for the Spanish people, how *in deeds* to secure the return of the gold belonging to the Spanish government that is withheld by the Bank of France, the release of the frozen Spanish credits in various countries, how *in deeds* to secure for the Spanish republic the right and the possibility to purchase all that it needs for its existence, how *in deeds* to prevent belligerent rights being granted to Franco, the hangman of the Spanish people, how *in deeds* to secure the *stopping of the intervention* in Spain and the withdrawal of the fascist troops of Italy and Germany that are carrying on their brigandage there.

Such a conference will be able to mobilize all the forces and resources of the working class and of international public opinion to secure the most speedy victory of the just cause of the Spanish people. Finally, such a conference would help to establish the much needed united action of the working class itself, to establish a *single and correct* international policy for it. And it would give a powerful impetus to the development of the united front of the international proletariat and of the peoples against fascism, against the unleashing of a second imperialist war.

Let it not be said that the calling of an international workers' conference is an impossible thing. True, the agents of fascism, the pro-fascist, anti-Communist elements, the enemies of working class unity will do everything to prevent such a conference. But millions of organized workers, all working class leaders who are true to their class and their people, and understand the need for united, working class action and for rallying all the anti-fascist forces, regardless of organizational and party affiliation, will want such a conference.

The fascist dictators and the representatives of the imperialist cliques are conspiring among themselves *against* the interests of the working class, *against* the interests of the peoples and of the cause of world peace. Why cannot the representatives of the workers' parties and organizations come together and settle matters *in the interests of* the working class, *in the interests of* the peoples and world peace? Why cannot the labor movement of all countries unite its forces against fascism, the common enemy of all working people, of all mankind?

Why cannot the representatives of the organized workers of Britain, France, Spain, China and the U.S.A., the Scandinavian and other countries, jointly with the workers of the Soviet Union, come together at an international conference

and invest the great cause of international proletarian solidarity with *real, effective* strength?

Now, after Munich, all these questions face every working class organization, every worker, every leader of the labor movement. They compel them to ponder deeply. *And the only correct reply to all these questions is to cast aside the rotten arguments of the saboteurs of united action, and to take practical steps to establish the world front of the international proletariat and of the peoples against fascism.*

VI.

PROCEEDING from this conviction, and basing itself on the will for unity of millions of advanced workers throughout the world, the Communist International has endeavored to utilize every, even the slightest, possibility and has not missed a single appropriate opportunity to achieve united action of the international working class. It would be useful now to call to mind the most important concrete steps of the Communist International in this direction.

When the fascists came to power in Germany, the Communist International, in February, 1933, addressed a proposal to the Second International regarding joint action against fascism. When the Spanish proletariat, in 1934, rose up with arms in hand against the monarchist-fascist reaction, the Communist International, in October, 1934, proposed to the Second International to carry through a joint campaign in aid of the Spanish proletariat.

In April, 1935, the Comintern proposed that joint May First demonstrations be carried through against fascism and war. At that time it wrote about the danger of the outbreak of a new imperialist war, and about the need to muster the

forces of the international proletariat against the German and Japanese war-makers:

"The Communist International has invariably promoted the agreements between the Communist and Socialist Parties for the joint struggle against the common enemies of the working class in all capitalist countries. Events have happened of late which *demand imperatively*, beyond national confines, the *joint international action of the working class*: the reintroduction of general conscription by the fascist Hitler government; its war threats against Lithuania and the other Baltic states, against Austria, and especially against the Soviet Union; the acute intensification of the danger of an imperialist war instigated by Hitler Germany and its allies, military-fascist Japan and fascist Poland."

When the immediate danger of an onslaught by fascist Italy hung over Ethiopia, the Communist International, on September 25, 1935, issued a call for common action against this onslaught. In the appeal of the Executive Committee of the Comintern to the Second International, it stated in this regard:

"The Seventh Congress of the Communist International instructed the Executive Committee of the Communist International to approach the leadership of the Labor and Socialist International with the proposal to establish international unity of action of the proletariat. We know that your Executive Committee decided fundamentally to examine the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International before adopting a position on the question of unity of action. And in order to give you this possibility we wished to wait somewhat before making our concrete proposals for negotiations on this subject. *But the international situation is so strained, the danger of the outbreak of a new imperialist war is so menacing and so close that there is not an hour to lose.*"

When the war against Ethiopia flared up, the Comintern once again proposed to the Second International to organize joint action by the international proletariat against the war.

