

Workers of all countries, unite!

***For a Lasting Peace,
for a People's Democracy!***

**Organ of the Information Bureau of the
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TOWARD NEW VICTORIES OF THE DEMOCRATIC CAMP!

The year 1947 was distinguished by the important events in the lives of the peoples of the world. The imperialist camp continued on a broad front its preparations for a new war; American imperialism still further intensified its active expansionist policy to enslave western Europe economically and politically.

The centre of the world reaction shifted to the USA. The Hitler plans to enslave the world, which suffered a fiasco, are now replaced by American plans for world domination, in the carrying out of which Britain has been assigned the role of junior partner.

The democratic forces of the world, and above all, the peoples of Europe, rose up in defence of their national independence and sovereignty, in defence of the interests of the working people, and against the rapacious ambitions of American imperialism.

The Declaration of the Conference of nine Communist Parties held in Poland at the end of September, 1947 played a decisive role in the upsurge of the struggle of the democratic forces.

The imperialist, anti-democratic camp meets the new year with mixed feelings of alarm and anxiety. The earth is quaking

under the imperialists. Impelled by the fear of the historical development of events American-British imperialism is resorting to a policy of force, atom blackmail, cynical threats designed to intimidate the faint-hearted, and, planning new adventures, is gambling with the destiny of capitalism itself.

Under the flag of the “Truman Doctrine” and the notorious “Marshall Plan” reactionary imperialist circles are insolently interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, are implanting the ideology of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority. These facts stem from one and the same root; the onslaught of American imperialism against the vital interests of the popular masses, the attempt to enslave the countries of Western Europe. The Aid-to-Europe Bill recently submitted by Truman officially proclaimed the expansionist policy of American reaction as the State programme of the USA.

This Bill provides for the establishment of the so-called Administration of Economic Cooperation and the appointment of a special US representative in Europe with the rank of ambassador. This is, in effect, nothing other than the setting up of a US “ministry” of European colonies—for those European countries which will receive US “aid”.

The American Congressmen, who brag about their vaunted American “democracy” are in practice trampling underfoot the freedom and independence of the peoples in the interests of a handful of capitalist monopolies. This was the reason why the American imperialists broke up the London conference of Foreign Ministers. The people hoped that the conference, in the interests of a democratic peace, would solve the German problem, would settle the destiny of Germany as a democratic state. The American imperialists however, have other plans, namely, to turn to Germany into their colony, into a jumping-off ground for a new war. This policy runs counter to the vital interests of the people of France and Britain, to the interests of the peoples of other countries. But the ruling circles in Britain and France, who have sold their countries into the bondage of American imperialism, are no longer independent politically.

The right-wing Socialists, alarmed by the rising tide, of the labour movement, are trying to restore their shaken influence among the working class are intensifying the campaign of slander against the Communist Parties, and are bent on splitting the democratic forces. In Britain the leaders of the Labour Party have launched yet another crusade of lies and slander against the democratic forces so as, beforehand, to prevent the trade unions from resisting the attempts of the government to lower the standard of living of the British workers. In France the splitters of the working class—the right-wing Socialists in the “Force Quiver”, who oblige by carrying out the policy to smash the unity of the working class, to weaken their resistance.

In Italy the men of the so-called Saragat party, headed by the traitor Saragat, have entered the de Gasperi government for the purpose of helping the American imperialists transform Italy into an American protectorate.

But the expansionist plans of the USA are coming up against the vigorous resistance of the peoples who have no desire to be in bondage to the American imperialists.

The ideas contained in the Declaration of the nine Communist Parties have taken root among the popular masses, have inspired them with confidence and pointed out the path of struggle against American expansionism. 1947 brought major victories to the democratic liberation movement. In France the working class in the struggle for peace, freedom and national independence achieved its first successes; in Italy the political activity and organisation of the working class have grown; the working classes in the liberation movement of the colonial and dependent peoples have increased their prestige and vanguard role.

In the course of the struggle it is becoming increasingly clear to the working class that its forces are inexhaustible, that the capitalist system is rotten to the core and historically doomed, that the Communists are the selfless defenders of the interests of the working class and of all working people, the

consistent and staunch champions of the national sovereignty and independence of their peoples.

The attempts to crush the national liberation movement by military force have been countered by the mounting armed resistance of the peoples. The Chinese people led by the Communist party, are successfully waging a heroic struggle against the American colonisers against the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique. The national-liberation movement in Indonesia has considerably grown, and become even more of a mass movement. The insolent armed intervention of the American and British imperialists in Greece cannot check the growth of the democratic movement nor break the will of the Greek people to struggle for their national freedom and independence.

The Democratic Army of Greece, which today controls half the territory of the country, is successfully developing its operations. Proof of the success of this struggle is offered by the formation of the democratic government of Greece.

The countries of the people's democracy—Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Albania—have consolidated the new people's power routing the political myrmidons in a stubborn struggle.

While in the countries of Western Europe, dominated by American hirelings, post-war restoration is linked with an offensive against the vital interests of the working people, with economic chaos, with unemployment, the impoverishment of broad sections of the population, the countries of the new democracy are forging ahead economically. Fulfilling the plans for the restoration and the development of economy these countries have advanced toward Socialism along their respective paths. They have concluded a series of agreements consolidating the peace in Europe, are rendering one another mutual assistance on the principles of fraternal friendship, respect for the sovereignty and freedom of nations.

1947 in the Soviet Union, the vanguard of the anti-imperialist and democratic camp, was a year of intensive,

constructive labour, which has yielded rich fruit in the spheres of industry, agriculture and culture. The recent monetary reform has strengthened the rouble; it will contribute to improving the material wellbeing of the working people and to further consolidating the might of the Soviet state. Rationing in the USSR has been abolished and prices on foodstuffs and industrial goods considerably lowered.

The capitalists, who are mortally afraid of the successes of the USSR and the whole democratic camp, are trying to distort the true state of affairs in the USSR; they are misrepresenting the facts in order to deceive the people.

It is clear to every sensible person, for instance, that the monetary reform and abolition of rationing in the USSR are outstanding facts, indicative of the steady economic development of the country.

Here it is not amiss to recall that even potatoes are now rationed in Britain, that starvation rations still exist in France and Italy, that inflation is rampant in all the capitalist countries; the pound, the franc, the lira are depreciating steadily. Economic dependence on the US has aggravated inflation in England; inflation is rampant also in the US. The army of unemployed in the capitalist countries is swelling. There are 11 million unemployed and part-time workers in the United States today.

The capitalist and right-wing Socialist scribes depict all this as an earthly paradise. On the other hand the true prosperity of national economy, the consolidation of Soviet currency, and the rapid improvement of the material conditions of the Soviet people, are portrayed as an “economic crisis”, as “headlong inflation”, as a deterioration in the standard of living.

But who will believe the imperialist swindlers and falsifiers! You would be only too glad if your economy registered the same forward strides, were your currency as stable. But that is beyond you. Your lot is—inevitable economic crisis, financial chaos, impoverishment and

unemployment for millions of working people.

The imperialists are trying to find a way out of the general crisis of capitalism by an offensive against the working class, against the vital interests of the working people, by enslaving entire nations.

The international situation has changed radically. The democratic, anti-imperialist camp has replied with an offensive against the imperialist camp. And the first successes have already been reached. Under pressure of the popular masses the imperialists have been compelled to go over to the defensive, to manoeuvre.

The working people and the democratic forces of the world must draw the inescapable conclusion from the struggle for freedom and independence that developed during 1947. And that is, that the imperialists can be compelled to retreat only by losing the ranks of the democratic camp, only by force. Imperialism recognises but one law—the law of force.

The strength of the working people lies in its organisation, its consolidation and determined offensive against the imperialists.

Hard and severe battles lie ahead. But the democratic camp will emerge from this struggle victorious over the forces of imperialism. The Communist Parties, rallying all genuine patriots and democrats around themselves, will raise still higher the banner of struggle for the independence of Europe, for the freedom and sovereignty of all countries, against their enslavement by American imperialism.

The democratic, anti-imperialist camp is consolidating its forces. It will further develop the struggle against the warmongers and enslavers of the peoples, and will win new successes in this struggle.

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VICTORY OF THE BLOC OF COMMUNISTS AND NON-PARTY MEMBERS IN THE ELECTIONS TO THE LOCAL SOVIETS OF THE RSFSR

Local elections in the RSFSR are taking place in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm. On December 21, 1947, voting took place for the Soviets of Working People's Deputies in the territories, regions, areas, districts, cities, and rural localities of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

The election results were as follows:

99.90 per cent of the electors voted to the elections to the Soviets of territories; 99.92 per cent—to the Soviets of region; 99.81 per cent—to the Soviets of areas; 99.93 per cent—to the district Soviets; 99.89 per cent—to the city Soviets; 99.80 per cent—to the city district Soviets; 99.87 per cent—to the Soviets of rural localities.

Practically all voters, with very few exceptions, went to the polls.

The percentage of votes cast for the candidates of the bloc of Communists and non-Party members is as follows:

In the elections to the Soviets of territories—99.50 per cent; to the Soviets of regions—99.29 per cent; to the Soviets of areas—99.59 per cent; to the district Soviets—99.20 per cent; to the city district Soviets—98.68 per cent; to the Soviets of rural localities—98.68 per cent.

Thus the results demonstrated the full support for the bloc of Communists and non-Party members. A total of 766, 563 deputies were elected. Of these 267, 088, or 34.8 per cent, are women; 356,527, or 46.6 per cent—members of the Communist Party; 408,036, or 53.2 per cent—non-Party members.

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FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE FORCES OF DEMOCRACY, AGAINST IMPERIALISM

ELECTION TO THE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES IN SERBIA

Elections were recently held to the People's Committees in Serbia. Over fifty thousand representatives of workers, peasants and the intelligentsia were elected.

The elections were preceded by wide spread preparatory work in which considerable numbers of the people participated. In the elections to the Legislative Assembly of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia on November 11, 1945 82.83 per cent of the electors in Serbia went to the polls. In the elections to the Legislative Assembly of Serbia on November 11, 1946 the figure rose to 90.78 per cent, and in the elections to the local People's Committees on November 9, 1947 to 94.34 per cent. These results show that the great mass of the people take part in the political life of the country, that they are deeply interested in the work of the local authorities.

The recent elections demonstrated the unshakable unity of the People's Front. People's Front candidates were elected in each of the 10,464 wards. They polled 17 per cent more votes than on November 11, 1945. The figures show that the confidence of the masses in the people's power is growing from year to year, that the working people regard the People's Committees and other organs of the people's power as a powerful lever for a happy and prosperous life, that the faith of the working people in the progress of the country is increasing.

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FORMATION OF PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC FRONT IN ITALY

The formation of the People's Democratic Front of Italy was proclaimed on December 29 at a mass meeting in Rome. The Front is composed of the Communist and Socialist Parties, the Party of Labour Democracy, the General Confederation of Labour, and other democratic mass organisations.

Luigi Longo was elected chairman of the Peoples Democratic Front.

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AID TO THE GREEK PEOPLE

Several meetings were recently held in the villages of the Haida region (Hungary) at which decisions were taken to render material and moral assistance to the Greek people, who are fighting for their freedom.

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CREATION OF A PROVISIONAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN FREE GREECE

The »Elefteri Ellad« (»Free Greece«) Agency, reports that on December 23, 1947 a Provisional Democratic Government of Free Greece, was formed on the liberated territory. The government is composed of: General Markos (Chairman and War Minister); Janis Ioanid's (Deputy Chairman and Minister of the Interior); Petros Roussos (Minister of Foreign Affairs); Miltiadis Porphirogenis (Minister of Justice); Petros Kokalis

(Minister of Public Health and Welfare, and acting Minister of Public Education); Vasilis Bardzotas (Minister of Finance); Dimitris Vlantas (Minister of Agriculture); Leonidas Stringos (Minister of National Economy and acting Minister of Supplies).

A General Board for the Affairs of the. National Minorities has been set up under the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

The constituent act outlines the aims of the Provisional Democratic government as follows:

1. continuation of the people's struggle for the liberation of Greece from the yoke of the foreign imperialists, for the restoration of national independence, for the consolidation of the democratic liberties and freedom of the Greek people;

2. administration of the country on democratic principles and satisfaction of the immediate needs of the people in the free areas and those in process of liberation;

3. reconciliation and consolidation of the unity of the Greek people;

4. establishment of friendly relations with all democratic peoples.

The government undertakes to convene a People's National Assembly as soon as conditions permit.

At its first session the Provisional Democratic Government of Free Greece resolved to address an appeal to the Greek people, and to send its representatives abroad to establish contact with the democratic peoples and their governments.

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RUMANIA PROCLAIMED A PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

On December 30, 1947, the People's Assembly of Rumania unanimously passed a law proclaiming Rumania a people's republic. In its call to the people the Rumanian government stresses that with the abdication of the King the people of Rumania can now elect a new form of State power. The call states: »The people of Rumania, liberated in 1944 from the yoke of the fascist invaders and their servants have taken their destiny into their own hands. Headed by the people, removing from administration of the State all those who defended the interests of its enslavers.

»Thus, the people of Rumania were able to create a democratic order, which is today growing ever stronger.

»The monarchy was an obstacle in the way to the further development of our State, in the way to realising a people's democracy. which ensures the material and cultural wellbeing of the people, the independence and sovereignty of the Rumanian State.

