

Media Lines

21 November 1966

UAR Press Adept in Use of Captions and Headlines for Propaganda. A sampling of the Cairo press during a recent week illustrates the use of headlines and captions in making propaganda points. The following examples were among those noted:

- a. The miscaption. The weekly review, AL MUSSAWAR, on 22 October carried an Associated Press photo of U.S. soldiers interrogating bound Viet Cong prisoners above the caption: "This is how U.S. Cavalry troops (the First Division), in search of Viet Cong troops. question Vietnamese villagers: they throw them, with their hands tied, into the rice fields, hoping they will furnish information about the 'rebels'".
- b. The editorialized caption. AL GOMHOURIA, a well-known daily, in its 20 October edition captioned a photograph of President Johnson shaking hands with New Zealanders out to greet him at the airport on his recent Asian trip: "Johnson Feigns Humanity; photo shows him shaking hands with a child across airport fence in New Zealand".
- c. The slanted headline. Another large Cairo daily, AL AHRAM, on 18 October headlined the commencement of President Johnson's Asian trip as follows: "Johnson Starts Asian Trip Amidst Threats to Assassinate Him".

The Cairo press carried no editorials on President Johnson's trip, but as one observer noted, "With such headlines, who needs editorials?" (Unclassified)

21 November 1966

Briefly Noted ✓

*George
Kennan
To Tell
All* Stalin Reported to be Police
Spy

In the "Periscope" column of its 7 November 1966 issue (see Press Comment, 8 Nov 66) NEWSWEEK magazine reports that former Ambassador George Kennan has found new evidence to prove that Stalin was once a Tsarist police agent. Kennan, now at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton, has discovered that the passport Stalin used to attend a party congress in Stockholm in 1906 was issued by the secret police, and also that Stalin disclosed at a party seminar in 1920 that he had been a Tsarist agent; a theoretical magazine reporting this disappeared from Soviet libraries, and the other participants in the session, together with Stalin's close associates in the 1906-1912 period, were all liquidated in the 1920's. NEWSWEEK reports that Kennan will publish his findings soon.

This is not the first time that Stalin has been reported to have been a police spy (see: STALIN'S GHOST SECRET by Isaac D. Levine, New York, Coward-McCann, 1956. 126 pp.) but Kennan appears to have uncovered new evidence, and his own stature as a former Ambassador and well-known historian -- together with the fact that he has lately been a critic of the U.S. government -- will probably attract considerable publicity to his story when and if it is published.

The NEWSWEEK report may be used as a basis for short editorial comment, pending the full publication of the story. The 50th Anniversary

commemorations next year will provide good pegs for discussions of Stalin's secret past. The point to be stressed is not so much Stalin's misdeeds as an individual -- many of these were fully revealed in Khrushchev's famous Secret Speech in 1956 -- but that an individual like Stalin could take over the CPSU and rule the Soviet Union and the World Communist movement for many years. Certainly no Bolshevik would have considered a one-time police spy within the party to be qualified to lead the party; Stalin, however, was able to keep this information from most of the Bolsheviks and to eliminate those who found out. Since there is no control over the leadership of a Communist party once it is in power, not even by the party itself, the rest of the world must see to it that Communist parties do not come to power in the first place.

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*"Guerrilla"
Broadcast
Series* Cuban Radio Incites
Violent Revolution.

Radio Havana, on 8 October, inaugurated weekly broadcasts in English of a program called simply, "Guerrilla". The series provides rundowns on guerrilla activities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and according to its sponsors, promotes "tri-continental solidarity". Half of the initial program, which lasted 32 minutes, was devoted to the situation in Colombia, which was

cited as offering a good example "of the armed struggle of the people." The remainder of the program included brief reports from Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Angola, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, Peru, Venezuela and Guatemala. For more than a year, Havana Radio has been appealing for violent revolution, and the new "Guerrilla" series indicates a reinforcement of that policy. (unclassified)

* * *

Conference 1936 French Popular
"Manifested Front Studied at CP
Proletarian Conference
Internationalism"

A so-called "international scientific conference" devoted to the history of the development of the Popular Front in 1936 and the activity of the late Secretary General of the French Communist Party (PCF), Maurice Thorez, was held in Paris from 24 to 29 October. In addition to the PCF, delegations from the CPs of Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Poland, Rumania, the USSR, and Czechoslovakia attended the conference, according to a 31 October TASS report.

The report on the conference in the 3 November issue of the PCF daily newspaper, L'HUMANITE, notes the participation of delegates from parties and institutes of history in 19 European and Latin American countries. L'HUMANITE also reports (see unclassified attachment) that not only was the French experience analyzed at the conference but attention was also devoted to experiences in Italy, Spain, Chile, and elsewhere.

Also attached is another article by Georges Cogniot, a member of the

PCF Central Committee. (Cogniot not only authored the article in L'HUMANITE but also gave the concluding speech at the Paris conference, which the Soviet news agency summarized thus: "In the last 30 years there have been big changes in the world, but the lessons of the Popular Front are still topical. Judging by its composition and the content of the proceedings the conference was a manifestation of proletarian internationalism." TASS also notes that a coreport was delivered by P.N. Pospelov, director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism at the CPSU Central Committee.)

Note in the concluding section of the Cogniot article in the August issue of the WORLD MARXIST REVIEW (the English edition of the international journal for all Soviet-oriented CP's) the statement: "The lessons of the epoch-making experience of the Popular Front, if due account is taken of the dictates of our time, have lost none of their significance. What was then an alliance of the working class and the middle strata now takes the form of the unity of all anti-monopoly forces against the financial oligarchy and its instrument -- one-man rule." (The latter is a typical CP veiled attack against the domestic policies of President De Gaulle while openly espousing certain of his foreign policies which complement those of the World Communist Movement.)

For further details of how the PCF uses the Popular Front theme see BIWEEKLY PROPAGANDA GUIDANCE Item No. 1021 of 23 May 1966, "New Opportunities for French Communists". How this is used on an international

scale is demonstrated in COMMUNIST TEXTS of 10 August 1966, an analysis of the WORLD MARXIST REVIEW article entitled "Unity of Action Is a Vital Need of Our Time."

* * *

*Communist
Media
Coverage
Wanes* Russell Mock Trial Beset
by Difficulties

Just before the first closed session of the Vietnam "war crimes tribunal" proposed by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (BRPF) was scheduled to be held (13-16 November in London), Russell announced that three African presidents -- Julius Myerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, and Leopold Senghor of Senegal -- had withdrawn their support of the Foundation's projects.* At the same time, Communist media around the world were paying less and less attention to it.

The North Vietnamese radio and press did not refer to it in connection with a large-scale propaganda campaign devoted to the documents and films released 31 October by the Hanoi-created Commission for Investigation of U.S. Imperialist War Crimes in Vietnam; other Communist media, reporting press conferences held by North Vietnamese representatives in other world capitals, as well as statements of support for North Vietnam's independent initiative in this regard, were similarly silent about the BRPF proposal. The FRENCH PRESS AGENCY (AFP) correspondent in Hanoi reported on 7 November that the arrival of top BRPF official Ralph Schoenman in North Vietnam three days earlier had not even been mentioned in the North Vietnamese press.

*(See page 7, 17 Nov PRESS COMMENT.)

The French Government radio on 7 November broadcast an interview with Mai Van Bo, the North Vietnamese Government's Delegate General in Paris. In answer to a question about the Russell initiative, to hold a "tribunal" in London, he gave this noncommittal reply: *"If Lord Bertrand Russell has had the idea of convoking an international tribunal to denounce and condemn the war crimes committed by the United States in Vietnam, this will be only just.... On our part, if we find that it is time to denounce and to condemn the war crimes, it is up to all the people of the world, including the American people, to join their efforts to those of our people to halt the arm of the greatest criminals in history and to make sure that the crimes committed against peace and humanity are not repeated against other peoples in other countries."*

Peking media continues to ignore the BRPF proposal. Two items from other Communist sources, on the other hand, disclose further complications for the "tribunal" organizers:

On 1 November the Yugoslav news agency TANYUG reported that professors and students of the University of Ljubljana had "condemned" the President of the Slovene Academy of Science Josip Vidmar "because he declined to cooperate in the committee assisting Russell's court for war crimes in Vietnam."