In connection with the fascist revolt in Spain, the Communist International, in October, 1936, made a proposal regarding the adoption of urgent measures for joint action on behalf of the Spanish people. After the nefarious bombardment of Almeria by a German naval squadron, when the intervention of German and Italian fascism began to assume wide dimensions, the Executive Committee of the Comintern repeatedly instructed its representatives, the French Comrades Cachin and Thorez, to communicate with De Brouckere, chairman of the Second International, with a view to establishing permanent contact and to employing joint efforts for the establishment of a united front of the international working class.

On June 3, 1937, the Communist International, at the request of the Socialist Party, trade unions and Communist Party of Spain, once again proposed to the Second and Amsterdam Internationals to organize joint action of the organizations of the international proletariat against fascist aggression.

On June 26, 1937, after the fall of Bilbao, the Comintern repeated its proposals.

On May 1, 1938, the Communist International once again proposed to the Second International to establish united working class action in the struggle against fascism.

A few months before Munich and also *directly* preceding the Munich plot, the representatives of the Communist International approached De Brouckere, the chairman of the Second International, with the proposal to establish permanent contact between the leadership of the international organizations of the working class and urgently to take joint action to ward

off the fascist blow aimed at Czechoslovakia and the cause of world peace.

However, all these proposals were turned down. That is how the leadership of the Second International acted under the pressure of its reactionary, anti-Communist wing, under the pressure of the enemies of the united front.

This policy, of course, was and is cordially welcomed by the fascist aggressors. It renders it easier for them to enslave the working people in their own countries and to attack other peoples and countries. Every day the events of international life adduce ever new proofs of the ruinous character of the policy of splitting the labor movement which many reactionary leaders in the ranks of the Second International and of the International Federation of Trade Unions obstinately continue to pursue.

It would be incorrect to assert that the Second International and I.F.T.U. have not officially occupied themselves with questions of aid for the Spanish republic. They have adopted many resolutions, and several of their leaders have made quite good speeches in this regard. But there is a *gaping void between these words and the actual deeds.*

Thus, for example, at a joint conference of the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions, held on June 24, 1937, the following decision was taken:

"To employ *all possible means* to exert pressure on the governments of states belonging to the League of Nations, so that the latter may render assistance to the Spanish government in restoring its political and territorial independence.

"To demand the restoration of freedom of trade so that the Spanish government may be able freely to purchase arms.

"To extend the clear obligations of solidarity in relation to

republican Spain to all members and all the respective organizations belonging to both bodies." (My italics—G.D.)

In March, 1938, at a joint session of the Executive Committees of the Socialist and Trade Union Internationals, a still more determined resolution was adopted. It was stated in it that the Internationals:

"... demand action of all their sections so as to render immediate and effective aid to republican Spain and its heroic struggle against fascist aggression. They must be ready to support the French and British governments in all measures of a moral, political, financial, economic and military character, which should prove to be necessary for preparing the end of German and Italian intervention." (My italics—G.D.)

Such are *the words* of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals. But *in deeds* the decision taken at this very session regarding the organization of meetings, demonstrations and other measures to mobilize the masses and public opinion in defense of the Spanish people, was not carried out. The parties of the Second International and the organizations of the International Federation of Trade Unions were not mobilized to put into practice the resolutions adopted.

These decisions make it an obligation on all the organizations and all the members of the Socialist Parties to carry them into life, but *in deeds* the governments of a number of countries led by Socialists, by members of the Second International, and Socialist ministers in governments act directly contrary to these decisions. At the time when the Second and Amsterdam Internationals were adopting the resolution regarding the need to apply sanctions of an economic, political and military character, *Socialist ministers* were speaking in the name of their governments at the League of Nations in

favor of the annulment of Paragraph 16 of the League Covenant which provides for such sanctions. The Socialist Spaak, Prime Minister of Belgium, who used most shameful government orders for the persecution of International Brigade volunteers and for the *expulsion of emigrants* who had fled from the fascist plague in Germany and Austria, stubbornly sabotages all support for the Spanish people, is striving to secure the recognition by Belgium of the fascist government at Burgos and truckles in every way to the fascist pogrom-mongers of Berlin.