» With the abolition of the monarchy new perspectives for development are open to our people's republic«.

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THE GREAT PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF BULGARIA

On December 24 the Great People's Assembly unanimously adopted a law for the nationalisation of industry.

In Sofia more than 100,000 people gathered outside the Assembly to greet this historic act.

The Bulgarian government has also submitted a bill to the Assembly providing for the nationalisation of private banks.

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CONGRESS OF THE POLISH SOCIALIST PARTY

The Polish Socialist Party (PSP) recently held its 27th Congress in Wroclaw. The congress was attended by representatives of the Socialist Parties of other countries, including a delegate from the Greek resistance movement—EAM—who was given a particularly warm welcome by the congress.

A telegram of greetings from the President of the Polish Republic, Berout, was received with stormy applause. In reply the congress assured the President that »the wellbeing of People's Poland is the guiding principle in the work of the PSP. The PSP fully participates, and will continue to participate, in the work of strengthening the people's democracy along the path to socialism.«

The congress unanimously approved the agreement on unity of action, between the Polish Workers' Party' and Polish Socialist Party, and pledged all branches and members of the PSP to strictly adhere to the agreement and carry it out. The congress called upon the party to continue the united front policy and thus achieve the political, organisational and ideological rapprochement of the two workers' parties.

In his report Cyrankiewicz stressed the question of the united front of the working class, the importance of this for consolidating the people's power and rehabilitating the country as well as its importance to the world labour movement in the struggle for a lasting peace.

The reporter noted that under the capitalist system democracy allows for the organisational development of the working class, but it cannot lead to socialism, because the capitalists will not hesitate to strangle democracy in the face of danger. After World War I social-democracy tried to collaborate with the capitalist coalition. In Germany this led to the Hitler

dictatorship, in Poland to the rule of the Sanacja, Cyrankiewicz vigorously condemned the so-called theory of the third »force« and, sharply criticising the policy of the leadership of the French Socialist Party, emphasised that the path along which Blum is leading his party »is not the French path to Socialism, but the French path to de Gaulle.«

Cyrankiewicz repeated that the main slogan of the PSP is: »Let the PSP lead only to the Left, and the enemy only to the Right.«

Thanks to the consolidation of the united front, stressed the reporter, the PSP can now play a big role in the struggle for socialism also on the international arena. »We are emerging on to the international arena,« he continued, »not as a party forced to cooperate with the Communists and to form an alliance with the USSR, but as the representatives of revolutionary Socialists, who have been tempered in the fire of struggle and have acquired rich experience in the process.«

Cyrankiewicz noted that »the Polish Socialists consider themselves historically far ahead of the West European Socialists, »who either lacked the objective possibilities to carry out a similar experiment, or were unable to draw the necessary lesson from it.

An understanding of the conditions in which the imperialist camp is waging its aggressive struggle, stated the reporter, shows that the place of our party and of People's Poland is in the camp of progress, alongside the Soviet Union and the other countries of the people's democracy.

The PPS, said Cyrankiewicz must devote its efforts to the struggle for the victory of a correct, genuinely Socialist political conception, must spare no effort to reach agreement between the groups of the true revolutionary Socialist Parties and in, this way form a united front of Socialists and Communists on the international arena.

Analysing the practical effect of the united front of the PSP and PWP Cyrankiewicz stated that this agreement between the two Polish workers' parties »was a revolutionary avalanche

during the elections, which swept off the face of the earth every thing connected with reaction.«

The victory of Polish democracy on January 19, 1947 did not exhaust the tasks facing the Polish working class. Among the major jobs to be tackled in the new phase is the struggle for peace and progress on the world arena, the struggle for the fulfilment of the country's Three-Year Plan.

Cyrankiewicz was elected General Secretary of the Polish Socialist Party.

The congress addressed a call to all the Socialist and Communist Parties in which it sharply condemned the American imperialists for breaking up the London conference of Foreign Ministers and urged »vigorous resistance to the attempts to create a new Munich by which the interests of the peoples, who suffered under Hitler aggression and occupation, would once again be sacrificed to the cause of German Nazism and imperialism, directed against the progressive forces in Europe.«

The PSP Congress, at which the united front was the keynote, closed with a mass meeting attended by 60,000 members of the PSP and PWP, and addressed by Cyrankiewicz and Gomulka. The meeting was an impressive demonstration in defence of peace and against the encroachments of the Anglo-American imperialists, on the Western borders of Poland.

The resolution, adopted by the meeting, stressed that »the realisation of the united front in Poland will help eradicate opportunist distortions and consolidate the labour movement in Europe and throughout the world on the basis of struggle against imperialism, for peace and freedom, in the interest of all working people. «

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**LUIGI LONGO. THE ACTIVITIES OF
THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF ITALY**

Information report delivered at the conference of the nine Communist Parties held in Poland at the end of Sept. 1947.

I. The Struggle to Overthrow the Fascist Regime. Organisation of the National Movement. Guerrilla Warfare

The fascist regime in Italy lasted for nearly twenty years, from the end of 1922 until July 25, 1943.

When fascism came to power the Communist Party was savagely persecuted and was the first party to be outlawed. It was the only party which continued its anti-fascist activities in conditions of absolute illegality. In 1934 the Communist Party concluded an agreement on unity of action with the Socialist Party. The two parties pledged to conduct joint activities against the fascist dictatorship. This agreement, which was subsequently revised and changed in keeping with the new conditions, continues to serve as the basis of united action by the two parties.

When Mussolini was deposed, the Communist Party had from 5,000-6,000 organised members. In addition to this there were numerous scattered Communist groups, which were not connected with one another, or with the leading Party centre. The varied activities of the Communists in Italy were guided by comrades, who were active in the country throughout the twenty years of the fascist regime; many of them had been in prison or exile where they maintained contact with the imprisoned Party leaders. Prior to imprisonment, a large number of these cadres had been active in the illegal organisations or attended Party schools in Italy or abroad. Finally, the Party membership counted hundreds of veterans of the Spanish civil war, who had been handed over by the Vichy government to Mussolini. Once out of prison these veterans became the best organisers and leaders of the guerrilla movement.

Twenty years of fascism worked profound changes in the political consciousness of the working people of Italy. The Communist Party, which was a small opposition party when

fascism came to power, and which enjoyed influence mostly in the big industrial centres and in those provinces with a large population of agricultural labourers, enhanced its prestige and authority among all sections of the Italian people by its loyalty to the ideals of freedom, by its heroic and staunch struggle.

Despite the difficulties of illegality, the Communist Party was able to preserve a considerable and stable organisation. This enabled the Party to keep up with events inside the country, to maintain uninterrupted contact with the masses. It enabled the Party, even in illegality, to win a firm foothold in all the big centres and to engage in widespread activities during the war, to organised systematic resistance to fascism and the war.

Toward the end of 1942 strikes, organised by our Party took place in certain centres of Northern Italy. A wave of political strikes, gripped Turin, Milan and Genoa in the spring of 1943. The defeat of the Hitler armies on the Eastern Front and the landing of the Allied troops in Sicily, accelerated the course of events and compelled the Italian bourgeoisie to seek a way out of the situation; They reckoned that if Mussolini were replaced by a less compromised representative of the bourgeoisie, they would avert a popular revolt. Hence their choice of Marshal Badoglio who, by relying on the less extreme section of fascism and the non-fascist conservative elements, was to find the solution to the difficult military, political and economic situation of Italy.

The news of Mussolini's resignation was greeted with monster demonstrations. The people demanded an end to fascism and the war. Political parties were restored. The leadership of the former fascist trade unions passed into the hands of commissioners, elected for the most part from among Communists, Socialists and Christian-Democrats. »Resistance Committees«, representing the different anti-fascist parties—Communists, Christian-Socialists, Liberals—were formed in all the cities. After some procrastination all political prisoners, including Communists (whom the authorities still wanted to

keep in prison) were released.

After July 25, 1943, a nation-wide agitational and organisational drive was launched despite opposition from the Badoglio government, to form a genuine democratic government which would break the alliance with Germany and conclude an immediate peace with the Allies. Under pressure of this campaign and the advance of the Allied armies, Marshal Badoglio was compelled to sue for an armistice, which was announced to the Italian people on September 8, 1943. But the day the armistice was announced the Badoglio government and the Royal Court, instead of calling upon the people to resist and fight the Germans, left Rome and fled to the South to meet the Allied armies. The Italian army, which still consisted of a large number of divisions at the time, and the people, who were imbued with strong anti-fascist sentiments, were abandoned. The army, saturated with fascist officers, fell to pieces. The people thereupon took up the banner of resistance and struggle. The anti-fascist committees, formerly united in the »Resistance Committees« established »Committees of National Liberation« (CNL), which set themselves the task of coordinating and leading the struggle for the liberation of the country.

A large part of the country was occupied by the Germans together with Italian fascists who, presenting themselves as Republicans, reorganised their forces under the leadership of Mussolini, who had been restored to freedom by the Nazis.

Thus, Italy was split into two parts: on the one side the regions of the extreme South, liberated by the Allies, where the labour and popular movement was weakest due to historical traditions and prevailing economic and social conditions; on the other German-occupied Central and Northern Italy, i.e. the regions where the most progressive and militant section of the population was concentrated, especially in the North. In the regions occupied by the German and Italian fascists the struggle rapidly spread and developed into mass resistance to the fascist yoke, into armed guerrilla warfare against the occupation forces. In the northernmost part of Italy this

struggle, waged by hundreds of thousands of armed men lasted for more than twenty months.

The cardinal task of all anti-fascists on the occupied territory was to resist and conduct a relentless armed struggle against the invader. The Communist Party headed the resistance movement from the very outset. It organised the soldiers in the disintegrated military units, collected arms abandoned by the soldiers, mobilised the workers and progressive soldiers for the first guerrilla detachments. As distinct from all the other parties the representatives of the Communist Party in the CNL and in the military committees formed by the latter, from the very beginning raised the question of the need for a relentless armed struggle against the German-Italian fascists.

The Communists had to put up a stiff fight—and even so they were not always successful in breaking down the opposition of the Liberals and Christian-Democrats to active struggle against fascism. These parties favoured restricting the struggle merely to giving assistance to the officers and soldiers who had left the army, and were of the opinion that liberation was the exclusive concern of the Allied military forces. While the representatives of the Communist Party in the CNL and in the military organs of the resistance movement tried to draw these bodies into more vigorous struggle against the enemies of the country and thus extend the front of struggle, the Communist Party independently set about organising partisan detachments- in cooperation with all who shared its point of view; it organised raids on barracks and military units of the invaders and their representatives. The Party rallied the people for wide-spread resistance and called upon them to sabotage the attempts of the Germans to use Italy's industry and agriculture for war needs.

In the course of the struggle we secured the necessary weapons and won a leading and dominant role on all sectors of the struggle for national liberation. We organised the Garibaldi shock brigades, which served as model units in the armed

struggle; we formed the »GAP« and »SAP« (»Groups of Patriotic Action« and »Detachments of Patriotic Action«), which operated in the towns and villages. Soon we united all these formations under the leadership of local, provincial and regional staffs, which had their auxiliary services: first aid, liaison, etc. The other parties, following our example based their military organisations on similar principles. We developed our political and military activity under the slogan of cooperation with all the political anti-fascist organisations and military formations. Throughout the struggle we insisted on the need to unite the scattered partisan formations under a single command and gradually succeeded in establishing a united military command over all the partisan detachments.

In occupied Italy our Party closely linked the armed partisan struggle with the struggle of the workers and peasants, who were resisting the violence of the occupation forces and collaborators.

Beginning with November 1943 the Party organised and led big strikes in Piedmont, Lombardy, Liguria and Toscana. At the beginning of March 1944 a general strike, organised on the initiative of the Communist Party and supported by the Committee of National Liberation of Northern Italy was staged in the German-occupied territory. This strike of over a million workers lasted a week. This mass movement created favourable conditions for further developing guerrilla warfare and other forms of mass resistance. During the whole period of the German occupation the invaders and fascist authorities encountered popular resistance in different regions of Italy. As a result of the mass movement dual power actually existed in many of the occupied regions: the organs of the official fascist authorities, which were becoming discredited to an ever greater extent, and the illegal antifascist organs, which enjoyed the confidence of the people. Apart from these regions there were a number of zones in Northern Italy, which had been completely liberated from the German occupation or Italian fascist regime. These zones were governed by democratic organs of power,

freely elected under the protection of partisan forces.

During the winter of 1944-45 the partisan movement suffered great hardships, as a result of the rigours of winter, the atrocities of the German troops and the attempts of those parties and trends, which following a »wait and see« policy, wanted to disorganise the partisan movement. General Alexander, Commander-in-Chief of the Anglo-American troops in an order of the day to the partisans requested them to lay down arms, return to their homes and wait for »more favourable weather«.

Our Party vigorously opposed this demoralising and demobilising campaign. It appealed to the people, organised the collection of provisions, clothing and everything else necessary for guerrilla warfare in winter conditions. This campaign not only helped preserve the partisan organisations intact, it also helped to cement new ties of solidarity between them and the people.