In London, former left-wing MP Fenner Brockway announced on 4 November that the British Council for Peace in Vietnam was sponsoring an international juridical commission to hear evidence about the war, and that it was not connected with the Russell "tribunal." According to a

brief TASS report, Lord Brockway said "he had sent a letter to Lord Russell calling for joint actions." The Soviet news agency added without comment: "Russell put forth an idea for setting up an international tribunal to deal with the American war crimes in Vietnam."

Prior to the London BRPF meeting there were indications that the original idea of holding a mock trial of U.S. leaders was being altered to make the subsequent sessions, still scheduled for February or March next year at some not yet confirmed site, resemble more a "commission of inquiry."

Our position remains that no publicity for the "tribunal" is still the best line to follow. Statements that there is every indication that the Communists may be dropping or ignoring the BRPF, despite their apparent validity, could very well be counterproductive since they might lend an air of some respectability to the Russell group.

The most plausible explanation of Communist media behavior in this connection is that the Communists prefer to advance their offensive against U.S. "war criminals" along three independent tracks: Hanoi's investigation for Communist and anti-U.S. leftist audiences, Russell's "tribunal" for non-Communists and intelligentsia of the Free World, and Brockway's for old-line pacifists.

* * *

<i>To Convene</i>	<u>Will Soviet Writers</u>
<i>or not ---</i>	<u>Meet?</u>

One of the most dramatic and significant cultural-political events of 1966 could take place in

mid-December when the oft-postponed 4th Writers' Congress is to convene in Moscow. Alternatively, that Congress could be as dull and uneventful as were the Congresses of the CPSU last March and the Komsomol in May. The outcome of the Writers' Congress will depend upon the strength and audacity of the liberal forces of protest and the counter-weight of the regime's mechanisms for imposing conformity to "socialist realism."

The struggle between the regime (represented by orthodox writers and officials) and the weakly organized but articulate liberal writers whose most significant works are published in NOVY MIR (NEW WORLD) was one-sided in favor of the former during the early part of 1966 as the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial and sentencing in February was followed up by blasts in the conservative press. Since mid-1966, however, the liberals have emerged more frequently from their virtual silence. The Congress, therefore, may pit the two forces against one another in a stirring battle for control and the right of freer expression.

The Soviets can hardly postpone the Congress once again, even though they realize it may prove embarrassing to them. If they do, we treat the postponement as a glaring admission of no confidence in the regime's ability to let writers express themselves openly in public and as evidence of the regime's awareness that the creative intelligentsia are alienated. If the proceedings of the Congress are scantily reported, we speculate widely on the issues and arguments behind the scenes which almost certainly will have been suppressed. If some Soviet writers

break through in print with statements condemning the bonds of regime control over literature, we applaud them and encourage the Free World's press to give them every practicable encouragement. In any eventuality, we contrast the suppression of liter-

any expression in the USSR with the freedoms existing in most Free World countries and, furthermore, we register our regret that the Soviet controls are depriving the world of the talented Russians' valuable literary production.

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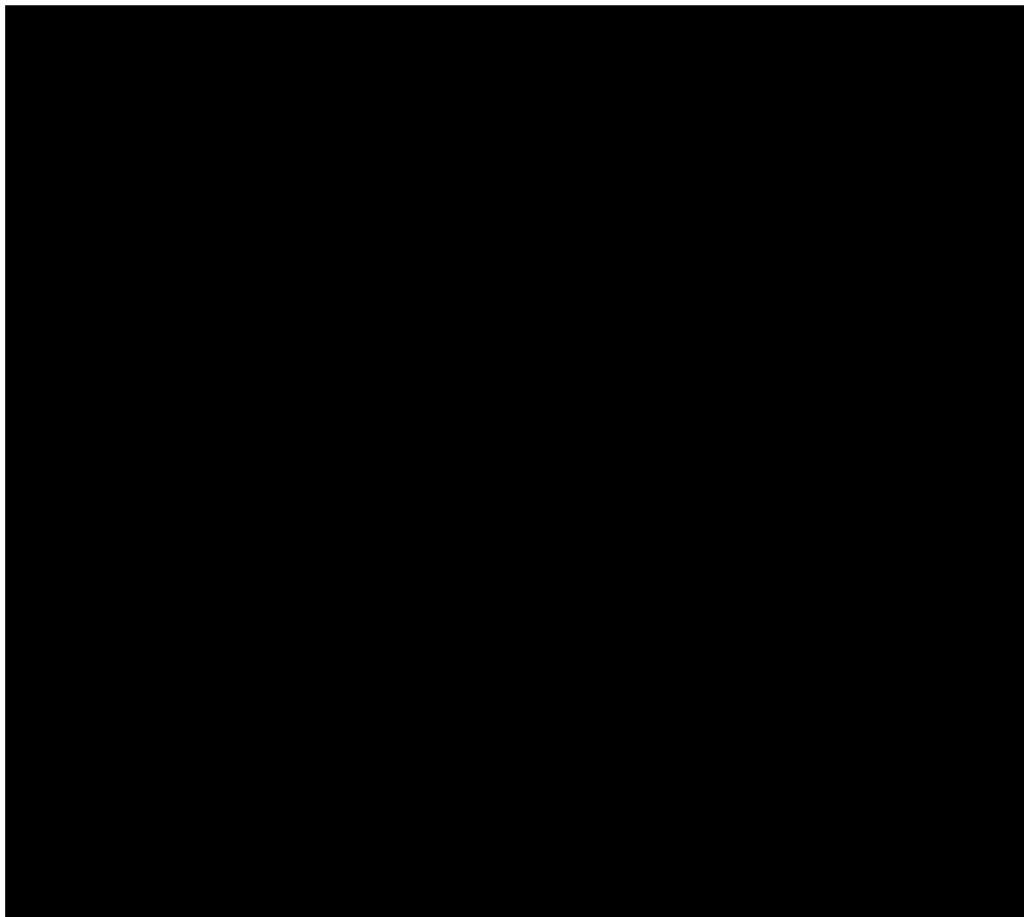
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Questionnaire

TO ALL FIELD ADDRESSES: In the past we have sent questionnaires several times to the field on the use of our BPG's, and your responses have materially aided us in our effort to meet your propaganda needs. Our last questionnaire was sent in 1963, and since that time several changes have been made in the BPG's. Will you, therefore, please fill out this form and return it within one week? (FYI, this is the last in our current series of questionnaires.)

25X1A2d1

TO: Chief, [redacted]
VIA: Chief, _____ Division
FROM: COS (COB)
SUBJECT: Bi-Weekly Propaganda Guidance Issue #202, dated 24 October 1966

A. This Station (Base) utilized Guidance Items in subject issue as follows:
(Use checks: If item not received, please cross out the item number)

1. Articles (editorials, news, other printed material -- if more than one, give total).
2. Broadcasts, speeches, other non-printed uses.
3. Discussing with Liaison, other local individuals.
4. Showing, discussing with State Dept. or other U.S. officials.
5. Background info for general functions of your position.

ITEM NUMBERS*		
1067	1068	1069

Additional Comment:

*1067 WH, Free Choice for Puerto Rico; 1068, "Vltava": Warsaw Pact 1966 Maneuvers Unprecedented in Scope; 1069 NE,AF., Nasser Jails Yemeni Cabinet.

B. "Propagandist's Guide to World Communist Affairs" and unclassified Chronology.

1. Do you usually find the classified Guide of value in treating and exploiting Communist developments? Yes__ No__ Comment:
2. Last Spring the Guide was changed from a bi-weekly survey of Communist dissensions to a monthly survey of over-all world Communist developments, not limited to dissensions. Has this change made the Guide more or less useful for your purposes? More__ Less__ No change__ Comment:
3. Have you used the unclassified Chronology accompanying the Guides by:
1) Passing it to agents? Yes__ No__ 2) other (explain):
4. Have you used the French or Spanish translation of the Chronology?
French__ Spanish__.