The Socialist ministers in the governments of the Scandinavian countries are in duty bound to carry through the decisions of their International. Nothing could prevent the governments of these countries from selling to the Spanish peoples all that it needs for its defense against Italian and German bombing planes, to save the women and children of Spain from the death-dealing fascist bombs. But *in deeds* the governments headed by the Socialists have not only failed to do this, but they keep frozen the credits of the Spanish republic with the aid of which it would be possible to save millions of Spanish children and their mothers from starvation.

In Great Britain, a number of leaders of trade unions and of the Labor Party, who play a decisive role in determining their policy, in contradistinction to the growing sympathy and support of the Spanish people by the British workers, give their government the possibility of using the hallmark of non-intervention to stifle republican Spain. The very same Labor leaders who sang the praises of Chamberlain when he flew to Berchtesgaden and Munich, continue to oppose unity of the international working class and joint action by it in support of the Spanish and Chinese peoples.

The French Socialist Party, one of the leading parties of the Second International, at one time, particularly when its

representatives were at the head of the government of France, possessed wide possibilities of carrying the decisions of the International into life. But the party leadership did not make use of these possibilities.

One could go on and on to describe the crying contradiction between the *words and deeds* of responsible representatives of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals. But what has already been said is quite sufficient.

Yet the facts testify that numerous units of the working class want *in deeds* a determined struggle against fascism, want real aid for Spain and China. They show the leaders of their organizations how the fight should be conducted against fascism, how the forces ought to be united for this struggle.

A splendid example, one which will go down as a glorious and heroic page in the history of the struggle against fascism, in the history of the struggle for unity of the ranks of the working class, is provided by the *International Brigades* in Spain. The battalions of volunteers made up of Germans, Frenchmen, Britishers, Canadians, Americans, Italians, Poles, men of the Balkans, and of many other countries, which covered themselves with undying glory in the battles against fascism, were made up of Communists, Socialists, and a number of other anti-fascists. Adherence to different political parties did not prevent them from taking up arms and coming to the defense of the cause of all advanced and progressive mankind. *They really wanted to fight against fascism.* Herein lies the secret of their unity and the secret of their success. And it is clear to everybody that he who really want to conduct a struggle against fascism will not search for endless excuses to disrupt united action by the working class.

Millions of workers stand for the policy of active support of republican Spain. They denounce the policy of "non-intervention" and demand its annulment. They seek to secure for

the Spanish government the right to purchase arms, and demand the withdrawal of the interventionists. They share their crusts of bread to aid the women and children of Spain. The big resources that have been, and continue to be, gathered in various countries in aid of the Spanish people speak more eloquently than any words of the fraternal international solidarity of the working people.

When the seamen of three Swedish steamers refused to transport supplies for the insurgents, when the workers in a number of countries refused to load military supplies and goods for the fascists, they showed an example to the leaders of the trade unions and Social-Democratic Parties of *how to act*. Among these seamen there were undoubtedly people who belonged to various political parties and who had different viewpoints on many questions. But they *really* wanted to fight, and united on the basis of common action against the fascist insurgents and interventionists, who are sowing death on Spanish soil.

One can find many such examples. And their number would be *immeasurably greater* if this action were led and organized by the corresponding working class organizations. Every day brings fresh proofs of the growing readiness of the units of the working class to employ increasingly effective measures so as to put an end to the policy of their governments' policies, which are helping to strangle the free peoples and are encouraging the fascist aggressors.

Alive in the minds of millions of workers is the *experience of the struggle against the counter-revolutionary intervention, directed against the Soviet Republic in 1918-20*. The working class at that time compelled the bourgeois governments to retreat, the latter were compelled to abandon the dispatch of troops and military supplies, and the open support of the White Guard counter-revolution. The proletariat of the capi-

talist countries achieved this by their determined action. The refusal to load and transport troop and supply ships, strikes of workers, meetings and demonstrations, the refusal of soldiers to fight against the Land of the Soviets and revolts on warships and in expeditionary units—all this helped the workers and peasants of the Soviet country finally to crush the interventionists.