Following the example of the Garibaldi Brigade the other partisan detachments decided to fight through the winter. The results were favourable: by spring the Italian partisan movement was in full possession of its cadres and formations. At the beginning of April 1945 more than 300,000 partisans in Northern Italy went into action and liberated the cities of Bologna, Modena, Parma, Piacenza, Genoa, Turin, Milan, and the whole of the Venezia region. Before the arrival of the Allied troops the partisans saved the industrial enterprises and communications from the destruction prepared by the Germans; took tens of thousands of war prisoners and captured considerable war equipment. They set up Committees of National Liberation, executed the Italian fascist leaders. Nearly all the members of the fascist government, including Mussolini were captured and executed by the Garibaldi partisan brigade.

During the war the Committees of National Liberation in occupied Italy were the coalition bodies uniting all the anti-fascist parties. But above all, they were the organs which mobilised the masses for armed struggle. They also were the

genuine organs of power in certain regions, and at a definite period were officially recognised as such by the Allied authorities and the central Italian government, on whose behalf they governed.

Under the leadership of the Central Committee of the National Liberation of Northern Italy and the CNL the latter drew up plans for reorganising industry and the administrative apparatus. The CNLs formed people's courts to try the fascist traitors; they appointed commissioners to supervise the enterprises abandoned by their fascist owners; they appointed mayors, prefects, police commissioners, who were to take up their posts immediately following the abolition of the fascist organs of power. In keeping with the decree of the Central Committee of the National Liberation of Northern Italy, issued on the eve of the uprising, Production-Management Councils were established where the workers, office employees and the technical personnel helped run the enterprise together with the employer and government commissioner.

For ten days, i.e., the arrival of the Allied troops and government authorities, the CNL guided the political, social and economic life of Northern Italy. Partisan detachments not engaged in pursuing and disarming the German fascist units took over police duty.

As soon as the Allied authorities together with their troops reached the North they removed members of the resistance movement from the responsible posts, to which they had been appointed by the CNL, and replaced them with officials of the old State apparatus. As for the government in Rome it lost no time, after the Allies had entrusted it at the end of 1945 with the administration of the country, in replacing all the responsible officials, appointed by the CNL, with so-called experts, that is, with officials of the old administrative apparatus.

Luigi Longo

***II. The Activity of the Party during the Period of
American Occupation***

In order to understand the development of events in Italy it should be remembered that our people had no choice in the election of a government. All governments formed in Italy required the sanction of the Allies both with regard to composition and political orientation.

Clearly, in such conditions the more conservative trends in the anti-fascist movement had every chance to paralyse and sabotage the genuine democratic initiative of any party or group of parties. These conservative trends enjoyed the direct support of the Allied political and military authorities, who controlled the government and the key positions in the national life of the country.

All efforts to eliminate the obstacles, which the Right groups put in the way of the Left elements who were interested in the recovery of the country, encountered the resistance of the Allied forces.

Thus, during the Allied occupation of Italy it was a question of choosing one of two paths: either the path of a decisive struggle to crush all resistance by the conservative elements, which might have provoked an armed clash with the Allied forces; or the path of utilising the relative freedom won for further extending and consolidating the bloc of the democratic forces before the elections to the municipal councils and Constituent Assembly. On the latter depended the solution of the more important constitutional problems, as well as the question of structural changes.

We chose the second path, which was the logical and natural development of the Party's policy during the war for national liberation. In order to understand why the Party chose this second path it should be remembered that Italy had just emerged from twenty years of fascist dictatorship, during which the Party had worked in deep illegality. After the liberation work had to be done to develop and consolidate all the democratic organisation, to develop and consolidate the Party itself; it was necessary to propagate democratic and

progressive ideas among the masses in Southern Italy who, in their majority, remained aloof from the struggle for democracy in the defascisation period and who, as a result of the development of events during the war, took no part even in the struggle for national liberation. Such was our political orientation when we prepared for the municipal elections, for the referendum on the structure of the State and for the elections to the Constituent Assembly.

Even though we were not able to carry out major structural changes after the uprising, such as the nationalisation of the industrial monopolies and banks, an agrarian reform, etc. we nevertheless made considerable headway in improving the conditions of the working people in town and country. We won our demand that workers were not to be dismissed from the enterprises. This saved them from unemployment during the difficult period of the conversion of industry. We also succeeded in having progressive wage rates introduced, and an automatic revision of wages corresponding to price increases. This was an important achievement, specially in the period of the devaluation of currency and shortage of goods. On the initiative of the Communist Minister of Agriculture a law was issued whereby the uncultivated and poorly cultivated land was handed over to the landless peasants. Despite the sabotage and resistance of the landlords this law radically changed the old social, semi-feudal relations existing between the landlords and peasantry in many parts of Southern, Italy. As a result of a widespread peasant movement changes were introduced in the agreements between the landlord and peasant which were dictated by century-old traditions. These changes compelled the government authorities to abolish the previous 50-50 distribution of products harvested, and entitled the peasant to 53 per cent of the crop plus 4 per cent for reclamation work. The Production-Management Councils—set up by the National Liberation Committees—which practise the principle of control and participation by workers in the administration of production, have not, as yet, received legal recognition in all

parts of Italy. Nonetheless, these Councils are operating at all the big enterprises in the North, and in Naples, Taranto, etc.

The Communist Party won major successes in all the elections held during the first six months of 1946, when it ran independently or jointly with the Socialist Party. Italy was proclaimed a republic as a result of the referendum on the question of the structure of the State, when more than 12 million people cast their vote. This was an important political victory for the Party, which had fought for this during the struggle for national liberation. In the municipal elections the Communists, together with the Socialists, received the majority of the seats in 35 per cent of the communes. Socialist mayors are predominant in the small municipalities and Communist mayors in the big cities. In the general elections to the Constituent Assembly on June 2, 1946, our Party polled 19 per cent of the total vote, the Socialist Party—23 per cent the Christian-Democrats—37 per cent. The remainder of the votes were cast for various political groups of secondary importance. However, at the subsequent elections held at the end of 1946 and at the beginning of 1947 the Communist candidates considerably increased their vote. The Christian-Democrats on the other hand, lost considerable ground, especially in the South Southern Italy, which in the past had been the centre of the ultra conservative and reactionary forces is now developing on a par with the most progressive social and political regions in Central and Northern Italy. After the uprising and liberation of Northern Italy the mass organisations began to develop apace. By the beginning of 1947 the Italian General Confederation of Labour had more than 6,000,000 members. In the recent elections to the executive organs of the Confederation the Communist candidates polled 58 per cent of the vote, that is, an absolute majority, while the Socialists received 22 per cent and the Christian-Democrats a mere 19.5 per cent. In the big trade unions the Communist wing scored even bigger successes. For instance, in «Confederterra» («Confederation of Agricultural Workers») the Communists

received 67 per cent of the vote, in the Metal Workers' Federation—63 per cent, in the Building Workers' Union—71 per cent, etc.

With the liquidation of fascism the cooperative movement developed and grew stronger. There are over 3,000,000 cooperative members organised in the «National Cooperative League», which is in opposition to the cooperative organisation, under the influence of the Christian-Democrats. In the recent cooperative elections in the «National League» the Communist wing received over 70 per cent of the vote.

Apart from the trade union and cooperative organisations there are influential organisations of women, youth and the veterans. The «Union of Italian Women» has close to half a million members. The «Youth Front» unites 273,000 young men and women. Here, too, this organisation enjoys great popularity among the young people of the country. The «National Association of Italian Partisans» unites more than 200,000 partisans. The influence of the Communists is predominant in all these organisations. It has also spread to other popular organisations such as the association of war veterans, invalids, mutual aid societies cultural, sport organisations, etc.

Thanks to the firm anti-fascist line of our Party throughout the fascist regime, thanks to its heroic struggle against German and Italian fascism, thanks to its vigorous defence of the democratic interests of the working people, thanks to its tireless work in the various popular organisations the membership of the Communist Party has increased from 5-6,000 on July 25, 1943, when Mussolini was overthrown, to 1,800,000 at the end of 1945, 2,145,000 at the end of 1946 and 2,279,000 at the end of July, 1947.

The proportion of Communists in the Northern, and in some of the Central regions is considerably higher than in the South. Over 5 per cent of the population in seven regions are members of the Party (12 per cent in Emille, 9 per cent in Tuscany, 7 per cent in Ombrie, etc.). In Sienne, Toscane

Province, 20 per cent of the people are members of the Communist Party.

The central organ of the Party, »Unita» appears in four editions with a circulation of about 340,000 copies. In addition the Party publishes over 50 weeklies with a total circulation exceeding 400,000 copies. A national weekly has a circulation of 65,000 copies and the monthly Party journal sells 40,000 copies.

However, the Central Committee considers that the Party's organisational influence among the masses does not correspond to the possibilities of a big mass organisation such as the Italian Communist Party, with its more than 2,000,000 members. This weakness of our Party is the outcome of certain shortcomings in its political line, a shortage of cadres and their incomplete political education. The Central Committee aware of these shortcomings has taken the necessary measures to overcome them.

Without being over-optimistic it can be said that our Party is linked closely to all the decisive sections of the Italian population, and that its influence and prestige are steadily growing. Apart from its direct influence among the different sections of the population, the Party maintains close ties with other political trends and social strata, which have not yet decided to accept our principle of struggle without reserve. We have an agreement on unity of action with the Italian Socialist Party; our functionaries in the trade unions and functionaries in the trade unions and in some of the mass organisations are cooperating with the Socialists; as well as with the representatives of the Christian-Democrats, the Action Party and Republican Party.

The reactionary anti-Communist elements are trying in every possible way to split this unity of the democratic forces, achieved during the liberation war and still existing in a number of regions, despite attempts to undermine it. The more reactionary wing of the Christian-Democrats is sparing no effort to break the unity of the popular forces. It succeeded

gradually in restricting the activities of the Committees of National Liberation, formed in the process of the struggle, and finally had them dissolved. This party is now trying to split the unity of the trade unions, and for this purpose has set up the «Christian Association of Italian Working People», and the «Peasant Proprietors of the Soil». They have succeeded in splitting the cooperative movement and also the women and youth organisations.

Enemies of democracy and national unity operated also inside the Socialist Party, where they tried to get the latter to annul the agreement on unity of action with the Communists and to form a bloc with the reactionary anti-Communist forces. They failed, however, and had to rest satisfied with a split in the Socialist Party. The right-wing Socialists and some groups of Trotskyite adventurers broke away from the Socialist Party and, headed by Saragat, formed a new party called the »Italian Workers' Socialist Party«.

This party claims that it is fighting for »Socialism, independent of the Communists and all foreign influence«. Actually, it is »independent« of the working class only and has nothing in common with Socialism; it is the paid agent of American imperialism, as has been revealed by the publication of certain irrefutable documents. It is the vanguard of anti-Communism in the ranks of the working class.

It was not long before Saragat's party exposed itself to the democratic forces, at whose expense it had hoped to grow rich. True, it succeeded in splitting the Parliamentary group of the Socialist Party. But in the elections Saragat's Party received an inconsiderable number of the votes formerly cast for the Socialists. It can be confidently stated that the attempts of Saragat to break up the Socialist Party and to force the Socialists to abandon unity of action with the Communists, have met with utter failure.

There still are a number of representatives of the reformist and anti-Communist wing in the old Socialist Party, who still have hopes of turning the Socialist Party away from the Communists

and of provoking a new split. However, thanks to the failure of Saragat's initial attempt, thanks to the evident success of the unity of action, the reformists still in the Socialist Party are being isolated and are losing their influence.

The split in the Socialist Party, caused by Saragat's activities in January 1947, made it easier for de Gasperi to manoeuvre the Socialists and Communists out of the government.

Meeting with defeat in the January crisis de Gasperi, under the direct pressure of the USA and the Vatican, provoked a second government crisis in May 1947. This crisis was effected on the pretext that Italy could not exist without American aid. The US, on the other hand, refused to assist a government which includes Communists. Hence the Communists had to be removed from the government.

In this way de Gasperi actually carried out a coup d'état. He disrupted the cooperation between the big mass Parties, established during the liberation war. This cooperation proved its vitality during the elections to the Constituent Assembly. After breaking off the alliance with the Left, de Gasperi, ignoring his pre-election political programme, formed a bloc with the Right.

The removal of the Communists and Socialists from the government radically changed the political situation in Italy. Comrade Togliatti stated in Parliament that this solution of the crisis signified a split inside the democratic forces of Italy.

The Communist Party openly exposed the internal and external reasons for its expulsion from the government. After removing the representatives of the Left parties from the government reaction was given a free hand in foreign policy and tried to place Italy in the service of Anglo-American imperialism.

The very first actions of the new de Gasperi government immediately exposed its reactionary anti-democratic character. Because of the way in which the Christian-Democrat deputies voted in the Constituent Assembly, the Parliamentary elections, scheduled for Autumn 1947 were postponed until Spring 1948.

All the democratic liberties won in the liberation struggle are now threatened. While Communist Party premises are raided, partisans arrested, while measures are taken to ban factory wall-newspapers and workers' meetings fascist newspapers are allowed to appear and fascist criminals are released from prison.

Police repressions have not intimidated the Communist Party. On the contrary they have stimulated its work, made it more militant. New members are joining the Party. An increasing number of people are attending our meetings and taking part in our demonstrations. Conciliation committees of the different political trends, and Committees of Struggle in Defence of Democracy and the Republic, are being set up in a number of centres.

The economic policy of the de Gasperi government is bringing down the standard of living of the working people. There have been new price increases; the depreciation of the lira continues; employers are trying once again to dismiss workers and office employees en masse. They want to abolish the progressive wage scale. The government is trying to destroy the political gains won by the working people in the uprising. The employers, for their part, are trying to do the same in the economic sphere, with the support of the government.