C. Unclassified Attachments.

1. Have you passed any of the unclassified attachments to BPG #202 to agents? Yes__ No__ Which attachments?
2. Do you consider the number of unclassified attachments to be generally: too few__ enough__ too many__ Other comment on attachments:

D. Subject matter.

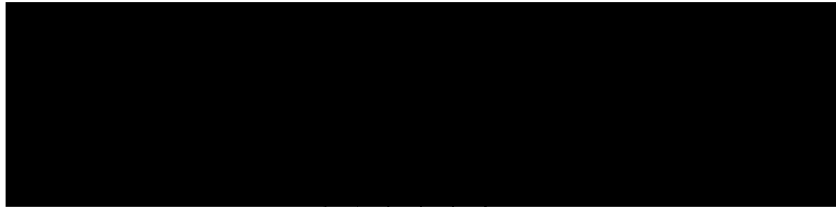
1. Are the subjects covered generally pertinent to your mission? Yes__ No__ Comment:
2. (For stations not receiving all BPG items:) Among items you do not receive, are there any you would like? If yes please specify:
3. Relative to your needs, and thinking back over the BPG's of the last year or so, do you find any major subjects which are not being covered? If yes, please specify:

E. General Comments: (If more space is needed attach additional sheets.)

1075.

PARLIAMENTARY OPPORTUNITY FOR
THE NETHERLANDS COMMUNIST PARTY

25X1C10b



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SITUATION: (Unclassified) In response to a formal request from the leader of the four-member Parliamentary group of the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN), the Second Chamber of the Netherlands Parliament on 4 October 1966 voted 80 to 47 to admit Communist deputies to membership on the Chamber's Permanent Committees on Defense and Foreign Affairs. This is the first time such admission has been authorized since the 1948 Communist coup in Czechoslovakia.

Only three members of the Catholic People's Party (KVP) -- coalition government leaders -- voted against admission of the Communists to these committees. The proposal was also supported by the Pacifist Socialist Party, Farmers Party, Christian Historical Union, and about half of the Labor Party members. An article in the Socialist daily HET PAROOL commented that the KVP gave their almost unanimous vote because of an evident Party decision that this action would be in line with the Vatican lead in "bridge building" to the East. (Note: the coalition Cabinet led by KVP Premier Cals fell ten days later on an unrelated issue.)

Largely because of the almost unanimously adverse Netherlands press comment (see unclassified attachment), the Permanent Committees on Defense and Foreign Affairs have voted to organize subcommittees to handle confidential matters; CPN members will be excluded from these subcommittees.

While there are only four CPN representatives in the 150-member Second Chamber (and only one in the 75-member First Chamber), this advance in status of the CPN domestically is best viewed in the overall context of efforts by Communist parties throughout the NATO area to gain respectability and wield greater influence, tasks re-emphasized in the goals listed at the 9-11 May 1966 conference of the West European Communist Parties held in Vienna (see BPG items #1026, 1033, 1036, and 1043, which discuss how this has affected other countries).

Even before the Vienna conference, CPN plans for gaining more influence in Netherlands politics were spelled out in an article in POLITIEK EN CULTUUR, the CPN's monthly theoretical organ, by Mrs. van Ommeren-Averink, Central Committee member and CPN Parliamentary representative. She wrote in the March 1966 issue:

"The CPN is concentrating its efforts principally on its national obligations. We place the most emphasis on unity and collaborate with all progressive forces in the Netherlands. We are open to whatever is possible in the way of agreements and cooperation for commonly held objectives, and with parties and groups that have either striven with us in the past or are still doing so. The commonly pursued demonstrations against the forms of a multilateral European force and for solidarity with Vietnam are examples of this desire. Cooperation has increased between Socialist and Communist workers and others. By intensifying the cooperation between Socialism and Communism the perspectives are opened to bring about in the future the gradual decrease and the ultimate elimination of any division in the worker's movement in the Netherlands."

Thus Mrs. van Ommeren-Averink reiterated the CPN's intention to use the tactics of the United Front.

On 22 April 1966, the CPN daily newspaper DE WAARHEID ("The Truth") carried a report on the previous evening's meeting of the Central Committee in Amsterdam, at which CPN Chairman Paul de Groot spoke about the XXIII Congress of the CPSU. De Groot stressed another tactical line popular among European CPs, that of claiming to be basically a nationalist party, free from entangling direction from the seats of the World Communist Movement. Denying that his Party was turning away from Moscow and seeking alignment with Peking as had been claimed in the "bourgeois" press, he declared:

"The CPN has defended its independence against everyone. It will not and it does not permit even the Chinese Communist Party to encroach either directly or indirectly upon this complete independence. It determines its policies itself, here in Amsterdam and nowhere else."

The CPN, whose delegates had refused to sign the final communique at the June 1965 Conference of West European CPs in Brussels, did not send a delegation to this year's Vienna conference; the Party explained in a short DE WAARHEID item that it was unable to attend because of the Dutch municipal electoral campaign and because it had been "too late and too scantily informed" about the meeting. According to the Party paper, the CPN objected to the way the meeting was organized: the meeting did not confine itself to the struggle against monopolies in the capitalist countries of Europe, and its sessions were not held in public.

The CPN gained slightly in the municipal elections on 1 June. Neither the Labor Party, a moderate constitutional socialist party which supports NATO and was a member of the Cals coalition, nor the Pacifist Socialist Party, a non-Communist, left-socialist, pacifist party, did well in the election. (See unclassified attachment from the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, "Dutch Face Political Storms.")

Following the elections, the CPN's public image was somewhat tarnished by three successive nights of rioting and vandalism in Amsterdam in mid-June. Although the CPN admitted playing a role in organizing the demonstration of construction workers which preceded the riots, the Party denied, with only limited success, that it had a part in inciting the riots themselves. Three days before the riots began, a pro-ChiCom youth group not officially affiliated with the CPN, called "Rode Jeugd" (Red Youth), published a RODE JEUGD BULLETIN which encouraged its readers to break windows in six American buildings in the Netherlands as a "small part" of what is needed to destroy "capitalist possessions." When Marcus Bakker, a CPN spokesman in the Second Chamber loudly denied complicity in the riots, the Catholic daily DE VOLKSKRANT ironically suggested on 18 June that he "should go to the Rode Jeugd offices and ask them to change the name of their paper because it lends itself to misunderstanding." (The subjects of Peking-oriented Dutch Marxist-Leninist groups and ChiCom-Dutch relations are not treated in this Guidance.) Although the activities of the CPN are not often publicized in such CPSU-directed international publications as Moscow's NEW TIMES, the 17 August 1966 issue of that journal published the second of two reports on the Amsterdam riots. It noted that, "as is usually the case, the reactionary press tried to put all the blame for the 'organized disorder' on the Communists." The NEW TIMES report, ascribed to a reader in Amsterdam who amplified the original report by the paper's own correspondent, claimed the riots were caused by the marriage of Princess Beatrix to a former officer of Hitler's Wehrmacht, the release and deportation to West Germany of a "war criminal," high living costs, and "imperialist aggression" in Vietnam.

The unfavorable publicity on the CPN's role in the riots obviously had little effect on the Parliament, since it voted in favor of CPN participation on these two important and sensitive Permanent Committees. 25X1C10b

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1076.

SOVIET CROP RESULTS IN 1966



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SITUATION: Agriculture in the USSR is usually viewed by Westerners as a critically weak sector and by some Soviets, in their more candid moments, as a hopeless situation with a catastrophic future. The balance of informed opinion is that Soviet agriculture has fallen far below reasonable expectations, considering the abundance of good land and of historically farm-oriented workers. The exceptionally large 1966 crop may cause many people to re-examine their views of Soviet agriculture. The closest observers of the USSR recognize that this year's improvement in agricultural production is largely attributable to very favorable weather and also to the implementation of some long-overdue measures to improve farming. The following discussion is elaborated upon in an unclassified attachment.