This historic experience shows how tremendous are the forces possessed by the working class, and how it can frustrate intervention directed against a people fighting for its liberty and independence.

The Communists, basing themselves on the entire experience of the struggle of the international proletariat, and proceeding from the great tasks which face them, will join with all supporters of the united front in the ranks of the Second International and the Trade Union International in waging a still *more energetic and tenacious* struggle for the fighting unity of the ranks of the proletariat both in separate countries and on an international scale, will wage an unswerving struggle for the anti-fascist people's front. The obstinate resistance of the saboteurs of the cause of unity cannot stop the Communists and all other supporters of the united front from fulfilling this *historic task*, on the solution of which depends the success of the struggle against fascist reaction within the capitalist countries and against fascist onslaught from without.

There can be no insurmountable obstacles to the achievement of the united action—so much needed—by the international working class movement. Let there but be a sufficiently clear understanding by the working class itself of the need for such unity and the firm, unshakable will to bring it into being despite all obstacles. *The whole question is to bring this unity about as rapidly as possible and to ensure a firm basis for it.* And then the fascist incendiaries of war and the

reactionary cliques in other countries will receive a complete repulse and be doomed to inevitable defeat.

* * *

The fascist aggressors are beating the drums about their "Munich victory." They are making furious preparations for new bandit conspiracies and crimes. They are helped in this by the worst enemies of the working class and of socialism in the bourgeois-democratic countries. Men of little faith, capitulators, cowards bow their heads before the fascist jack-boots.

But the fascists are celebrating prematurely. Their "victory" is a *Pyrrhic victory*, a victory which is fraught with defeat for them. They have engulfed Austria, but millions of the Austrian people hate them. They have seized the Sudetenland, but have roused the wrath of the peoples of Czechoslovakia to the utmost limits against themselves. They have crushed Czechoslovakia, but have roused all the small nations against themselves. They are shedding the blood of the Spanish people, but twenty million Spaniards pronounce the name of the German interventionists with hatred. The fascists, by their effrontery, are rousing the whole world against themselves.

By their revival of the monstrous obscurantism and Inquisition of the Middle Ages, by Jewish pogroms which far outdo the most sanguinary deeds of the "Black Hundreds" of tsarist Russia they are calling forth the most profound indignation of mankind. By their brigandage and conquests they are undermining the ground beneath their feet. And the hour of vengeance will come. A united working class together with the democratic forces of the peoples are in a position to curb the fascist violators and warmongers, and together with the peoples of the fascist countries to crush fascism.

There are not, nor can there be, such forces in the world which can turn back the wheel of historical development. The future belongs not to rotten, declining capitalism, and its poisonous and foul-smelling cesspool—fascism, but to ascending socialism, towards which are turned the eyes of all working people, of all advanced mankind.

THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

*Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist
International, issued on November 7, 1938*

PROLETARIANS and working people of all lands!
Today the Soviet people mark the twenty-first year
of their great socialist revolution, of their heroic struggle, of
their world historic victories.

At the time when the peoples of the Soviet republic are completing the construction of classless socialist society and are advancing full of confidence towards communism, the capitalist world is in the throes of an ominous war fever.

The second imperialist war, a robber war for a new repartition of the earth, has in fact already begun. It is already raging in various corners of the globe. In Spain and in China the fascist butchers are doing their abominable work. Over 500,000,000 human beings have been hurled into the abyss of bloody destruction. War threatens to spread to new territories and so involve new peoples. Hundreds of millions of people are menaced with attack by the fascist beasts of prey.

Never yet, as during these days of fascist brigandage, have the masses of the people of the capitalist countries had such a strong and profound feeling of their blood-bond with the great land of socialism. The peoples see in the U.S.S.R. the bulwark of their struggle for liberty and independence, the

embodiment of their age-old aspirations. They see that the Soviet people, thanks to the proletarian dictatorship, have withstood a host of enemies, have maintained and consolidated their independence, have built socialism.