III. For the Creation of a Broad Popular Democratic Front of Struggle, for Peace and National Independence

The struggle between democracy and reaction, between the workers and employers is growing sharper. For the first time since the liberation, Italy has been swept by a wave of mass actions and strikes. Over a million agricultural labourers went on strike in the valley of the Po. 600,000 metal workers struck work for 24 hours. The peasant movement to appropriate the

uncultivated and poorly cultivated land has spread throughout the country. On September 20 big protest demonstrations against high prices, were held in all cities. These demonstrations were organised by the Communists, together with the Socialists, the Action Party and the Party of Labour Democracy.

As the political and economic struggle intensifies the Christian-Democrats are redoubling their splitting activities in the trade unions and are trying in every possible way to hinder and paralyse the work of these trade unions. At the trade union congress in Florence, in June 1947, the Christian-Democrat trade union leaders refused to vote for a resolution favouring political strike action. The resolution, however, introduced by the Communists and Socialists, was carried by an overwhelming majority. The Christian-Democrat leaders made a number of stipulations but they did not dare go so far as to split the Confederation. They have become the initiators and champions of the anti-popular policy of the de Gasperi government. They are trying to sabotage the action of the masses are trying to split their unity.

In foreign policy the de Gasperi government has announced its readiness to come to any agreement with America. It encourages and conducts a vicious campaign of lies and slander against the Soviet Union and the Countries of the new democracy. This campaign, inspired by the Vatican and American agents, serves as a cover for the manoeuvres and war policy of the American imperialists and Italian chauvinists. Taking advantage of Italy's need of foreign assistance, reaction is trying to prove that this assistance can come from America alone, and only on condition that an anti-Communist policy is pursued, policy of subservience to the strivings and plans of the American imperialists. The Marshall Plan is the principal weapon in the struggle of native and foreign reaction against democracy, freedom and the independence of the country.

Our Party's stand on the question of foreign aid and relations with the USA is clear. It is: defence of the freedom

and independence of Italy; defence of peace, friendship and cooperation not only with the Anglo-Americans but also with the USSR and the countries of the new democracy. We need America, but America also needs us. We need America's assistance, but we also need economic cooperation with all the other countries, particularly with the countries of Eastern Europe. We reject any plan that ties our hands and places us in foreign bondage.

The Italian Communist Party exposed the Marshall Plan as being detrimental to our economy and dangerous to our national independence since it leads a) to the formation of a bloc of the countries, which are pursuing a policy hostile to the Soviet Union; b) to a division of Europe into two blocs; c) to the interference of a group of Great Powers in the economic life of other countries; d) to political interference in the internal affairs of the European countries, as vividly seen in Greece.

We are explaining to the Italian people that it is a question not of »assistance«, but of economic cooperation. The word »assistance« suggests charity and bondage. We have the means and resources to negotiate with the USA on an equal footing and not as poor relations.

In his speech to the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Comrade Togliatti stated, that despite the new situation brought about by de Gasperi's coup d'état the principal strategic aim of our Party continues to be a regime of progressive democracy. This can be achieved by forming and preserving a wide and stable bloc of the democratic and popular forces, capable of barring the way to reaction and capable of guiding the activities of the government along new democratic and constructive lines.

The political aim of our struggle today is the overthrow of the de Gasperi government.

We are fighting for the establishment of a government, representing, all popular and left-wing Republican forces. But we realise full well that this can be brought about only by the pressure of broad democratic forces.

The Party has no intention of remaining on the defensive with reaction and the de Gasperi government attacking it on all sides. We will not allow them to drive us underground. We shall defend ourselves and will counter-attack; we will remain at the head of the popular masses, who are fighting for bread and work, for peace and freedom. We shall appeal to all parties, all organisations, which call themselves Left and democratic to join this struggle; we will expose all those who represent Christian-Democratic and American reaction in the ranks of democracy. We will work in the local organisations and executive bodies, will conclude agreements with the different Parties and organisations. We will start a movement for unity in the factories, and villages, will build up a powerful united front, composed of all genuine democrats, of all sections of the working people, and lead them in the struggle against the de Gasperi government, in defence of democracy and freedom.

Such are the main features of our Party's activities at present. At the recent plenum of the Central Committee we discussed the political line of the Party and its practical work. The Central Committee noted the serious shortcomings in the political orientation of the Party and in its practical work. The Party displayed great weakness when we were expelled from the government and became an opposition Party. This opposition expressed itself primarily in the press and public speeches. Our opposition has grown more effective lately as a result of a number of economic struggles and mass action. However, these activities do not reach beyond the framework of trade union economic demands, and have not developed into a widespread mass movement, with definite political aims.

The Central Committee also noted a certain tendency on the part of our organisation to confine work to the sections already under our influence, thus neglecting the groups isolated from us, vacillating or passive in the political struggle. It likewise drew attention to the tendency to let the relations between our Party and the other democratic Parties develop their own accord, to the weak struggle to prevent a gap

between us and the working-class elements in the Christian-Democratic Party.

The Central Committee of the Party emphatically stated that it is impermissible passively to await the downfall of the de Gasperi government as a result of Parliamentary combinations. If we really mean to bring about a change in the political leadership of the country we must, above all, get the population to accept the aims of our struggle. This can be achieved only by persistent agitation and propaganda. Proceeding from this the Central Committee has decided to concentrate its activity around the following questions: 1. defence of democratic liberties; 2. defence of the standard of living of the people; 3. protection of the small and medium proprietors against excessive taxation; 4. the struggle against all and every injustice, violence and profiteering.

In order to wrest industry and agriculture from the influence of the big monopolies and landlords the Party will agitate for workers' control in industry through the Production Management Councils, and for the immediate introduction of agrarian reform, which will meet the pressing demands of the Italian countryside.

Our Party to ensure the carrying out of this line rallied around its Central Committee and its leader, Comrade Togliatti. We know our strength and our shortcomings, are aware of our tasks and of the possibilities open to us with the existing relations of forces among the various special groups and political movements in Italy.

We shall overcome our short comings in this struggle. We know that we are moving towards sharpening social and political relations in Italy and in Europe and we shall meet the situation ideologically, politically and organisationally prepared.

That is why I support Comrade Duclos' statement and on behalf of the Italian delegation welcome this conference, which has given us the opportunity to exchange our experience of common struggle with the leading fraternal Communist parties

of Europe.

This exchange of experience will help us to improve our political and organisational work. It will help the Party to lead the Italian people in the resistance movement against reaction and American imperialism, which want to use our country as a pawn in their plans to enthral Europe. We are confident that if we spearhead this struggle of the Italian people for their freedom and national independence we shall secure new political and social gains on the road to socialism.

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HUNGARIAN DEMOCRACY CONSOLIDATES ITS ECONOMIC POSITIONS. A. BEREI

The new democratic order established in Hungary following her liberation found itself in extreme economic straits. The Horthy fascist regime had preserved the system of semi-feudal landlordism in agriculture, which left its imprint on the life of the country. About half of the cultivated area was the property of some 12,000 big landowners; 84 landlords owned 15 per cent of all crops. Hungarian finance capital developed in organic contact with this semi-feudal system and monopolised the greater part of industry (more than half of the capital of all the industrial and mining joint-stock companies was in the hands of eight large banks in Budapest. Quite clearly the people's democracy could develop and grow strong only after the old economic structure had been radically reorganised.

During the final phase of the war, when for several months Hungary became a battle ground, the country suffered great damage. A considerable part of the means of production was either destroyed or severely damaged, output was far below the pre-war level, the State income covered only 20 per cent, and later a mere 10 per cent, of the needs of the national economy.

The outcome of these conditions was a growing inflation which threatened the country with complete economic collapse. Consequently an imperative task of the new Hungarian democracy and the main pre-condition for its stabilisation, was to stop inflation and secure the economic rehabilitation of the State. The democratic government spared no efforts to solve the difficulties and achieved big successes.

As early as March 1945 the first land reform, which abolished the system of the semi-feudal landownership in agriculture, was carried out in accordance with a government decree. The government divided more than one-third of the cultivated area among 642,000 peasants (of whom 371,000 were landless peasants and farm labourers), each receiving on the average an allotment of 5 holds. (One hold is equal to 0.575 hectares). A radical change took place in the social structure of the Hungarian countryside.

Semi-feudal landownership and its dominant influence have disappeared. The number of small peasant households has greatly increased. This transformation brought about changes in the entire social life of Hungary. It deprived the reactionary forces of their economic base, and provided an essential condition for strengthening Hungarian people's democracy.

The stabilisation measures introduced on August 1, 1946, were the second major economic success of the new democracy. The national economy was saved from disastrous inflation thanks to the plan elaborated by the Hungarian Communist Party, a plan based on the resources of the country, and above all, on the readiness of the working people to make sacrifices. As pointed out by Mathias Rakosi, two conditions were needed for stabilisation. "Firstly, an appropriate level of production and, secondly, a balanced national economy." The democratic government relying on the broad masses of the people secured both conditions. Despite hunger and cold, the workers restored the ruined factories and got production going; the miners won the "battle of coal". Exerting superhuman efforts and under the Communist Party slogan "face the railroads", Hungarian democracy, guided by the Communist minister, Gere, rapidly restored the rail road system, which had lost 80 per cent of its rolling stock. Thus, notwithstanding the covert sabotage and open hostility of capitalist circles it was possible to stabilise the currency and to balance the national economy. The success of stabilisation added to the prestige of the young Hungarian democracy and laid the foundation for its

further economic development.

However, the land reform and stabilisation have not, as yet, secured the predominant influence of democracy over the capitalist monopolies in the decisive sectors of economy. The democratic government, therefore, on the initiative of the Communist Party, turned to the gradual nationalisation of the key branches of economy, and in the first phase industry. In June 1946 the mines and the adjoining electric power stations were nationalised. Six months later, in December 1946 heavy industry came under State management. The greater part of the timber industry passed over to the State at the time of the land reform. Finally, in November of 1947 Parliament passed a law for the nationalisation of all Hungarian shares in the National Bank and also in the other big banks. This measure which places the five biggest credit bodies in the country in the hands of the State, is of exceptional importance for Hungary's national economy, This is so not only because the nationalised banks control two-thirds of the total bank capital and bank deposits but also because a considerable part of the large industrial and trading enterprises are in the hands of these banks. Thanks to the nationalisation of the main banks the State now controls 26.5 per cent of the textile industry, 32 per cent of the knitgoods industry, 45 per cent of the pulp industry, 35 per cent of the brickyards, 45 per cent of the food industry and 15 per cent of the engineering industry. With the nationalisation of these industries the new Hungarian democracy has broken the domination of the capitalist monopolies and laid the foundation of the State sector in the national economy.

By basing itself mainly on the nationalised industries the democratic government was able to embark on the State organisation and management of the national economy, thus gradually restricting the laws of capitalist economy. In December 1945 the government set up the Supreme Economic Council to coordinate and direct the different branches of economic life; in 1946 the government began to regulate the distribution of raw materials and credits, and, as in the sphere

of foreign trade turnover, brought them under State control. These measures made possible the elaboration of the Three-Year Plan, which on the initiative of the Communist Party, was put into effect, on August 1, 1947. Although private capital plays a greater role in Hungary than in any other country of the new democracy, with the exception of Rumania, planned economy has become possible in our country, because the influence of the working people on the State has considerably increased and the State has won leading positions in the country's economic life.

The Three-Year Plan aims at raising the standard of living by 80 per cent compared to 1946-47. This will be attained by means of a rapid upward swing in industry and agriculture, calling for investments totalling 6,585 million forint (nearly 580 million dollars). More than 65 per cent of capital investments fall to the State sector, 25 per cent to different public and municipal enterprises and cooperatives, and only 9 per cent to the private sector. Thus, according to the Three-Year Plan industrial output and the transport freight turnover will considerably exceed the pre-war level, while agriculture will reach this level. The State, public, municipal and cooperative sectors will extend considerably their positions in the national economy at the expense of private capital.

Big capital and its supporters in the different parties, have always endeavoured and are endeavouring now to retard the efforts of the democratic forces to reorganise economic life. They claim that the restriction of capitalist private ownership, state control and management of economic life, will paralyse production and upset the economy.

Facts, however, prove the contrary. Economic development is proceeding apace accordingly as the positions of the people's democracy take root in the economic life, and as big capital is dislodged. The reactionaries vociferously claimed that the land reform would destroy agriculture, especially the more highly developed branches. Despite this, the country's arable area increased by 300,000 holds between 1945-47; the area sown to

sugar beet, formerly grown almost exclusively on the big estates, increased from 104,000 holds to 154,000 holds; the area sown to tobacco from 26,000 holds to 30,000 holds; the area under rice has been extended; livestock is rapidly increasing.