In spite of the vagueness of available reports on the Soviets' 1966 crop, it is clear that an all-time high has been reached for total agricultural production and for grain. The preliminary claim by Brezhnev is that the gross agricultural production in 1966 is 10% larger than in 1965. Inasmuch as double-counting* of production is tolerated, the gain in net agricultural production is probably somewhat smaller. Furthermore, adjustments will still have to be made for the Soviet practice of reporting crops in terms of "bunker weight," or as received at the delivery point. The final Soviet figures will, if past practices continue, be published at a rather late date in 1967, and will then have to be converted by Western analysts to a more meaningful basis by measuring production more accurately.

The Soviets themselves are probably surprised that the 1966 grain crop turned out to be so good, as evident from their contracts to spend hard currency for the purchase of almost 4 million metric tons of wheat from Canada and France between 1 July 1966 and 30 June 1967. Several factors play important roles in the 1966 results: good weather, increased use of mineral fertilizers, and higher farm wages. The weather was not only good, but its timing was particularly favorable. The European USSR had abundant rainfall in the spring, and the New Lands had an ideal dry spell for the harvest season. The application of fertilizer, a relatively simple yet

*e.g., grain fed to animals is counted both as grain production and as part of the value of beef, pork, poultry, and other food products.

frequently bungled task in the USSR, was improved, especially in the Western areas. The payment of higher wages and the new practice of paying a greater number of collective farm workers regularly instead of upon completion of the harvest undoubtedly resulted in greater efforts on collective lands without reducing substantially the amount of time spent on the private plots. The most significant of these factors, is the weather.

The active role of the government in the production of this year's crop should be viewed against the background of stagnation in agriculture since 1957-58. The leaders recognized that poor crops have had the indirect effect of limiting resources for industrial development and have also presented serious obstacles to the formulation of long-term economic plans. Another consideration, undoubtedly, was the contribution of poor crops to the long-term decline in the growth of per capita consumption in the USSR. Furthermore, the Soviets showed acute sensitivity to Free World remarks about the mysterious transformation of Russia from an exporter of agricultural goods into a country which had to buy food in capitalist markets. Whether the Soviets can reverse this unfavorable image depends upon their being able to improve the organization and management of agriculture and to obtain results from the planned increase in agricultural investment during forthcoming weather cycles. The Soviets' commitment to buy 6 million metric tons of wheat from Canada, half in 1967-68 and half in 1968-69, indicates that they lack confidence in their own ability to produce adequate crops consistently.

The impact of this year's harvest in the USSR is to reduce the needs to import grain, to replenish sorely depleted reserves, and to ensure that the Soviets will be able to take care of their export commitments to selected countries. The improvement has not been enough, however, to permit the Soviets to lift the rationing of flour which has been in effect since 1963.

There is no doubt that this year's crop will help relieve the USSR's critical food supply situation. In its wake, however, it will aggravate other problems. For instance, the USSR is most likely to be committed to an expansion of investment and industrial production in support of agriculture; this commitment would restrict the options for the development of other sectors in the taut Soviet economy. The long-overdue policy of paying wage incentives to farm workers will have a continuing popular impact. With disposable income in the economy as a whole already growing far faster than the supply of goods, the regime will be hard pressed to show the farm workers that their rubles can be exchanged for an adequate amount of satisfactory goods. 25X1C10b

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21 November 1966

1077.

UNITY AND SCHISM IN ITALIAN
POLITICS ON THE LEFT

25X1C10b

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SITUATION: (Unclassified): "October 1966 was a memorable month for the Italian left. The democratic left found new unity. The Communist left found new schism." This editorial summation by the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR (see page 16, 3 November PRESS COMMENT for the full text), oversimplifies, of course, the current political scene in Italy -- but, hopefully, presages developments which will lead toward a successful (from the Free World point of view) conclusion at the general elections scheduled for 1968. (See the unclassified attachment from the Socialist paper AVANTI, "Socialist Unity and Communist Immobilism.")

The final weekend of October saw the reunion of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) and the Italian Social Democratic Party (PSDI), which have been partners since 1963 in the coalition government led by the Christian Democrats (CD). (The two Socialist parties had split in 1947 on the question of collaboration with the Communists.) The new party (PSI/PSDI/United) represents 19 percent of the Italian electorate and ranks third in strength behind the CD (38 percent) and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) (26 percent). The meaning of this reunion in terms of strengthening "the fabric of Italian democracy by providing a strong magnet for Italian workers disillusioned with the Communists" is cited in a NEW YORK TIMES editorial (see page 22, 2 November PRESS COMMENT), which calls it "a victory for courage and flexibility in political maneuver" -- one that can be studied to excellent advantage by political observers in many other countries with major contests between Socialist and Communist parties. (See the unclassified attachments: a two-part series from the CSM, details of the Socialist unification, and the earlier article from the SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION, particularly for the section in the latter on "The Problem of Communism.")

The reunification of the Socialists will probably lead to a major regrouping of political forces around three major parties: the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Communists. Although the possibility exists that the new Socialist party might attract more votes away from the right than from the far left, the political isolation of the PCI should become more and more apparent to the Italian workers. A thwarted feeling among rank-and-file workers who have voted the Communist ticket in the past, coupled with further electoral defeats such as the PCI suffered in the June 1966 local elections, could become very serious for the PCI.

Although the PCI is definitely having difficulties, they are not sufficiently serious to menace the party's continued existence as a major political force -- or, to paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of its death are greatly exaggerated.

One of the basic reasons for the gradual decline of the PCI's influence is that its leadership, held together largely by ties formed during World War II Resistance days, is getting older and lacks the charisma of the party's longtime chief, the late Palmiro Togliatti. As a result, it keeps searching about for new issues trying to present a guise of positive "activism" to maintain the interest of its adherents. The Christian Democrats and the Socialists, on the other hand, attract and maintain supporters because of their adherence to traditional political stances. And the CD is even getting more of a plurality of the new young voters who are attracted by the well-paid jobs available to the major party's supporters in the government-controlled businesses.

The PCI's views on the Socialist reunification were given in an interview to a Paris paper and reported by the Soviet news agency TASS on 27 October thus:

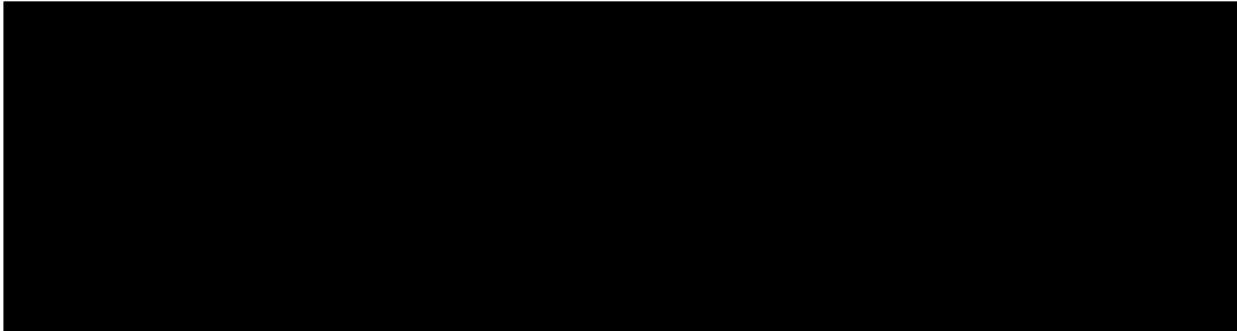
"In an interview with the newspaper LE MONDE, Secretary General of the Italian Communist Party Luigi Longo stated that the Italian Communist Party takes a 'clear stand of criticism and denunciation' toward the unification of the Italian Socialist and Social Democratic parties. This is because, Longo pointed out, in the first place, it leads not to uniting labor and socialist forces, but to deepening and widening the differences existing today among the working and democratic masses of Italy, because it is based on a renunciation of any contacts and cooperation with the Communist Party and other leftwing forces of the Italian labor and socialist movement; and, in the second place, because unity resting upon a Social Democratic ideological and political foundation shows that the Socialists are abandoning their best traditions of class and socialist struggle."