Towering aloft like a rock of granite before millions of people in the capitalist world, which is in the grip of confusion and disintegration and is on the threshold of a new economic crisis, is the land of victorious socialism. Conscious of its strength, the Soviet land pursues its path with resolute and tranquil step. The justness of its cause constitutes its greatness. Its hand is formidable to enemies and will not fail to succor friends. Its Stalinist word is inviolable. It is with confidence that it looks into its future. Inexhaustible are the material and moral forces of the Soviet land.

The gigantic scope of socialist industry, the enormous progress of the collective farms, the growing prosperity of the masses, the blossoming of a life that is full of joy and happiness—all these have united the Soviet people with communism forever.

The unity of the workers and peasants, the unity of the people and the Bolshevik Party, and the Soviet government, the unity of the nationalities that inhabit the U.S.S.R., the unity of the working people throughout the world and their great fatherland—render the Soviet power an invincible force. The glorious Party of Lenin and Stalin embodied and consolidated this moral and political unity of the Soviet people in the great Stalin Constitution, that charter of nationwide socialist democracy.

The Soviet land will yield to no one its achievements, its inexhaustible riches. The frontiers of the Soviet country are inviolable. On the borders of the U.S.S.R. there stands, unyielding, the strongest army in the world, the Red Army of socialism. By the lesson it taught the Japanese cutthroats at

Lake Khasan it provided a clear example of how the cause of peace should be defended. By wiping out the gang of Trotskyite-Bukharinite spies, the Soviet people teaches how one should conduct the struggle against traitors, capitulators and enemies of the people. By its unswerving loyalty to the obligations it had undertaken, the Soviet government, during the Czechoslovakian crisis, showed how agreements should be kept and collective security defended. Only the Soviet people supported and continues to support the Spanish people against the violence of the plunderers and the treachery of their accomplices. Only the Soviet Union stretches out a helping hand to the Chinese people. Only the land of the proletarian dictatorship, supremely, with Stalinist courage and stalwartness, upholds the cause of liberty throughout the world.

The great material power of socialism gathers strength with every hour. Millions of working people everywhere are turning towards it. The revolutionizing influence of socialism over the peoples is a source of fear to world reaction. World reaction wishes to turn back the wheel of history. It is unleashing the wild fascist beast against the land of socialism, against its own peoples. In their mortal hatred of socialism, of the international working class of every democratic movement, the imperialist cliques of Britain and France concluded a counter-revolutionary alliance with German and Italian fascism. The Munich agreement *was not only a blow at Czechoslovakia*. It is a far wider imperialist conspiracy. It is a conspiracy against the small nations which Britain and France are betraying to the fascist plunderers. It is a conspiracy against the Spanish republic, whose heroic people they wish to place in bondage to the German and Italian violators. It is an onslaught on the French people, around whose neck German and Italian fascism are drawing the noose ever tighter. It is an onslaught on the British people, against whom war is being prepared by its age-

old enemy—German imperialism. It is a treacherous blow against the German people, whose enslavement becomes severer the greater the concessions made to the hangmen of the working people of Germany. It is against the people's front movement, against the international proletariat that the Munich conspiracy is directed. It is against *world peace* that the blow is directed by the Munich conspirators, who come forward hypocritically in the role of "saviors of peace."

Not peace was saved by the British and French reactionaries; what they did was to save German fascism from collapse. They strengthened Hitler's position for the conduct of a major war.

* * *

Workers!

Was it possible to preserve peace and avert the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia?

Yes, comrades, it was!

Neither from the military nor the economic point of view was Hitler Germany ready for war. It was lacking in raw materials, foodstuffs and financial resources. Its fortifications were not completed. Its army did not possess trained personnel in sufficient quantity. The rear of German fascism constituted a terrible danger to it. The German people had no desire for war. They were filled with deep discontent. A wave of popular indignation threatened, if war broke out, to sweep away the fascist adventurers.