Industrial output and the railroad freight turnover are steadily approaching the pre-war level, as can be seen from the following table:

	1938 monthly average	1945 August	1946 August	1947 August	Oct.	
Coal	7,790	4,050	5,254	5,854	8,420	In 1,000 centners
Cast iron	270	29	174	284	278	“
Steel	540	232	292	558	573	“
Cotton textiles	15,000	-	3,335	10,994	13,600	In 1,000 metres
Woollen fabrics	1,000	-	331	800	1,560	“
Footwear	395	43	80	389	459	In 1,000 pairs
Railway freight turnover	1,674	355	781	1,402	2,076	In 1,000 tons

These achievements, together with the changes which have taken place in the structure of the national economy, reflect the economic consolidation of the new Hungarian democracy. Undoubtedly, the process of democratic transformation and strengthening of the national economy, is by no means

completed. Hungary's national economy is at present passing through a transition period, which is characterised by the conflict between the retreating capitalist sector and the advancing State and cooperative, sector, which are becoming increasingly socialist. The capitalist sector no longer plays the decisive role in economic life. On the other hand the growing State and cooperative sectors, have not, as yet, reached such proportions as to influence the whole of the national economy.

At present the State sector, taking into account also the nationalised banks, is predominant in the engineering and mining industries, and also in transport. Of the total labour force in these industries, some 400,000 workers are employed in the State and public sectors and only 200,000 in the private sector. Almost 50 per cent of the workers In the mining industry, 80 per cent in iron and steel and the engineering industries and 95 per cent of the transport workers are employed in State, public or municipal enterprises.

Only one-third of the capital of the credit institutions remains in the private sector. However, private capital still plays a leading role in commerce where it accounts for approximately two-thirds of the foreign trade and 80 per cent of the domestic trade turnover. Despite the general predominance of the State sector in the industrial and mining industries, private capital still holds strong positions in light industry. For instance, 75 per cent of the workers engaged in the textile and chemical industries, 90 per cent of the workers in the tanneries and timber industries are employed in private enterprises. Finally, in agriculture only 1.5 per cent of the total cultivated area is State property; 75 per cent of the tractors are private property; 6 per cent belong to the State and 13 per cent to the cooperatives. In their struggle against the big farmers and private trade the mass of the small and medium peasants can not wholly rely on the cooperative sector which has not yet got a firm foothold in agriculture. It is true that the 2,100 peasant cooperatives, established since the liberation, have been joined by a considerable part of the small peasants who

received land as a result of the agrarian reform. The members of these cooperatives own only 13 per cent of the entire cultivated area and 20 per cent of the livestock. However, the majority of the cooperatives are engaged in buying and selling and hardly take part in organising and managing agricultural production.

This relation of forces in the different sectors accounts for certain difficulties and obstacles, which have still to be surmounted by Hungarian democracy. Nationalisation was carried out in the least profitable industries, which require the biggest capital investments. A considerable share of the goods produced by the State enterprises reaches the market through private trade; the accumulation of new capital in the State-owned enterprises is not done on the proper scale, moreover, a number of State-owned enterprises show a deficit. At the same time the private sector and the kulak households are accumulating considerable capital, a large part of which is used for profiteering. This encourages high prices and is a component part of predominant private trade. The consequences are most unfavourable both from the economic and social points of view.

The further consolidation of Hungarian democracy depends, primarily, on the fulfilment of the Three-Year Plan, on stabilising the State and cooperative sectors. The more prosperous and profitable the State-owned enterprises, the more restricted will be the sector of big capital, and the sooner will it shed the remainder of its monopoly and opportunities for profiteering. The broader the base of the cooperative movement the sooner will the mass of the Hungarian small and medium peasants free themselves from the clutches of the kulak usurers. The consolidation of the people's democracy and the growing influence of the working people on the government is the surest guarantee of the continued development of Hungarian national economy.

The struggle between the capitalist forces and the State and cooperative sectors, the struggle which is leading to socialism,

continues. The economic achievements of Hungarian democracy have secured conditions for the favourable outcome of this struggle for the people's democracy, for the further progress of new socialist elements in Hungary's national economy.

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GEORGIU-DEJ. CONSOLIDATING THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY IN RUMANIA

Rumania belongs to the group of countries which dropped out of the imperialist system as a result of World War II and, after taking the path of building a new people's democracy is effecting profound democratic changes with the support of the popular masses.

By advancing along this independent path—the path of a Rumanian people's democracy, which is determined by the specific conditions of the historic development of the country—we are providing the political and economic preconditions for the reconstruction of Rumania on new, socialist foundations.

In order to better understand the specific character of our democratic development it should be said that Rumania made more rapid progress in the direction of political changes, towards a people's democracy than she did in the economic sphere.

WHAT THE MANIU TRIAL REVEALED

The second half of 1947 brought crushing defeats to the groups representing the different sections of the reactionary bourgeoisie. The trial of the traitors in the leadership of the National Peasant Party, headed by Maniu, dealt a mortal blow to this group, which rallied around itself all the reactionary-fascist forces. The documents that fell into the hands of the security organs, and also the testimony of the accused revealed to public opinion the monstrous plot to provoke civil war and foreign armed intervention. This plot was prepared not only in close collaboration with the foreign intelligence service, but also with certain diplomatic representatives of the imperialist powers. The notorious Acheson letter to the conspirators,

mentioned at the trial, disclosed that the main concern of the corresponding foreign State organs was to find the opportune moment for the armed uprising, prepared by the leadership of the National Peasant Party, to overthrow the democratic order in Rumania.

During World War II the parties of the big capitalists, linked with foreign monopoly circles, and the reactionary landlords, represented by the National Peasant and National Liberal Parties, discredited themselves by political and economic collaboration. However, by resorting to demagogic manoeuvres they succeeded for a time in retaining certain political positions. The Maniu trial showed the people that betrayal of national interests was an integral part of the policy of the social strata represented in these parties. The trial exposed the political bankruptcy of these social strata and completely discredited them.

Therein lies the main significance of the trial for the internal life of the country.

Another outcome of the trial was the removal of Tatarescu and his group from the government, The evidence showed that under Tatarescu the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had become a centre of espionage and treachery. Many high officials were directly involved in the conspiracy. Nor was this accidental. For some considerable time it had been obvious that Tatarescu's line on all decisive questions of home and foreign policy ultimately protected the same interests championed by the so-called "historical parties"—the national peasants and national liberals. The Tatarescu group held important positions in the government, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance; As a result the democratic parties in the government often found themselves in the position of the legendary Rumanian architect Manola who overnight lost everything that he had managed to build in the course of the day. It was clear that an end had to be put to the participation of the Tatarescu group in the government, that this was an essential condition for the unhampered development of

Rumania along the path of a people's democracy. And so the Tatarescu group of ministers were removed from government.

The political bankruptcy of the whole of Rumanian reaction is reflected also in the indifference shown by public opinion to the attempts of the Tatarescu group to keep going. Most indicative, too, is the disappearance, for lack of readers, of the newspaper »Liberalul«, organ of Bratianu's National Liberal Party.

The question of state power is of decisive importance when determining the nature of any system. What is the character of the government and of the State power in our country, following the removal of the Tatarescu group? The vanguard of the working class played a leading role in the administration of the State even when Tatarescu was in the government. The resignation of Tatarescu and his group means the removal of the last representatives of the reactionary bourgeoisie from the government; it means that the proletariat and its allies no longer share State power with the representatives of the exploiting classes. The role of the working class as leader of the democratic forces has gained in importance. The proletarian vanguard, in close alliance with the peasantry and the progressive intelligentsia, is the backbone of the government. In other words our government today is a government of workers, peasants and working intelligentsia. Since the removal of the Tatarescu group the bloc of democratic parties is a bloc representing the genuine Interests of the working people, headed by the party of the working class, the Communist Party.

FOR THE CREATION OF A UNITED WORKERS' PARTY

The creation of a united workers' party in the near future will be a new factor in consolidating the front of democratic parties. A nation-wide campaign has been launched in preparation for this. The merger will be formally effected at a

Congress to be convened in all probability on January 21, the day when all progressive mankind honours the memory of the great Lenin.

The programme of the united workers' party, unanimously adopted at a joint meeting of the Executive Committees of the Communist Party and Social Democratic Party, explains the need for political and organisational unity of the working class in these terms:

“The menace of imperialist intrigues against peace and freedom; the complicity of the right-wing Socialists with the imperialist circles in the struggle against democracy and the Land of Socialism; the interests of the working class which, in a number of countries, and especially in the countries of the new democracy are confronted with the task of building socialism—all this makes it vitally important not only to strengthen the unity of action of the working class, but also to establish a united Marxist-Leninist party wherever the objective and subjective conditions for this exist”.

We are of the opinion that such conditions exist in our country. The fact that Rumania is one of the countries where political and organisational unity of the proletariat is in the process of being realised, is undoubtedly the result of the correct united front policy pursued by our Party.

The united workers' party will rally the working class around the banner of Marxism-Leninism and make it possible to cope with the historic task of eliminating reformism in the labour movement. “The ideology of the united workers' party”, states the aforementioned programme, “must be the class, Marxist-Leninist ideology of the proletariat. The united workers' party will base its activity on the teaching of the great leaders of ‘the working class—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin.

“In its activity the united workers' party will be guided by high class principles. It will make no concessions in the matter of principles to other classes or parties. It will fight with revolutionary irreconcilability against all enemies of the working class and its ally, the labouring peasantry, and against

all hostile agents in the ranks of the proletariat”.

Under our conditions where the peasantry constitute nearly 80 per cent of the population, the question of the alliance of industrial workers and small peasants is one of the central questions of the party of the working class. The alliance of workers and peasantry (i.e. peasants not exploiting the labour of others), is reflected in the close cooperation between the proletarian vanguard and the Agricultural Workers' Front, which is headed by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Dr. P. Groza. The Agricultural Workers' Front is consolidating its ranks in the struggle against the kulak remnants in its organisations.

THE FORCES OF THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT ARE GROWING STRONGER

Thanks to the activity of the Communist Party in stimulating the national culture and its patient ideological work among the intelligentsia nearly all prominent representatives of Rumanian culture have joined the democratic camp. This is an entirely new feature in our country. However, the job of eradicating the reactionary influence among the intelligentsia and servility before Anglo-Franco-American bourgeois culture, is far from finished.

The democratic front is being joined also by the National People's Party, the party of the so-called middle strata (handicraftsmen, small traders and employers, etc.).

The democratic regime in Rumania has successfully solved one of the most complex problems confronting it, namely the question of relations between the Rumanian people and the other nationalities inhabiting the country, and especially relations with the Hungarians, who constitute the biggest national group in the country (over one and a half million inhabitants).

The fact that we are steadily carrying out a consistent

national policy, inspired by the teachings of Lenin and Stalin, has made the working people of the other nationalities a loyal and active ally of Rumanian democracy. This policy has dealt a sharp blow to chauvinist and revisionist sentiments. We regard the results in the sphere of national policy as one of the major achievements of our people's democracy in its struggle for the moral-political unity of the working people, and above all, as the outstanding achievement of the Communist Party.

Thus, the front of Rumanian democracy, headed by the Communist Party, has won a number of major successes in the struggle against the forces of reaction, has completely changed the relation of forces in favour of the democratic camp, has consolidated and reinforced the political positions of the people's democracy.

THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATION OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

The cardinal task of the democratic forces in the country is to strengthen decisively the economic base of the people's democracy.

In June 1947 our Party published its proposals for improving the economic situation of the country. These proposals were adopted by the government and became its programme. When carrying out this programme we succeeded in putting an end to the financial chaos, caused by inflation, and introduced a monetary reform—the pre-condition for a healthy economy. Thanks to the measures taken to organise the economy and thanks to the heroic efforts of the workers, considerable success has been achieved in the matter of industrial output. On July 1, when we began work on the six-month production plan, industrial output was but 48 per cent of the 1938 level. Between July-September output in the iron and steel industry reached 72 per cent compared to 1938 and 135 per cent compared to 1946; in the chemical industry the figure

was 80 per cent compared to 1938 and 118 per cent compared to 1946; in the timber and building materials industry 67 per cent and 136 per cent respectively, in the pulp industry and printing trades 78 per cent and 123 per cent. The subsequent months showed a steady upward trend in a number of the vital industries such as steel, rolled steel, cast iron, pulp, cellulose, woollen fabrics, footwear, etc. The output of coal is also increasing. Thanks to a good harvest some branches of the food industry are topping the target figure.

These achievements brought about a definite improvement in the economic conditions in our country. However, we cannot be satisfied with the present rate of industrial output. A number of industries failed to fulfil their production programme. The present growth of output does not correspond to the pressing economic needs of the country, or to the economic tasks raised by the rapid development of the people's democracy. In point of fact the present rate of growth is hampering the planned reorganisation of Rumanian economy.

The situation would be quite different if the efforts of the government and workers to increase industrial output did not encounter the resistance of a large section of the capitalists, and if the democratic state occupied a stronger position in the country's economy.

The State sector in our economy is still small. The State controls the National Bank, the railways and a number of enterprises. We have appointed State administrators to supervise certain enterprises, especially where the employers are persistently sabotaging economic restoration. We also have state administrators in the »Astra-Romana« and »Unirea« oil companies in which foreign capital has shares and in the »Banca Romanesca«, biggest private bank in the country, etc.

In addition 14 industrial councils have been set up, uniting the basic industrial enterprises. As is known in September 1917 Lenin suggested an amalgamation of industrialists to ensure state control over the activities of industry and the most effective organisation of these activities. Lenin declared that

the purpose of amalgamation was to establish complete, detailed and strictest book-keeping, and above all, to coordinate buying and selling operations in the matter of raw materials, and to economise with national means. Lenin emphasised that, in itself, this measure did not in the least affect private property, did not deprive the proprietor of a single penny. Our industrial councils are of a somewhat similar nature.