More evidence -- which can be understood by audiences in other countries with actual or potential splits and dissensions among Socialists -- of how the Communists fear the unity of the Socialists and its effect on the labor vote is provided in the attached unclassified clipping from the 14 September issue of NEW TIMES, the Moscow-published weekly journal of comment on international affairs, which complains that the new party's "Unity Charter" runs counter to the "need for agreement, contact, cooperation, and united action of Communists and Socialists on crucial issues."

The PCI is also in danger, although to a far lesser degree, from its own far left. Two weeks before the Socialists reunited, a pro-Chicom "Italian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)" was formed at a conference in Leghorn of Dissident Communist splinter groups. Uncoordinated

pro-Chicom factions have existed in Italy for the past three years, but they have not succeeded in winning a significant following -- and at present the Chicom "cultural revolution" is believed to be disillusioning many possible adherents of the party. (See "Briefly Noted" item, "Italian Communists Embattled on Right and Left," in BPG 202, 24 October 1966.)

The apparent effect of the formation of this new group is not as important as the British press would make it appear (see the attached article from the 22 October ECONOMIST of London, "Togliatti No, Marx Yes," and the following items in PRESS COMMENT: page 5, 1 Nov -- LONDON OBSERVER, "Communist Desertions End Hopes of Office"; page 5, 31 Oct -- LONDON TIMES, "Europe's Newest Communist Party"; and page 6, 25 Oct -- LONDON TIMES, "Italian Communists Face Party Split"). The party should not be thought of as an organization composed of militant youth but rather of misfits of all ages. The real reason for its formation can be discerned in its attack on the current PCI policy of seeking political power through peaceful elections and possible accommodation with the Socialists. 25X1C10b



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- No. 972 (20 Dec 65) Italian Socialists Reject Unity With Communists
- No. 845 (9 Nov 64) Togliatti-ism: Contradictions Compounded
- No. 832 (28 Sept 64) Whither the Italian CP?
- No. 717 (2 Dec 63) Italian CP "Declaration of Independence"
- No. 663 (20 May 63) The PCI and the Italian Elections

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

2 November 1966

The Italian Socialists — I

By Mario Rossi

CPYRGHT

Rome

Some Italians have embarked on an adventure which could deeply affect their country's political life. Some others are keeping a close eye on it; the majority are keeping their eyes on TV, little caring one way or another.

Last Sunday the two main socialist parties of Italy formally united on a middle-of-the-road platform which could break for good the political monopoly held by the Christian Democratic Party since the end of World War II. It could also confirm the government in its present left-of-center position, ending the ever-present threat of a renewal of the coalition between the Christian Democrats and the Right.

Significant also is the fact that Italy will have one less political party. The influential parties will be limited to four: Christian Democratic, Communist, Socialist, and Liberal (conservative).

Italian politics have been dominated by this impending event for some time. To understand its impact we must make a short diversion into history.

When political life resumed in Italy with the fall of fascism, the Socialists emerged as a compact party under the leadership of Pietro Nenni. The need to continue the struggle against those social and economic factors that had made fascism possible, combined with a strong class consciousness, had led Mr. Nenni to make a pact of common action with the Communists.

While there were sufficient internal reasons (as Mr. Nenni saw it) to justify this pact, it did mean supporting the Soviets — as the Communists of course did—in the cold war against the Western nations. An influential group of Socialists objected to this, leading to a split in 1947, just prior to the decisive elections that were to be held a few months later and which, it was feared, the Communists and their Socialist allies had a chance to win.

The new breakaway party under Giuseppe Saragat was Social Democratic along the lines of the British Labor Party, supported financially by American labor, and decidedly anti-Communist and pro-Western. It supported the Christian Democratic majority, and often shared with them, through thick and thin, the responsibility of government. The workers remained for the most part faithful to Mr. Nenni and the old Socialist Party, which usually managed to get twice as many votes as Mr. Saragat's.

Then came 1956, and the tragic events in Hungary that deeply rent the far left everywhere. Mr. Nenni shared the revulsion against the bloody suppression of that revolt; he had also arrived at the conclusion by then that the Communists could not gain power and that he and his party would get nowhere with them.

There followed a collapse of the pact of common action with the Communists. Mr. Nenni's party next moved to parliamentary support of the center government, and finally participated in the government with Mr. Nenni as vice premier.

This change in policy led to a new split and the emergence of a Socialist Party of Proletarian Union—a pro-Peking group well to the left of the Italian Communist Party. It has few followers and little influence.

Another event which helped pave the way to Socialist reunification was the election of Mr. Saragat as president of the republic. An undisputed way to leadership of a reunited party was thus left open to Pietro Nenni—with the understanding, however, that he should accept the Social Democrats' basic platform—which he readily did.

First of two articles.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

4 November 1966

The Italian Socialists—2

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By Mario Rossi

Rome

When Giuseppe Saragat was elected to the presidency of the Italian Republic in December, 1964, many observers thought that he was being taken right out of the market place of Italian party politics. In Italy, the presidency is not an executive but a figurehead office. And so, it seemed, the way was left open for Pietro Nenni to emerge as the unchallenged leader of a reunited Italian Socialist Party.

Mr. Nenni has indeed so emerged. But Mr. Saragat has still been a major if not always obvious influence in shaping the course of Socialist reunification and in making Italian socialism more respectable. To begin with, Mr. Saragat — who broke with Mr. Nenni in the early postwar years and founded the Social Democratic Party — has been, by general consent, a good President. He has remained loyal to Socialist principles

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even if his socialism is very middle-of-the-road; and simultaneously he has stood firm in defense of democratic institutions. Properly, he has been a President above party.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Saragat has been far more effective as a President than as a party leader. By his wise handling of the presidency he has done much to enhance the image of the moderate Socialists among the voters.

The reunified Socialist Party thus finds itself in a position to become a major factor in Italian politics. It will appeal to a large number of people who would like a consistent plan of reforms pushed by a party which is neither Roman Catholic nor Communist. It also may exploit a rather important development in Italian social life: the loosening up of what was once a strong class consciousness on the part of the workers. A new aristocracy has come into being within the working class in recent years which has acquisitions of its own to defend and is no longer interested in class warfare.

The new party also will appeal to those workers who understand that the time of the barricades, and revolutions, and violent seizures of power is over as far as Italy is concerned. Italy will have reforms by evolution or no reforms at all.

Both the Christian Democrats and the Communists have realized the impact that Socialist reunification is bound to have upon Italian politics. The Christian Democrats do not like the prospect in the least. They see in it a threat to their power and a strong limitation on their freedom of action. Furthermore, it cannot be excluded that a number of voters who supported the Christian Democrats as a moderate party without accepting its ecclesiastical connections will prefer an equally moderate lay grouping.

The unified Socialists probably will continue to cooperate with the Christian Dem-

ocrats in future left-of-center governments, but their power to insist upon meaningful reforms will be much greater than hitherto. Christian Democracy will have to commit itself to a policy of close alliance with the Socialists, and of acceptance of most of their program, if it wants to continue ruling the country.

The impact in the Communist camp has also been deep. The party is not expected to lose many votes to the unified Socialists; but unless it accepts the new state of affairs it will become a party of carpers and complainers. In all fairness it must be recognized that without Communist agitation many of the progressive achievements of recent years would probably not have been initiated.

A young Communist told me: "In Sweden I would support a Labor Party because that would be sufficient to give the people a fair deal. But Italy is not Sweden. Here we need more radical action to achieve the same results." There are quite a few Communists who feel that way. Most of them consider Socialist reunification with favor.

The Communist Party hierarchy has taken positions meant to keep the doors open toward socialism. It hopes that one day events will lead the Socialists to prefer an alliance of the left, which would include left-wing Catholics both within and without the Christian Democratic Party. This possibility is probably somewhat distant, but it cannot be dismissed.

The late Palmiro Togliatti saw the trend of Italian politics with great clarity and had spent the last months of his life working toward an alliance of the left.

Italian politics will be worth watching from now on. It could be that Italy's "economic miracle" has helped pave the way for a political evolution which is bound to have repercussions throughout the Western world.

Last of two articles.

November 1966

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NEW TIMES September 1966

UNITY OR DIVISION?