Ranged against Germany were forces on whose side was the overwhelming preponderance. Czechoslovakia possessed an excellent army and was protected by a system of first-class fortresses. The British and French fleets were in a position to ensure the blockade of Germany. Action by the Soviet Union would have given rise to a powerful wave of the anti-fascist

movement in defense of the *just* cause of the peoples. Faced by such forces, *German fascism would have had no alternative but to retreat*. But the British bourgeoisie who dragged France in the wake of their policy did not want to permit this political defeat of the fascist gendarme of Europe. Britain and France did everything possible to compel Czechoslovakia to capitulate. By exerting unheard-of pressure, by supporting the German blackmail, by threatening to take the side of Germany, they succeeded in getting the Czech government to accept the bandit ultimatum of German fascism.

The Munich conspiracy took place because the reactionary bourgeoisie decided to resist by every means the formation of an international peace front together with the Soviet Union. Not at any price would they permit a powerful movement of the peoples against fascism. Having in advance come to agreement with the German fascists, and having distributed the roles, the British reactionaries organized the deception of the peoples with the aid of the farce of ostentatious military mobilization in Britain and France. The Munich conspiracy was able to take place because the hypocritical advocates of French "democracy" preferred cowardly *capitulation* to a policy of resisting the aggressor, because the capitulators broke the determination of the people to struggle by sanctimoniously preaching the pacifist creed of peace at any price. The Munich conspiracy was facilitated by the fact that the working class, as a result of the splitting, capitulatory policy of the leaders of the Second International, was unable to muster its forces so as to frustrate the criminal conspiracy of German fascism and of British reaction.

Proletarians, working people!

Now, when millions of people are asking themselves what is the way out of the situation created by the Munich conspiracy, we Communists say: *The policy of capitulation did*

not and does not save peace. It has already led to war. Ethiopia and Spain, Manchuria and China, Austria and Czechoslovakia—such are the blood-stained landmarks of this policy, of the policy of concessions to fascism. By weakening the peace forces, by strengthening the fascist aggressors, it helps them to unleash new, even more destructive wars, brings closer a monstrous conflagration of world imperialist war. There is only one way by which to save peace, namely, the way of resolute struggle against the fascist aggressor.

He who does not fight for peace cannot avert war.

To fight for peace means that in *each country* the liberty of the people must be defended against the reactionary bourgeoisie. Just as the feudal nobility during the period of the collapse of feudalism plotted with the enemies of France against the French republic, so now in the epoch of decaying capitalism, the reactionary bourgeoisie in alliance with German fascism are brandishing the sword over the heads of their own peoples.

A successful fight for peace cannot be conducted unless ruthless blows are dealt at those who betray their country and their people. The fascist aggressors, who have cast off all restraint, cannot be curbed unless a resolute struggle is undertaken against the capitulators in one's own country.

The peoples cannot entrust the fate of their countries to governments which conspire with foreign fascism against their own peoples. They cannot entrust either the defense of the country or armaments to such governments. It is against the working class, against all laboring people, against the liberation struggle of other peoples that these reactionary governments will direct their guns.

The condition for a successful struggle to strengthen the cause of peace is to replace the governments of national treachery and shame in the countries menaced by fascist blows

from without, by governments that are ready to repulse the fascist aggressors. A government of real national salvation cannot pursue the ruinous path of capitulation. It will conduct a ruthless struggle against capitulators and agents of foreign fascism. It will ruthlessly crush the fascist machinations of reaction at home. It will purge the army of the fascist enemies of its own people. It will establish real control by the working class over the defense of the country. It will disarm the fascist leagues and make the working class organizations the mainstay of the country's defense. It will conduct a consistent policy of collective security and will not shrink from employing sanctions against the aggressor. With the aid of such governments, that are ready to use armed force in defense of the liberty and the independence of their peoples, it will be possible for a firm front of the peoples to arise which will compel the fascist aggressors to respect frontiers and keep the peace.

Only through the medium of *an alliance of peoples conducting a self-sacrificing struggle for the cause of peace* is it possible to frustrate the criminal plans of the instigators of war. A defense cordon of armed peoples who have joined their forces with the great Soviet people will doom fascism to impotence and hasten on its defeat and its inevitable ruin.