A large part of the industrial and banking enterprises are in the hands of capitalists. The democratic regime has been most tolerant in its attitude towards the private employers, who enjoy favourable conditions for taking part in the economic rehabilitation of the country. The government will continue to give manufacturers helping to restore the economy an opportunity to make reasonable profits. However, despite repeated appeals to “private enterprise” we are compelled to admit that It has failed us. The capitalists frequently refuse to make capital investments and install the necessary equipment; they transmit funds abroad, and organise overt and covert sabotage. Their behaviour is dictated by narrow class interests and the desire to obstruct economic restoration and thus prevent the consolidation of the people’s democracy. A striking example of this is offered by the oil industry—one of the basic branches of our economy. Oil output is not a mere 59 per cent of the 1938 level. Moreover, in 1947 output fell compared to 1946. The fact that the representatives of the “Royal Dutch” and “Standard Oil” international trusts are vitally interested in undermining the economy of people’s democratic Rumania, does not occasion any surprise.

The interests of rehabilitation and the further planned development of the national economy, and the safeguarding of our independence demand that the State sector in national economy be consolidated and extended.

It is also necessary to put a stop to the profoundly unjust distribution of the national income, inherited from the former regime. The monetary reform resulted in a definite

redistribution of the national income in favour of the working people. The financial policy of the Communist Minister of Finance aims at introducing new changes in the distribution of the national income. Thanks to the policy pursued by the Tatarescu minister of finance Rumania until recently, was one of the few countries where the capitalist hardly paid any taxes. Direct taxes paid by industrialists and merchants comprise only 8-9 per cent of the total budget revenue. Actually this percentage was even lower. This dodging of tax payments, which was widely practised by the manufacturers, aggravated inflation.

A month after stringent measure had been imposed by the new leadership of the Finance Ministry incomes from taxation nearly doubled. The printing of new paper money to cover budget expenditure was stopped. Parliament passed a law whereby all persons deliberately withholding tax payments render themselves liable to be charged as economic saboteurs. Steps now being taken to introduce a tax reform will ease the tax burden of the working people at the expense of the propertied strata of the population. Budget revenue will no longer be pocketed by shady businessmen. We consider that this clean up in the financial system will enable us in the near future to establish a special development fund.

Our achievements in industry and finances, and of course the good grain harvest, sugar beet, potato and the olive crop, will greatly remedy the material conditions of the working people. But increasing the productivity of labour, which is still very low, remains the principal means of raising the standard of living, especially of the working class. The emulation movement in the factories is gaining momentum; a new attitude towards labour is taking shape on the different construction jobs where volunteer youth brigades are working. This will improve labour discipline and achieve a steady increase in the productivity of labour.

It is difficult in a single article to dwell in detail on the different measures taken by the government to consolidate the economic

foundations of the people's democracy in Rumania. We have made a beginning in building up the state trading sector by opening State-owned stores. Parallel with this the cooperative sector is being strengthened by establishing consumers cooperatives for workers and office employees.

Measures have been taken to extend the agricultural cooperatives on new principles. These cooperatives are to help liquidate gradually the dominant position of the exploiting elements in the countryside. Apart from selling agricultural products, from supplying the village with manufactured goods and improving exchange between town and countryside the cooperative movement is faced with the prime task of organising peasant producers cooperatives. This will facilitate the mechanisation of agriculture and hasten the abolition of the economic, technical and cultural backwardness of the countryside.

Such, briefly, are the measures taken by the democratic government to consolidate the economic base of the people's democracy in Rumania.

A second major task confronting the democratic forces in Rumania is that of consolidating and extending the political base of the people's democracy.

EXTENDING THE POLITICAL BASE OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

A new reform, which will abolish the clearly obsolete administrative structure, is scheduled for the near future. Organs of people's power, democratically elected by the working masses, will be established. These new local bodies of the people's power will help to eliminate the remnants of the old reactionary State apparatus, will help to consolidate the front of the democratic forces and draw the popular masses into the administration of the country.

In keeping with the reform of the judicature, which was

adopted by Parliament on the initiative of the Communist Party, the judicial organs are being fundamentally reorganised. The very composition of these organs, not to mention the reactionary legislation had turned justice into a tool of the exploiting classes. According to the new reform organs of people's justice will be set up in the country. Henceforth, the judicial organs will consist of a judge and two people's assessors, elected by the trade unions and other public organisations, and by general meetings of the peasants. The election of people's assessors is already under way in many regions.

Finally, the time has come to give the country a new democratic constitution, a constitution which will correspond to the changes that have taken place in Rumania, and which will register our achievements. This constitution will proclaim that in democratic Rumania the leading role belongs to people of manual and mental labour, to the working people of town and countryside. The constitution will show that the democratic system strives to guarantee the realisation of the rights of the working people, which is impossible under conditions of capitalist democracy. The constitution will proclaim the principle of equality of all citizens, irrespective of sex, race or nationality. Thus, the new constitution will be the corner stone for the further development of our country along the path of a people's democracy.

ADVANCING TOWARD NEW SUCCESSES

The working people of Rumania are faced with the tremendous job of eliminating the economic and cultural backwardness, inherited from the reactionary regimes of the past. These regimes, acting in the interests of their imperialist masters, retarded the development of Rumania so as to make it impossible for her to break loose from economic dependence on foreign monopoly capital.

The country abounds in natural wealth. The soil is fertile, there are rich deposits of oil, coal, iron and copper ores and bauxites, which are only partly exploited. We have enormous sources of electric power; we are not short of labour. All this makes it possible to secure the economic independence of Rumania.

Our country can, and shall, advance along the path of the accelerated development of industry, above all, of heavy industry, along the path of the further development of agriculture. Our people realise that their wellbeing, the prosperity of the country, her political and economic independence and progress towards a higher plane of social development depends on overcoming Rumania's economic backwardness.

The constructive labour of our people is anathema to the foreign capitalists, who infuriated are resorting to any and every means in an attempt to place once again the country under the imperialist yoke. That is why Rumanian democracy regards the struggle against the imperialists, against the warmongers as its vital concern. That is why it is actively participating, together with the other countries of the people's democracy in the struggle of the anti-imperialist democratic camp, headed by the Land of Socialism—the great Soviet Union, whose friendship and political and economic support is felt daily by our country.

Nothing will deflect Rumanian democracy, headed by its Communist vanguard, from the path leading to the liberation of the working people from the exploitation of man by man, to the future socialist Rumania.

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**THE FORCES AND ORGANISATION OF
THE WORKING CLASS OF FRANCE
ARE GROWING IN STRUGGLE
(INTERVIEW WITH THE GENERAL
SECRETARY OF THE CGT, BENOIT
FRACHON)**

In an interview given to a correspondent of »For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!« the General Secretary of the General Confederation of Labour, Benoit Frachon, stated:

The Scale of the Strike Movement

Three million working people were involved in the strikes that swept the country between November 13 and December 10. At the peak of the strike the total number of workers involved exceeded 2,500,000. On December 10, when the decision to return to work was taken 1,500,000 workers continued to strike.

By rejecting the just demands of the workers the government caused enormous damage to the national economy, which could have been avoided had the government taken the national interests of the country into consideration.

For three weeks some of the main industries were completely paralysed, including the coal mines and docks where the strike continued, even after the order to resume work.

An indication of the sharpening class struggle in France was the brutality used against the strikers on the one hand, and, on the other, the stubborn resistance and staunchness of the workers and the militant nature of the strikes.

Impoverishment of the Working People of France

The government resisted one of the principal demands of the workers, namely, a guaranteed purchasing power by automatically revising wages and periodically adjusting them to high prices.

The figures given below show the conditions of the working class while capitalist firms were increasing their profits annually and accumulating considerable capital: taking the 1938 wage and price index at 100 we get the following picture:
Coefficients in July 1945

Wages Prices

370 398

Real wages compared to 1938 equal 90 per cent.

July 1946

Wages Prices

407 577

Wages compared to 1938 equal 60 per cent.

January 1947

Wages Prices

530 856

November 1947

Wages Prices

650 1336

Wages compared to 1938 equal 48 per cent.

Thus, since July 1945 real earnings decreased by half, while output has doubled. In the three months preceding the strikes the accelerated rise in prices, averaging 30 per cent, swallowed the 11 percent wage increase, won by the workers in August. Naturally the rise in prices evoked the indignation of the workers.

The Ramadier government promised to revise wages and prices in April, then postponed the matter until June and, finally, put it off to December.

It is understandable why the workers had little faith in this new promise. To every wage increase the ministers—members of the MRP and the Socialists—acting as the »loyal bailiffs« of capital, to use the words of Blum himself, replied with price increases. Even when wages were frozen prices continued to soar.

Beginning with 1947 the number of strikes steadily increased, especially during the second quarter. Strikes broke out in the metal industry, and affected the banks and transport system in Paris. The railwaymen's strike lasted from June 6 to the 12, the miners' strike from June 26 to July 1.

Experience convinced the people of the need for and the possibilities of a mighty movement, which would unite the broadest sections of the working class.

In those circumstances it could be confidently predicted that any more or less big strike breaking out in one sector would eventually spread to others, The leaders of the labour movement had to be prepared for this.

The plenum of the National Committee of the General Confederation of Labour, held on November 12-13 addressed a call to the working people of France, in which it defined the principal demands of the working class as follows:

a guaranteed minimum wage of 10,800 francs per month, with a corresponding all-round wage increase;

effective measures against price increases and profiteering;
an immediate 25 per cent wage increase until the new
guaranteed minimum wage is established;
guaranteed purchasing power of wages by periodically revising
earnings and their automatic adjustment to prices;
to draw into labour the non-working members of society.
On November 12, while the National Committee was
discussing these demands strikes broke out in Marseilles.

The Anti-National Policy of the Government

The anti-labour policy of the French government is explained by its servility to the American imperialists, by its absolute submission to their directives.

Following Blum's visit to the United States in June 1946 the Socialist leaders, the MRP and de Gaullists re-doubled their efforts to subordinate French policy to the USA, especially during the past six months.

In the political, economic and social spheres and, above all, in the matter of foreign policy, we have to do with a government that is acting on orders from the, American capitalists, and not with a government that decides and acts in keeping with national interests. Throughout the strikes all the actions of the government were guided solely by directives from Washington. Reluctance to grant the workers a wage guaranteeing sound purchasing power is indicative of the government's intentions to reinforce its defence of the interests of big capital, which supports the imperialist claims of Washington. The government plans to secure this protection not only at the expense of the industrial workers, but also at the expense of the peasants and middle classes.

The existence of a powerful Communist Party and the strong General Confederation of Labour, which are not shackled by the influence of the »American party«, constitute a decisive obstacle to the enslavement of France.

The French workers are becoming increasingly aware of the danger to their existence, and to their liberties of the American imperialist drive. They also realise that this expansionist policy carries the threat of war, that the anti-Soviet orientation of the French government and French reactionary circles, the policy of, capitulation to imperialism, are reminiscent of Munich.

While the strike was in progress the American imperialists sent Marshall's man, John Foster Dulles to France to give the necessary instructions.

Making clear the purpose of his presence Dulles stated that after meeting the Ministers he would see de Gaulle, Blum and Leon Jouhaux.

The Government Combats the Strikers and Attacks Trade Union Rights

By launching an offensive against the French workers, the government of the so-called »third force« revealed itself as the servant and agent of American imperialism, as the enemy of the working people, of their liberties and national independence.

Schuman and his Minister of the Interior, the Socialist Jules Mock, proved themselves worthy of the confidence of the French and American capitalists.

The police were hurled against the strikers. The Socialist Minister arrogantly announced that he would use all means to enforce respect for »order«. He called for an emergency law annulling trade union rights and banning strikes, and called up 200,000 reserves. The use of tear gas bombs against the working people became the order of the day.

Jules Mock used violence against the pickets who had captured the enterprises. He encountered unexpected resistance. During police attacks thousands of workers were injured, but they gave blow for blow, and quite frequently compelled the police to retreat.

The hands of the Socialist, Jules Mock, are red with the blood of French workers, murdered by his police.

Apart from police repressions the government operated with lies and slander. Press and radio were briefed to distort the meaning of the strikes. By accusing the Communists of preparing a coup d'etat the government and reaction strove to create an atmosphere of panic, and to justify their violence. They tried to get the people to forget about the needs of the working class and their lawful demands. For three weeks the press and radio kept repeating that the number of strikers was dwindling daily, that workers everywhere were opposed to the strike, that only a minority was forcibly preventing a resumption of work.

Developing its drive on the workers the government continued its policy against the reforms, achieved since the liberation, especially against social insurance and nationalisation. It can be said that by its policy the government has virtually abolished nationalisation. The Minister of Industry, the Socialist Lacoste, is rapidly completing this task by organising the appropriate trusteeship of picked men from the monopolies. He is driving out the genuine representatives of the working class from the administrative boards and councils of the nationalised enterprises and is replacing them with the puppets of the capitalists.

The workers, who were to secure the success of the nationalised industries are no longer interested in these enterprises being considered the property of the nation. In actual fact, nationalisation has to be won all over again.

The State employer, jointly with his reactionary government, today runs the enterprises in the interests of the capitalists and with greater brutality than the capitalists themselves.

In private enterprise the workers often compel the employer to give way and grant their demands. But in the nationalised industries, the government employs the full weight of the State apparatus against the working people. Under the pretext of being the employer the government questions the right to

strike.