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THE finishing touches are being put to the merger of the Italian Socialist and Social-Democrat parties. A joint committee has drawn up and published a Declaration of principles, political action and organization, or, to use its more common appellation, the Unity Charter. The leadership of the two parties have agreed on the Constitution of their joint organization and on procedures for the duration of the transition period. Special congresses are to be held in October, followed by a constituent conference. But at the insistence of the Social Democrats the merger will be finally formalized after the 1968 parliamentary elections.

The Socialist leaders have proclaimed the forthcoming merger a "historic turning point," "a new stage" in the Italian socialist movement. They are thus assuming a very heavy responsibility.

Capitalists Welcome Merger

Uniting all the workers' parties in a single organization is a historical task. Any real step towards that goal would, of course, be welcome. For the absence of unity, the existence of many parties speaking for the working class, considerably hampers the labour and democratic forces in the struggle for peace and progress.

Ever since the war, there has been

VLADIMIR KUPNIYANOV

a process of division within the Italian labour movement. In 1947-49, the Right wing seceded from the Socialist Party to form a breakaway organization, the Social-Democrat Party. In 1964, the Left forces found themselves compelled to break with the Socialist Party and form an organization of their own, the Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity. Italy therefore has four labour parties: Communists, Socialists, Proletarian Unity Socialists and Social Democrats. This was bound to have an adverse impact on the development of the labour movement and its struggle.

Now two of the four parties are merging. One would have expected the monopolies and the press that speaks for them to come out in adamant opposition and to do everything possible to prevent unity. However, we have the very opposite. Such leading capitalist papers as *Messaggero*, *Corriere della Sera* and *Resto del Carlino* have, in effect, approved of the merger, though not without certain reservations.

All along the capitalist class and its press have done everything to prevent labour unity and to widen

and harden the split. Why should they be so enthusiastic now at the prospect of a Socialist and Social-Democratic merger? The answer will be found in an analysis of the Unity Charter, and in the practical activities of the two parties' leadership in the recent period.

Aims of the New Party

The most distinctive feature of the Charter has been aptly formulated by the weekly magazine *Espresso*. The Charter, it writes, is "a political document in which all mention of ultimate aims and structural reforms and means of their achievement is reduced to a bare minimum." True, its compilers could not avoid mentioning Marxism, but at the same time they have been careful not to frighten away elements far removed from Marxism, elements that do not accept the class struggle and do not want to see the working class united.

The Charter says that the new party will "wage a struggle against the capitalist system," for the emergence of a society "free of the antagonisms resulting from class divisions." How is this to be achieved? The Charter provides no answer whatever. It says that the party will strive for economic planning and reforms that correspond to "univer-

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sal social aims." But what reforms, and how they are to be implemented, is not stated. Nor are there any other concrete plans or proposals.

Authoritarian and dictatorial trends are inherent in the capitalist system, the Charter further says. "The capitalist system, while formally observing the rules of democratic procedure, rests on exploitation of man by man."

Few are likely to object to that. But there is still the question: how is this to be squared with the thesis, set out in the Charter, that years of struggle by the labour and democratic forces are more and more transforming the capitalist state "from an instrument of oppression serving the capitalists into a potential instrument of the liberation of labour, to the extent that labour participates in the administration of state power." Realities, and notably the struggle of the Italian workers, wholly refute that contention.

In fact, the Charter says that "the structure of society and social relationship must be altered" and calls for "serious struggle against the Right and extreme Right forces, and against conservative pressure on the state." But there is no mention of monopoly power, nor of the main

party of Italian capitalism, the Christian Democrats, against whom—in the not too distant past—the Socialist leaders were pledged to wage a determined struggle for power. This deliberate failure to mention the Christian Democrat Party is all the more strange considering that in the past Nenni and the other Socialist leaders devoted much attention to the problem of relations with it.

Press commentators attribute the absence of polemical references to the Christian Democrats to Socialist and Social-Democrat leaders' reluctance to antagonize their senior coalition partner. Indeed, the Charter says the Centre-Left policy will be continued, implying that the new party will co-operate in the government with the Christian Democrats, on their terms.

Attitude Towards the Communists

"The problem of communism is more sharply posed in Italy than in any other country," the Charter declares. It admits that the strength and influence of the Communist Party make it necessary to agree, on occasion, to parallel, even joint, action, particularly to fight back the political and economic onslaught of the conservative and pro-fascist forces. The Socialist leaders reject the "idea of turning the vigorous and irreconcilable ideological controversy with the Communists into daily quarrelling in an attempt to 'isolate' the Communists."

And yet we have the Charter calling for political and ideological division with the Communists, who have the support of the majority of the working class. More, Nenni has even appealed for a campaign "against communist hegemony in the world of labour." The Socialist *Avanti* has carried items clearly designed to foment strife between Socialists and Communists.

The Charter says the new party

will preserve the autonomy and democratic foundations of local government. This is a far cry from the Socialist and Social-Democrat leaders' attempts to undermine Left unity in the municipal councils. In recent months, after twenty years of close co-operation and on patently absurd pretexts, the Socialists severed all ties with the Communists in the municipal councils of Siena, Florence, Livorno, Ravenna and many other towns. That tactic is now being duplicated in the peasant organizations.

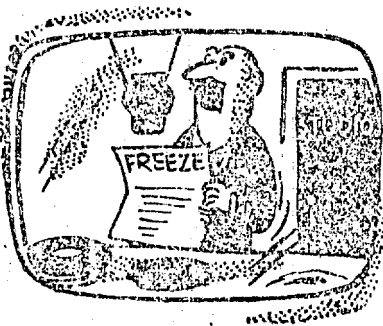
In short, the facts will show that the present policy of the Socialist Right wing is weakening labour unity, widening the rift, and creating more favourable conditions for reactionary manoeuvres.

Trade Union Policy

The rank and file of the two parties belong to different trade union federations, and this creates a difficult and embarrassing problem. The Socialists are linked with the masses through the General Confederation of Labour (CGIL), where there has always been close co-operation between Socialists and Communists. In fact, united action in the trade unions has become a central factor in promoting labour unity and has served as a powerful instrument in defending the workers' vital interests and in the struggle for democracy and social progress. The Social Democrats have their own trade union centre, the Italian Labour Union.

At first, the idea was to set up a united, "Socialist" national union centre. This proved extremely unpopular with the membership, for it was obvious that it would only make for more disunity. Yet, the Charter reverts to that idea, though in a thinly veiled form. It says the Socialists will retain the present structure of trade union affiliation, but only for "the immediate future." A statement of the Socialist leadership

The "Free World"



"Just hold on a minute, I'm not sure if this is the weather forecast or the news!"

Eccles in the London Morning Star

(*Avanti*, Aug. 7), in connection with the party's fourth trade union policy conference, was greeted by the capitalist press as a blow to the CGIL. The statement says that the "Socialist trend," which hitherto co-operated with the Communists, must now "reconsider the pattern of relations within the General Confederation of Labour."

Foreign Policy

The most concrete, and in this author's view the most conservative, sections of the Charter deal with foreign policy. There is assurance of support for the United Nations' efforts to relax international tension and improve East-West relations. But, in contradiction to this, there is also assurance that the new party will "accept Italy's ties and obligations under the Atlantic pact, in its defensive and geographically limited interpretation." In other words, Nato policy is approved.

The U.S. aggression in Vietnam, condemned by progressives everywhere, is not even mentioned. More, some Socialist leaders have sought to justify, albeit obliquely, Washington's aggression by appealing for understanding and appreciation of "America's sincere desire to settle the conflict peacefully without humiliating U.S. prestige."

The new party will be affiliated to the Socialist International. One would expect the Charter to take a definite stand on the Frankfurt Social-Democrat Manifesto, a cold-war document based entirely on anti-communism. Silence on this important issue could be construed to signify acceptance of this anti-communist statement.

The gap between Socialist proclamation and Socialist practice in foreign and home policy can clearly be seen in what the Socialist leaders say in the columns of *Avanti*. And the contradiction between proclamation and practice is due to a compromise between Socialists and So-

cial-Democrats and, also, to the heterogeneous composition of the two parties. For they contain groups which widely differ, in some cases are direct opposites, both in tradition and policy. The Unity Charter tries to find a common denominator by retreating from the best class traditions of the Socialist Party which have served as a guide for a whole generation of Italian workers.