At the time when fascism has already set about the repartition of Europe, when it is crippling other peoples and tearing them to pieces, *the task of the working class now is to head the liberation struggle of the enslaved nations and the defense of the peoples threatened by foreign domination.* The nation is not the gang of fascists, reactionary financiers and industrial magnates who rob and betray the people. The nation is the many millions of workers, peasants and working people generally—the people that is devoted to its country, cherishes its liberty and defends its independence. Just as in Spain and China where the people are fighting with arms in hand, and

in Austria and Czechoslovakia, so also in all countries menaced with fascist invasion from without, only the working class can rally, rouse and lead the people to a victorious struggle for national liberation. The working class is the backbone of the nation, the bulwark of its liberty, dignity and independence.

* * *

Workers!

Do not let yourselves be led astray by the treachery of the bourgeois politicians to the people's front. Let the traitors break with the people's front movement. Their departure will only be a gain to it. You are faced with a big and noble task—not only to *strengthen* but also to *extend* the front of the people. New people and new sections of the population, who do not barter the fate of their country and their people, will join with you in the struggle against reactionary traitors, in the struggle *to save the people*.

Who can hammer out this broad front against fascist brigandage? *Only a united working class*.

The working class is the greatest force in modern society. It is the real master of the world, if it is united.

In the face of the international conspiracy of fascism, *international working class unity* has become a matter that brooks no delay. The Communist International carries on an unceasing struggle for this unity. It has repeatedly made the proposal to the Labor and Socialist International to establish united action by the international working class. Millions of workers throughout the world demand unity. Unity is desired by many Social-Democratic and trade union organizations. But this unity is not wanted by the reactionary leaders entrenched in the leadership of the Second International and in

a number of Social-Democratic Parties and trade unions. They systematically disrupt the formation of a united, anti-fascist, working class fighting front. It is they who, while retreating step by step before fascism, conduct a shameless, slanderous campaign against the land of socialism. It is they who gather up with a solicitous hand from the cesspool of fascism the Trotskyite agents of the Gestapo, whom they allow to do wrecking work in the labor movement with impunity. It is they who, by their policy of non-intervention, have helped the hangmen who seek to strangle republican Spain. It is they who, without protest, accepted the Munich ultimatum, hypocritically declaring it to be a supreme victory for the cause of peace. It is they who, after Munich, continue the same policy of splits and capitulation, the policy of disintegrating the labor movement. Without a daily and resolute struggle against these enemies of working class unity, these agents of the bourgeoisie, it is impossible to achieve the cohesion of the ranks of the proletariat. Now it is not enough to declare oneself a supporter of unity; now one must boldly put it into immediate practice on a local scale, as our Spanish brothers have done.

Working class unity—in the name of the peoples who are oppressed by fascism; in the name of the liberation struggle of the Austrian people against alien domination, of the struggle of the peoples of Czechoslovakia against the dismemberment of their country, and against the arbitrary conduct of German imperialism.

Working class unity—in the name of the heroic Spanish people, against whom the conspirators of Munich are preparing the next blow. *Arms and foodstuffs for the fighting Spanish republic!* Lift the shameful blockade! Drive the German and Italian interventionists from Spanish territory.

Working class unity—in the name of the heroic Chinese people. *Support China with arms and credits!* Economic sanc-

tions against the Japanese aggressor! No war materials, no credits for the Japanese plunderer!

Working class unity—in the name of the workers' most urgent interests, in the name of all the peoples whose independence is menaced by German fascism, in the name of peace which is at stake!

Proletarians of all lands, unite, so as to lay the foundation of unity of the peoples against fascist aggression!

Proletarians, working people of all countries, strengthen the fraternal fighting alliance with the great Soviet people.

The U.S.S.R. is the impregnable fortress of socialism, the guarantee of the oncoming victory of the international working class.

The U.S.S.R. is a powerful buttress of peace and fraternity between the peoples.

The land of victorious socialism is an indestructible bulwark of the peoples throughout the world in the struggle against fascist enslavement.

Long live the great Soviet Union, the fortress of socialism, liberty and of the independence of the peoples!

Long live international working class unity!

Long live the Spanish people, fighting with arms in hand in defense of their liberty!

Long live the Chinese people, waging a liberation struggle for their independence!

Long live the people's front against fascism in all countries!

Long live the world-wide front of the peoples against the fascist aggressors!

Long live socialism!

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

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