The Resistance and Militancy of the Working Class

Outstanding factors in the recent strikes were the resistance and militancy of the working class, and also the solidarity of the peasantry with the strikers.

For more than three weeks 2,500,000 workers withstood a furious onslaught under extremely difficult conditions. They lacked funds, and were opposed by the combined forces of reaction, beginning with the Socialist leaders and ending with the de Gaullists.

The workers resisted strenuously the campaign of demoralisation in the course of which all means were applied. The miners, water transport workers, dockers, iron and steel and building workers displayed a remarkable proletarian staunchness. The miners and dockers continued the strike when the others returned to work.

The fighting spirit of the workers came to the fore particularly when resisting the police.

For three weeks every region of France, all the big industrial centres were scenes of uninterrupted battle between police and strikers for possession of the railway stations, round houses, telephone exchanges, the pits, and the big metal factories. At the stations and round houses in the Paris region, the main objects of the first police measures, fighting lasted over a week, in the course of which a number of the round houses changed hands several times. Similar clashes took place in most industrial centres.

In the Nord Department and Pas de Calais the mines were virtually stormed. On one occasion the Socialist Minister, Moch triumphantly informed Parliament that these mines had been seized by the police. Next day, however, they were again in the hands of the strikers.

Iron and steel works in the Paris region, and elsewhere were

also subjected to attack and counter-attack.

At some factories, for instance, at the Renault plant, where the workers were firmly entrenched and held the plant throughout the strike, the police did not dare attack. Meetings held in the factory grounds, were attended by up to 20,000 persons.

In the industrial towns where the police were particularly brutal, repressions as often as not led to an extension of the strikes. Such was the case in Marseilles, Lyons, Saint Etienne.

Not all the police played the perfidious role assigned them by the government. Many refused to act against the workers and Mock had to apply repressive measures against them at the very height of the strike movement.

The army was even less reliable. Despite denials by the War Minister, there were many instances of soldiers declining to attack the workers. When the police in Saint Etienne refused to go into action against the strikers, troops were summoned but the soldiers, armed with machine guns, joined the workers demonstration, and helped them dislodge the mobile guard from the railway station which was recaptured.

That is why Jules Mock brought in coloured troops and Anders' soldiers serving in the Foreign Legion.

Of great political significance was the widespread solidarity of the peasants with the striking workers. They collected hundreds of tons of provisions for the strikers. According to information at hand it was a genuine mass movement.

The Socialist Traitors Combat the Working Class

Another characteristic feature of the strike was that the Socialist leaders, MRP and de Gaullists, were forced to reveal their agents, and especially, their splitting elements in the trade unions, including the »Force Ouvriere« group, who, until then had been conducting their splitting activities in the guise of the independence of the trade unions.

These capitalist agents were receiving instructions from Leon Blum all the time. Long before the strikes Blum who had

announced a split in the trade unions, resisted the demands of the workers and defended his »theory of the vicious circle of prices and wages.« In order to transfer the full burden of rehabilitation onto the shoulders of the working people he resurrected Lassalle's »iron law.«

The leaders of the Christian trade unions, supporting the MRP ministers, also acted as strikebreakers. All of them have for long been associated with the agent of the American Federation of Labour, Erwin Brown, who supplies the dollars, counsel and orders under the supreme supervision of the US Department of State.

The »Force Ouvrier« group was assigned the leading role in the struggle against the strikes. Reaction banked on this group rendering the greatest services both in breaking the strikes and in attaining the cherished object: a split in the ranks of the working class.

The fact that five secretaries of the CGT, headed by Jouhaux, were in the leadership of this group, enabled it the better to conceal its role of an enemy agent. Since practically all its leaders are closely linked with the Socialist Party, the group's orientation and activities conform to the instructions of this party, including Blum himself. This subversive group tried hard to carry out the task assigned it, but the splitters failed to increase their number or their prestige. They have lost all hope of parading as the defenders of the independence of trade unions, and have exposed themselves as a faction of the »third power.«

During the strikes the secretaries of the CGT in the »Force Ouvrier« group, were active for the most part outside the regular bodies of the CGT. They were officially received by the Labour Minister as the minority of the CGT. An announcement to this effect was made in a corresponding communique. All their appeals to break the strikes and return to work were, through the good offices of the government, announced over the radio, which did not broadcast a single official communique of the strikers.

As for their »independence« never has a group been used as the tool of a party and policy directed against the interests of the working class as the »Force Ouvrier« was used. By selecting this group as their tool the imperialists not only aim to enslave the French working class; they are also trying to strike at world trade union unity as represented by the World Federation of Trade Unions, which is an obstacle to realising the aggressive plans of the warmongers.

The Results of the Strike

What was the situation on December 9, when the decision was taken to return to work?

On November 30 the government decided to freeze wages until June 1, 1948. Since the government's policy allowed for further price increases, freezing signified a new cut in real wages.

The majority of the CGT Bureau, as well as the Strike Committee set up on November 26, rejected these government decisions.

When the struggle had lasted another week, the Labour Minister informed a CGT delegation on December 7 of the new decisions of the government. According to these decisions, all workers, regardless of their strike action, would receive a monthly bonus of 1,500 francs. Family allowances would be paid to all workers, irrespective of whether they had taken part in the strikes, and would be increased by 22 per cent.

The government withdrew its decision to freeze wages until June 1, and increased the minimum hourly wage from 45.40 francs to 52.50 francs, that is, 10,500 francs a month.

These new decisions represented a certain concession on the part of the government. However, it refused to assume definite obligations on the main demand, namely, measures securing the automatic revision of wages, level of purchasing power, and confined itself to vague promises.

The CGT, championing the interests of the workers, declared

these measures unsatisfactory.

But before deciding to go on with the strikes it was necessary to review the forces in action and to measure up their resistance.

One million five hundred thousand worker were still on strike. The coal mines and docks, constituting the decisive sectors of struggle, were completely paralysed. The strikes in the metal and building materials enterprises in the big industrial centres were practically general.

The same holds true for the strikes in a number of the big cities, particularly in Marseilles, Lyons and Saint Etienne where the strikers were most militant.

Negative aspects of the situation were as follows: despite the efforts of the unions and the continued clashes the enemy succeeded in disrupting the strike movement among the railwaymen. It was clear that the railwaymen had to retreat. Bearing in mind the importance of the railways for the strike the resumption of work on this sector undoubtedly would have had a negative effect on the movement as a whole.

A similar situation developed among the postal workers, and in the electric power industry. After a 48-hour strike the civil servants resumed work.

On the other hand the splitting »Force Ouvrier« group continued their intrigues and strike-breaking activities.

In these conditions the National Strike Committee, to avoid a break up of the strike movement, decided upon a resumption of work on December 10. The Committee issued a manifesto summarising the results and gains of the strike, but at the same time pointed to the danger in the fact that the government decisions did not guarantee wages.

Explaining the reasons for this decision the Committee issued instructions to resume work at all plants for the purpose of regrouping the trade union forces.

Everywhere the workers returned to work convinced that their struggle had not been in vain: they had become conscious of their strength and that the struggle against reaction had

sharpened.

The rather positive results of the strike can be summarised as follows:

1. Had the working class not taken to strike action their conditions would have further deteriorated. The working class remained true to the trade unions, because the latter organised the struggle in defence of their vital interests.

2. The scale of the strike, the closing down of basic industries for several weeks, the courageous, and often victorious resistance offered police aggression, inspired the workers with confidence in their strength. This was the first time since the liberation that so many workers had taken part in such a bitter struggle.

3. The government's brutal repressions, the reactionary behaviour of the Socialist leaders and splitters, their bloc with de Gaulle, greatly helped to expose the right-wing Socialists as the agents of capitalism, as the enemies of the working class.

4. New people came to the fore during the strike, including women and the youth who proved to be able leaders.

The strike had a number of positive aspects, even though we did not win the main demand of the working class, that is, a guaranteed wage.

Regarding the position of the country and her future it should be stressed that the principal problem raised by the strike has not been solved. The economic and financial crisis have not been solved in the least. On the contrary this crisis has been further aggravated by the servile obedience to the dollar.

The government will try to get out of its difficulties by placing the full burden on to the shoulders of the working class. It will try to curtail, still further, the share of the working class in the national income. At the same time the government will try, as revealed by the bills it has introduced in Parliament, to use repressive measures against all the working people, against the peasants and small traders. This circumstance provides the preconditions for developing on a wide scale the **Committees for Defence of the Republic**.

Consequently, if the workers wish to avoid poverty and enslavement, they will again have to defend their living conditions.

The working class will fight, for the workers are in a militant mood, are determined to be victorious. The workers of France have entered the period of hard and severe battles. But they have proved their mettle and all the conditions for victory are a hand.

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DEMOCRATIC POLAND ON THE PATH OF INDEPENDENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. STEFAN ENDRIHOWSKI

In June 1947 the Polish Seim adopted a three-year (1947-1949) economic plan of rehabilitation. The plan devotes special attention to the restoration of the country's productive apparatus, destroyed as a result of military operations and the predatory policy of the German invaders. The value of industrial production in the State, cooperative, as well as private sector, is to reach the sum of 18.8 thousand million zloty (in terms of 1937 prices); agricultural production in 1949 will be 10 per cent above the average pre-war level.

The rapid development of industry and the restoration of agriculture in democratic Poland is all the more remarkable when compared to the rate of economic development at the time the country was ruled by landlords and capitalists. Here account should be taken of the enormous war destruction caused the national economy, estimated at 80,000 million zloty (5 zloty to the dollar). Bearing in mind that Poland's pre-war annual budget averaged 2,000 million zloty the war damage sustained by the country is the equivalent of 40 annual budgets. Even when the industrial output of the old Poland was at its

peak, there was a downward trend in a number of her basic industries: coal, oil, steel casting, etc. Agriculture steadily declined (the sugar-beet output, for instance, decreased by 50 per cent).

The reasons for this slump and stagnation in the economy of pre war Poland must be sought not only in the general decline of world capitalism and the uneven development of the capitalist countries, but also in the specific conditions prevailing in the country, the economic life of which was determined by:

1. The existence of deep-rooted feudal remnants in agriculture.
2. The policy of economic monopoly.
3. The influence of foreign capital In the principal branches of the national economy.

Prior to World War II there were 171 Polish and 100 international cartels in the country, which controlled production, and marketing not to mention the import and export of all the most important industries. The operations of these monopolies retarded the development of the country's economy.

The international cartels were not the only means by which foreign capital exerted influence on the pre-war economic life of Poland. In 1937 more than 40 per cent of the basic capital of all Polish, joint-stock companies was in the hands of foreign capitalists. They held 87.5 per cent of the shares in the oil-producing industry, 81.3 per cent in electric-power and water supply, 66.1 per cent in the electro-technical industry, 60 per cent in the clothing and haberdashery industry, 59.9 per cent in the chemical industry, 59.1 per cent in the insurance societies, 52.1 per cent in the wood-working industry, 52.1 per cent in the mining (excluding oil) and iron and steel industries.

It is understandable that under these conditions Poland's, economic, life, was subordinated to the interests of the international concerns, whose sole object was to extract the maximum profits from the country and not to promote her economic development. Thus, for instance, when oil workings

in Poland were exhausted the foreign capitalists declined to prospect new deposits. As a result the country's oil output decreased by half in the period between 1913-1937.

The democratic people's Poland put an end to the rule of the landlords and monopoly capital, confiscated the landed estates in favour of the small and medium peasants, and nationalised large-scale and medium sized industry. These measures put an end to the influence of big international capital on the economic life of the country. Enterprises belonging to German, and Italian capital were confiscated without compensation, as well as the enterprises sold to the Germans during the occupation by certain West European capitalists. The rest of the foreign concerns in Poland were guaranteed compensation, but not for the war losses suffered.

Having realised these basic reforms democratic Poland set about the planned rehabilitation and development of her economy. The results for the first ten months of 1947 are most instructive. With a few minor exceptions practically all branches of industry fulfilled the 1947 economic plan by more than 75 per cent, while certain industries have topped the target figure. Thus, the output plan for bicycles, was fulfilled 113 per cent, for cultivators—109 per cent, threshing machines—103 per cent, cable and insulation wire—116 per cent, automobile and motor-cycle tires—111.3 per cent, silk fabrics—116 per cent, knitgoods—100 per cent, haberdashery—166 per cent, animal and vegetable fats—128.6 per cent, preserves—184.9 per cent. A number of industries had reached the target set for the year by November.

This year the basic industries will considerably increase their output. Compared to the pre-war level coal output in 1947 will reach 153 per cent, i.e. 59 million tons as against 38 million in 1938; steel output—106 per cent; zinc output—124 per cent; locomotives—730 per cent; freight cars—206 per cent, ploughs—254 per cent; cultivators—229 per cent; threshing machines—121 per cent; transformers—105 per cent; nitro fertilizers—148.7 per cent; caustic soda—103.6 per cent; oxygen—185.7

per cent; acetylene—256.5 per cent; flax goods—160 per cent. The incorporation of the liberated Western territories, which, industrially are more developed, has contributed to the upward trend in industry. But many of the industrial enterprises in the Western territories had been destroyed and it required an enormous amount of labour and considerable capital, to restore them to their present capacity.