The Left Socialists

The Left Socialists remaining within the party, and also supporters of Riccardo Lombardi and Fernando Santi, are opposed to organizational unity with the Social-Democrats. They have been waging a consistent campaign in defence of the party's militant traditions, for working-class unity and co-operation with all workers' parties without exception.

At their conference in June, the Left Socialists declared that the merger, as now conceived, can only be interpreted as an attempt to block progress towards genuine unity of all trends in the Italian labour movement, and is therefore unacceptable to all true Socialists.

The Left Socialists reject the Unity Charter and the policy principles on which it is based. They are especially critical of its failure to take a clear-cut stand on the U.S. aggression in Vietnam, its acceptance of Nato policy, and its attempts to widen the split with the Communists and Proletarian Unity Socialists. They also reject its ambiguous trade union policy.

The merger, they maintain, will only postpone the socialist reconstruction of Italy and will do much damage to working-class unity and interests. The Socialist rank and file and the active membership of the mass democratic organizations, where unity with the Communists remains firm, have vigorously resisted the new splitting tactics of

the Socialist leadership and have clearly condemned the anti-communist aims and substance of the merger.

Christian Democrat Apprehensions

The Charter is studiously silent about the Christian Democrats. But the Christian Democrats are anything but silent about the Charter and the Socialists. Of course, they cannot remain indifferent to the two-party merger. And though they have no reason to believe that the new, united party will really take up arms against the capitalist system, there is a certain amount of apprehension in the Demochristian leadership. There is even fear that the merger might affect their commanding position.

However, that is not the dominant note in Demochristian reaction to the merger. In their public statements the Demochristian leaders emphasize that the new party must from the very start be a pliant tool in the struggle against the Communists. Mariano Rumor, the Demochristian party secretary, told an *Espresso* interviewer that he and his colleagues were opposed to a united Socialist party which, in certain circumstances, would have Communist support in Parliament. That, he said, would 're-establish the "barrier" between the secular and Catholic parties. And Rumor's deputy, Flaminio Piccoli, has warned that if the new party sought to co-operate with the Communists, the Christian Democrats would have to give up the present partnership arrangement. He broadly hinted that the Christian Democrats were apprehensive not so much about the possible weakening of their positions in favour of the united Socialist party, as about the possibility of a broad united front of all the democratic forces, the Communists included.

There is every evidence of contin-

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uing pressure on the Socialists to force them to make more concessions, all of them of an anti-communist nature, to their Social-Democrat partners. As for the latter, their party secretary, Mario Tanassi, has bluntly stated, in a *Corriere della Sera* interview, that isolation

of the Communist Party is one of the main purposes of the merger.

It should be noted that the merger might strengthen in a section of the Italian workers illusions about the benefits of the Centre-Left policy pursued by the Demochristians in

co-operation with the Socialists and Social Democrats. That policy aims at keeping the labour movement dis-united and isolating the Communist Party. It is believed in capitalist circles that moderate, half-way reforms will take the edge off some of the social and economic problems and oust the Communists from poli-

tics. The present coalition government has failed to achieve that. Every "reform" it has introduced, or announced, bears the hallmark of monopoly policy, and none of the reforms has helped to solve such problems as one million fully unemployed, soaring prices, wage demands, and many others affecting the conditions of Italy's working population.

Now there are new promises, even more lavish. And they come not so much from the Demochristians as from the Socialist Right wing and the Social-Democrats. Organizational unity of these two parties, the public is told, is the cure for all the evils of Italian capitalism. The new party will give the workers prosperity, wipe out unemployment, introduce economic planning, etc. And it has to be said that these promises exert a certain influence on workers who still believe in the sincerity and goodwill of the Socialist leaders.

But how are all these promises to be carried out? Within the framework, it appears, of Centre-Left policy, without the Communists and against them. No wonder the conservative forces have already given their approval to the programme of a party that still does not exist.

The trend in the West has been away from the myths and prejudices of the cold war. More and more people are coming to see the need

for agreement, contact, co-operation and united action of Communists and Socialists on crucial issues and, of course, on the towering issue of war and peace. The Unity Charter runs counter to this progressive trend, which is steadily gaining acceptance in the West-European labour movement.

PEOPLE
IN THE NEWS

CPYRGHT **Karl Ernst**
Ulrich de Maizière

General Karl Ernst Ulrich de Maizière, Inspector of the Land Forces, who succeeded General Heinz Tretner as Inspector-General of the Bundeswehr on August 25, was born into a civil servant's family at Stade on February 24, 1912.

This descendant of the French Huguenots began his military career in 1930 and won his commission in 1933. He fought against Poland and Franco, and then took a general staff course in 1940.

Later he fought in the Soviet Union (with the 18th and 10th Motorized Infantry Divisions). There he was wounded and transferred to the High Command Reserve. After that he served with the Army General Staff Operations Department, ending the war as Lieutenant-Colonel. From 1945 to 1947 he was a British prisoner of war.

In 1951 de Maizière joined the newly-established Blank Department, which set out to remilitarize the country. He was the first West-German military representative at the Paris discussions of the European Defence Community plans. In December 1955 he was promoted Colonel and subsequently served with the Bundeswehr Operational Headquarters and commanded diverse units. In 1960 he was made General and appointed commander of the Army Internal Services School. In 1962 he became head of the Bundeswehr Military Academy. On October 1, 1964, he was promoted Lieutenant-General and made Inspector of the Bundeswehr Land Forces.

In the Bundeswehr, Gen. de Maizière is regarded as a military theoretician. He is an advocate of "forward strategy" and has time and again called for the equipment of the Bundeswehr with nuclear weapons. He also insists on preparing the Bundeswehr for an "ideological conflict" with communism.

PEOPLE
IN THE NEWS

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UNITY OF ITALIAN SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS
 PROCEEDS WHILE DO-NOTHING COMMUNISTS COMPLAIN

[Following is a translation of an article by Franco Gerardi entitled, "Socialist Unity and PCI Immobilism," in the Italian-language daily organ of the Italian Socialist Party, Avanti! (Forwards!), Rome, 25 September 1966, page 1.]

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A number of news items has been collecting here day by day and they now seem to be taking on definite shape: a broad crisis among the Communists in Tuscany, autonomous movements being set up in Milan, Modena and Parma, similar dissident movements among Communists at Palermo and throughout the whole of Sicily and again in Modena and Parma groups have pulled out of the PSIUP [Partito Socialista Italiano di Unità Proletaria; Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity] claiming themselves to be pro-Chinese, persistent rumors of a nationwide congress to found a so-called Partito Comunista di Italia (Communist Party of Italy), widespread individual resignations from the party even in the country districts and expulsions from the party too numerous to make them attributable to individual personal cases.

These are the first outward signs of the crisis among the Communists already admitted by the PCI [Partito Comunista Italiano; Italian Communist Party] leadership but without any way being indicated to overcome the crisis; these are symptoms of a disease that is really more serious than the cracks showing on the surface. One could even say that the very consciousness of the seriousness of the disease has paralyzed the hands of the PCI leadership, hands that were much more active during what appeared to be much more dramatic times such as the weeks and months following the Budapest revolt [the Hungarian revolution].

At the top of the pyramid there is the conflict that sees the Soviet Union opposed to China in a veritable torrent of invective wherein one daily hears the Communists' own cherished myths exploded, from the one that made the Communist Party a party of saints every so often subverted by some traitor to the one about the Communist state being a cornucopia of wealth and a dispenser of well-being and the myth that made every Communist society a just society without inner conflicts or that the worldwide organization of Communist

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~~states was a compact, well-knit bloc in the service of peace.~~
The gradual breakdown of barriers which is also making headway in Eastern Europe leads to new contrasts and comparisons every day and other myths are exploded while problems arise and questions are asked that have no answer.