When the Three-Year Plan of Restoration was adopted the foreign bourgeois press very much doubted whether it could, be realised without aid from the capitalist West. Poland needs raw materials. We have to import about four-fifths, of our oil products and iron-ore, all of our cotton, 96 per cent of our wool, more than two-thirds of our raw, hides etc. The fulfilment of the country's economic plan, therefore, is dependent, to a large extent, on the import of the means of production.

Moreover, in the immediate post-war years Poland experienced, and even today is experiencing a shortage of grain and fats. An unusually severe winter, which was followed, by floods and drought, account for the 1947 crop failure in a number of areas. So far little headway has been made in cattle raising, and the catastrophic shortage of fodder last spring caused a temporary increase in the number of hogs, which until then had been increasing favourably. To date grain yield per capita of the population is but 72.6 per cent of the pre-war level and that of milk—56.6 per cent.

The, enemies, of democratic Poland hoped that the economic hardships would be followed by a grave economic and political crisis, Mikolajczyk and his foreign patrons banked on this. They based their hopes on the fact that in 1946 Poland was getting UNRRA aid. At the beginning of 1947 UNRRA aid all but stopped. The American imperialists refused any further assistance to Poland. They waited for the crash, but it did not come.

Last April the Polish reactionaries and foreign imperialists gained heart when market prices soared during the first quarter

due to transitional difficulties (non-fulfilment of the industrial plan, transport difficulties, the lag in raw material supplies). The Polish Workers' Party, however, disclosed the real reasons for this and impressed upon its partners in the democratic bloc the need for measures to stop the rise in prices. These measures were:

1. control of private trade, to combat profiteering, public control of retail prices and commercial profits;
2. public control of tax rates and measures to combat tax misuses;
3. reorganisation of grain purchases with the help of a special fund for the purpose.
4. the opening of State-owned stores in the provinces;
5. to afford private capital, hitherto engaged in trade profiteering, the opportunity to take part in building work, especially housing, to make industrial and trade investments in the Western territories and to finance imports.

These measures were effective thanks to a consistent financial policy, which prevented inflation and which, at the same time, did not retard economic development.

Beginning with the second quarter of 1946 Poland had a balanced state budget. The capital investment plan is secured partly by bank surpluses and partly by economically-sound bank credits. In 1947, the State fully cleared its debt to the Polish National Bank.

As a result of a correct, financial policy we have achieved the further stabilisation of prices. Last autumn the State introduced the first cut in prices on industrial goods, such as textiles, ceramics, agricultural machines, woodwork, paper, etc. The autumn-winter season which in the past was always the period of high prices, is now distinguished by staple prices.

However, we are still faced with serious difficulties, especially with regard to the balance of payments, in view of the need to import considerable food supplies, raw materials and industrial equipment, and with regard to financial exigencies involved in meeting the 1948 plan of capital investments, which are more

than double the 1947 figure. The foreign imperialists took it for granted that these difficulties would compel Poland to renounce her national independence, to capitulate to the »Marshall Plan«. But the Polish people remember only too well their cruel experience of dependence on international capital, and are determined never again to be burdened with the yoke of this dependence.

Restoring and developing the national economy, the Polish government relies, above all, on its own resources. In view of the difficulties that lie ahead in 1948, everything possible has been, done to purchase marketable grain on the home market, and major successes have already been achieved in this field. The government is taking the necessary measures to eliminate the disproportion in the development of industry and agriculture. The area sown to crops will be increased in 1948; a number of measures have been introduced to raise the productivity of the individual peasant house-hold in the cultivation of grain and the development of cattle raising. The agricultural and other cooperative branches are being reorganised so as to enable them to cope with the tasks in the sphere of exchange between town and country. New forms for accumulating savings are projected.

Emulation, which developed in a big way in the autumn of 1947 on the initiative of the coal miner, Wintcenti Pstrowski, is one of the sources contributing to the increase in the national income and, simultaneously, to the real earnings of the working people. Today entire industries (coal and textile) are competing with one another, with the result that overall output and output per worker are steadily growing. This, in its turn, is lowering production costs, increasing industrial profits and raising the standard of living. The emulation movement is one of the major guarantees that the 1948 plan, will be successful.

In its foreign economic policy the Polish government aims to surmount the economic difficulties by extending cooperation, above all, with the Soviet Union and the countries of the new democracy, as well as with the other European and non-

European countries. The national economy has greatly benefited from cooperation with the Soviet Union. Thanks to the assistance rendered by the Soviet Union in the matter of raw materials Poland's industry started operating at full capacity immediately following the liberation. The Soviet Union has more than once helped Poland with grain. During 1946 and 1947 this, assistance was given in the form of credit. Yugoslavia, Hungary and, Rumania, too, have helped Poland cope with her acute grain shortage. Finally, cooperation with the Soviet Union will play a big role in the sphere of Poland's investment needs.

Undoubtedly, the different economic agreements concluded with Czechoslovakia in 1947 will make it easier for the two countries to carry out their economic plans. Trade relations with Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania are developing. Poland has signed economic agreements covering a period of years with Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. The economic cooperation between the countries of Eastern and Central Europe can serve as an example of mutual interests, based on respect and, friendly relations between the nations.

Naturally, Poland is not restricting her trade relations to the countries of Eastern and Central Europe alone. We are for trade relations with all the capitalist countries, desirous of trading on conditions advantageous to both sides.

Like the other countries of the people's democracy Poland is confidently advancing along the path of recovery. There are difficulties ahead; the survivals and heritage of the past still have to be eliminated; much remains to be organised more efficiently than hitherto. But ours is the only sure path, the path which guarantees ultimate success, the economic prosperity of the new Poland. *(page 6)*

THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

In its time the democratic press of a number of countries gave considerable publicity to the documents and materials of the Information Conference of representatives of the nine

Communist Parties, In these documents the Communist Parties made an analysis of the international situation, reported on their activities, exchanged experience and jointly outlined their immediate tasks.

The Communists, confident of the justice of their cause and the genuine champions of the interests of the working people, have no need to conceal their aims and tasks. Only those whose conscience is not clear, have to hide their real face and intentions.

A month has gone by since the conference of the Socialist Parties was held. It is high time that the world was informed why the representatives of the Socialist Parties gathered in Antwerp. To date, however, not a single resolution or report of this conference has been published. One might think there had been no such conference.

What is the matter, gentlemen of the right wing? Why are you concealing your decisions from the people? You, who are so fond of accusing the Communists of »conspiracy« and all kinds of »plots«.

One can guess what was discussed by the Antwerp conference from the desultory dispatches carried by the capitalist and Socialist press.

The leaders of the Right Socialist Parties, uneasy at the vigorous resistance offered by the popular masses to the American plan to enslave Europe, planned the Antwerp conference to conspire how to facilitate the task of the American imperialists. When discussing the economic reconstruction of Europe the rightwing Socialists assailed the decisions of the Polish conference of the nine Communist Parties, which outlined the only correct solution to the post-war recovery and reorganisation of the countries of Europe. But, like devoted lackeys, they went out of their way to sing the praises of the »Marshall Plan«, The British, French and Norwegian delegates were particularly zealous.

Anxious to render a service to the American patrons of the organisers of the conference the British delegates and French

Socialists set out to secure, according to some reports in the capitalist press and 'managed to secure, a favourable appreciation of the »Marshall Plan«. Thus the Socialist stamp was affixed to the plan.

But Messrs, the imperialist Socialists, will not go far. They will not succeed in deceiving the peoples of Europe, who are fighting for their freedom and sovereignty.

Professor Laski, representing the British Labour Party, reported on the problems of peace. World public opinion has not been informed of what he had to say, But bearing in mind his pronouncements on this question prior to the Antwerp conference, and after studying the information which filtered through the press, we can form a fairly good idea of what he told the delegates. Laski utilised, his speech to justify the imperialist policy of the USA, which is aspiring to world domination.

According to the press a typical Labour resolution, one that in no way offended the capitalists was adopted on his report. Delegates representing the Socialist Parties of Poland, Hungary and Italy countered this resolution with one of their own.

The champions of class peace and custodians of the integrity of the capitalist system expressed »regret« at the sharpening contradictions between the camp of imperialism and the camp of democracy. The conference according to the organ of the PPS »Rabotnik« turned down a Polish draft, supported by the Hungarians and Italians, which pointed to the sharpening class struggle on the international arena and to the expansionist drive of American imperialism.

This once again revealed the right-wing Socialists as the agents of American imperialism. They dare not tell the people of Europe the truth about the insolent colonising policy pursued by the American imperialists in the countries of Western Europe, for they fear their masters.

That is why evidently the right-wing leaders of the Socialist Parties have every reason to hide their decisions from public opinion. They have every reason to fear the light of day, for

their conscience is not clear.

The capitalist press treated the news of the Antwerp conference and its results with sympathy and satisfaction. The only thing that annoyed some newspapers was that differences of opinion between the Socialist leaders of many countries are hindering the carrying out of a concerted struggle against the Communist Information Bureau.

A rather strange impression is created by the fact that the Left Socialists, who opposed the Right Socialists at the Conference on a number of essential issues, did not deem it necessary to inform public opinion in detail of the Antwerp conference and of the disagreements that arose there. They are thus objectively helping the Rights to carry out their plans.

A.DRUGOV

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PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia

An enlarged plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia was held recently in Bratislava. The plenum discussed the causes of the political crisis in

Slovakia and the ways and means of liquidating it.

As was stressed in the report of the chairman of the CP of Slovakia, Comrade Siroki, and in the subsequent discussion, the crisis had been caused primarily by the anti-State and anti-popular activities of Slovak reactionaries who had found shelter in the so-called Democratic Party. Since the liberation of Czechoslovakia, the Slovak reactionaries had adopted a negative attitude towards nationalisation, the principles of planned economy and other measures designed to secure the social and economic reconstruction of Czechoslovakia along new, democratic lines. Taking advantage of their positions in the State and economic apparatus reactionaries sabotaged government measures for carrying out the Two-Year Plan and raising the standard of living.

The Slovak people delivered a resolute rebuff to the disruptive activities and intrigues of the conspirators.

As is known, the protracted struggle against reaction was followed by the reorganisation of the national executive body—the Council of Representatives—since the working people of Slovakia had no confidence in the former composition of the Council. But the main result of this struggle, as pointed out by Comrade Siroki, is the changed political atmosphere in Slovak public life. The sabotaging elements have seen for themselves that the democratic republic has the powerful backing of the people, that the people are fully determined to defend the gains of the popular democratic revolution.

The plenum stated that while reaction had suffered a heavy blow, this was but the first step towards the complete liquidation of the political crisis and its causes. Comrade Siroki pointed out that the struggle was not yet over; it would be continued in the course of the national drive for the emergency purchase of grain for the population; in relentless struggle against the black market and profiteering. We shall endeavour, said Comrade Siroki, to fulfil and over-fulfil the Two-Year Plan, to thoroughly cleanse Slovak public life and bring the anti-State conspirators to trial.

These are the tasks and the programme of action of the Communist Party of Slovakia—tasks dictated by the present situation. The political goal of the Slovak Communist Party is to win the majority of the Slovak people for Party policy, since this is the only correct way to surmount the difficulties.

Concluding his remarks Comrade Siroki read the proposal of the Central Committee to convene the IX congress of the Slovak Communist Party on March 6, 1948.

The General Secretary of the Party, S. Bastovanski reported on the organisational preparations for the congress. A congress preparatory campaign will be launched under the slogan of solving the urgent political questions of the Slovak people.

After a 2-day debate, which revealed the ideological growth of the Party, the plenum agreed on, a number of important decisions concerning Party organisation.

In view of the forthcoming congress the Central Committee decided to address a letter to all Party members and to the public, raising for discussion vital problems of Party policy, and the prospects of development towards Socialism. The Central Committee has also elaborated the draft of new Party rules, which will be submitted to all Party organisations for discussion.

POLLITT'S REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY

Reporting to the recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the British Communist Party, Harry Pollitt dwelt on the international situation and on the Party's tasks arising from the economic, and political situation in Great Britain.

After a detailed analysis of the whole course of development of the British crisis in the light of the international situation, Pollitt stated:

"When the world is divided into an imperialist and an anti-imperialist camp, with a Labour Government an active partner in the former, important changes need to be made in the policy of the Communist Party. We correctly exposed the reactionary nature of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, but we were slow after the end of the war to recognise that American imperialism had become the new central force of world reaction, seeking to subordinate Britain to its own interests.

»Now this question is placed in still sharper terms because of the way Britain is being tied behind the Marshall Plan; production increases will not be utilised for the benefit of the British people, but will be subordinated to the general aims of American policy.

»In our anxiety to drive for increased production, we have sometimes done far too little in the fight for wages and conditions, and on occasions placed ourselves in a position where we seemed to be holding back the struggle for the workers' demands.

»It was our duty in all industries to help mobilise the workers in the factories, trade unions and all working-class organisations on a much greater scale than we have done, against all 'sacrifices', shortages and attacks on their living standards. We should drive for a drastic policy of decisive inroads upon profits and all forms of capitalist control, and conduct a much sharper fight against the composition and reactionary character of the various nationalisation boards.

»There has been too much concentration on work at the top and insufficient direct mass leadership on every aspect of the workers' struggle. Our campaign of exposure of the role of Social-Democracy has also been insufficient.«

Calling upon the Communist Party to organise a mass struggle against reaction, Pollitt warned that the main danger today is an under-estimation of the strength of the working class and its readiness to fight back for the achievements of its demands and its solution of the crisis.

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