The PCI leadership is out in the rain and it is getting soaked to the skin. The sense of disorientation spreads throughout the rank and file but the leadership stands still, mouthing the worn-out platitudes of the old mythical-moralistic propaganda. It actually seems that they are preparing themselves for the worst. A symptom of the present state of things is the decision which appears final of unifying the party's daily organ at Milan, doing away with Unità (Unity) in Rome, a decision motivated by economic difficulties but evidently also influenced by a calculated decision to rely more on labor demands and the trade union movement than on political initiative, the inconsistency of the latter being implicitly recognized. (Avanti! was born in Milan but transferred its offices to the capital (Rome) when the party became aware of having become an essential part of the nation's political life; ever since then the various shifts in location of the political press between the two cities has always been influenced by the political conditions of the moment).

It is easy to predict that under these conditions the uneasiness of the Communist rank and file is bound to increase. It is even easier to predict that under these conditions the Communist polemics against Socialist (and Social Democratic) unification will be destined to fail. Certain words spoken by Giorgio Amendola against the unification -- "a policy that is trying to be pressed home in the face of discouragement and weariness, that is trying to be made acceptable because of moral weakness and cultural feebleness.." seem to be written to order for the PCI and one could swear that some of Unità's readers will take it that way, some who perhaps still have some faith left in Amendola in spite of all the delusions suffered by his followers.

Socialist unity is a proposal that stands before the mass of the Italian people, which stands before the entire Italian Left, which presents itself in the face of all the divisions and weaknesses of the Italian Left. It matters not that Amendola states that we have arrived prematurely at unification. Nor does it matter that Giancarlo Pajetta complains about how long it is taking (Pajetta says that the unification was born in 1956 at our Venice party congress; and it is true that Socialist unity was born with the autonomy of the Socialists from [democratic] centralism and from [popular] frontism, but Pajetta should also show that the ten years that followed were thrown away, something that he

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cannot do and possibly will do, is some that Communism is riding the top of the wave while, instead, the Communist Party is navigating in the trough). Presumptuous arguments and pretexts for arguments, at least those offered by the Communists, no longer matter today. This type of polemics does not weaken us and does not strengthen anybody. The fact that the entire Socialist rank and file is moving in a body towards unification should also teach them something, just as they should also learn something from the approbation given the unified party by forces outside the PSI and the PSDI [Partito Socialista Italiano; Italian Socialist Party] and [Partito Socialdemocratico Italiano; Italian Social Democratic Party].

Democratic forces have today in Italian society a place and a strength that expect to be translated into political terms. Democratic positions have gained a predominant place in the schools, are decisive in the field of culture, have a decisive influence on the arts and are being disseminated broadly, being reflected in the behavior of individuals and collectively by the masses. This condition of predominance is not reflected in the political-economic structure of the country, though, due to the permanent political and trade-union divisions of democratic forces. By Socialist unity we wish today to bring together all the forces that are available for a policy of democratic development. The true test for us lies in the area of new and conclusive proposals and not in the area of useless polemics; it is the refusal of the Communists to budge that brings into the foreground the problem of a new conquest of the labor movement by Socialist forces. It is an objective necessity which arises out of the Italian situation, itself, and if it is not brought about things will not get better but instead will run into new obstacles, new disappointments and more delays.

It is not a question, then, of breaking the Center-Left coalition, of burying a correct and fruitful policy in exchange for the usual orgy of words that under the current domestic and international conditions do not have the power to hurt a fly. The important thing to do is to go ahead with the Center-Left coalition, to make the forces for progress prevail within the Center-Left, to succeed in converting into deeds the programs agreed upon and insofar as possible to promote the commonly-held aspirations for a renewal [of society and of the nation]. The thing to do is to break the domination of the moderates which also befalls the DC [Democrazia Cristiana; Christian Democratic Party] reducing the democratic strength of its popular rank and file. It is a matter of laying the foundations for a future Christian Democratic and Socialist leadership of the state, fulfilling the desires and aspirations of the best forces within the country.

This is the socialist unification and these are the objectives that can be achieved with unification. The useless polemics take a place far, far to the rear of these programs.

SII

London

August 20, 1966

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Italian Socialist Unity - final stages

The final sessions of the joint committee set up by the Italian Socialist Party (P.S.I.), and the Italian Social Democratic Party (P.S.D.I.) to establish a basis for the reunification of the two parties took place on July 28 and 29. During these final meetings representatives of the two parties approved a declaration of principles, political action and internal organisation for the future united Party. Our picture shows Pietro Nenni, leader of the P.S.I., and Mario Tanassi, General Secretary of the P.S.D.I., seen together at the final meeting. The joint committee also drew up the statutes of the new Party and decided on the procedure to be followed until the first ordinary Congress of the united Party. The Central Committees of the two parties are to meet on September 16-17, the respective Congresses on October 19-21, and the Socialist Constituent Assembly, formed of delegates from the National Congresses of the P.S.D.I. and the P.S.I., will follow soon afterwards. We publish below the declaration drawn up by the joint committee.

The Socialist Party formed by the unification of the P.S.I. and the P.S.D.I. takes its place in political life as a new force dedicated to the service of the working classes and of the nation; its aim is to find solutions to the new problems which confront society and the state.

The united Party continues the tradition of the Italian Socialist Movement, which first organised itself as a political party at the Genoa Congress of 1892, and from which it inherits doctrinal experiences, beginning with the basic doctrines of Marxism, and also political experiences, gained during three-quarters of a century of class struggles which were always hard and often bloody.

Its doctrines and actions continue to evolve in step with changing historical and social conditions, changing conditions which are characterised by the ever-growing involvement of the working classes in the democratic life of the country.

The Party does not ask of its members any strict adherence to a philosophical or religious creed, and welcomes all those currents of thought which accept the ethical principals and the political and social beliefs inspired by the ideals of justice, equality and peace on which the Party has based its own programme.

It is the aim of the Party to build a society in which the contradictions and constraints deriving from the class divisions of capitalist society disappear, and in which the free development of the individual is the pre-condition of the free development of all.

The vast productive forces of the world today, the birth of the modern mass industrial civilisation, and the immense possibilities opened up by new discoveries render ever more complex the problems of freedom and of the conditions of the working classes. The Party, by its policy of reform, gives, day by day, its own reply to these problems without ever losing its own original

inspiration drawn from the eternal values of freedom.

Socialism is inseparable from democracy and freedom from all forms of freedom, political, civil and religious and just as it can only be realised in conditions of freedom and democracy, in the same way there can be no real and lasting democracy without Socialism. Historical experience shows, with particular cogency in our own country, that tendencies towards authoritarianism and dictatorship are always present in capitalist régimes and that even when these régimes show a formal respect for the rules of democracy their chief characteristic remains the exploitation of man by man, which has always caused and still continues to cause the alienation of man and the limitation of his freedom.

Furthermore, the history of the last half century shows that those proletarian revolutions which have led to the abolition of private ownership of the means of production and exchange degenerate into the despotism of Party and State when freedom and democracy are suppressed.

The Party promotes the political organisation of workers and citizens and acts as the interpreter of the working classes' demands for independence and progress, while at the same time avoiding any paternalistic attitudes.

The struggle against capitalism

The Party leads the struggle against the capitalist system and the ideology on which it is based, in order to overcome them and to build a new, truly democratic, social system. With the aid of the working classes and of all the forces of progress, it is working for popular and truly democratic control of the State, which itself has been transformed and is still being transformed, by decades of struggle, from an instrument of oppression in the service of capitalism, into a potential instrument for the liberation of the working classes.

Born a century ago as a protest

movement and having since become a powerful factor in national and world politics, Socialism, by its conscious and collective efforts to build a democratic and free society, is of major importance in the world today.

The democratic development from Capitalism to Socialism involves a period of transition, the natural constitutional framework for which is Republican Democracy; this transitional period is characterised by the structural reform of society and the State. As regards the institutional framework, the Party is pledged unreservedly to defend and consolidate the democratic and secular Republic. As regards the structural reforms, the Party affirms that they must be based on a general social purpose and must modify in favour of the working classes the balance of power between the classes and lead to the effective participation of all citizens in the running of society and the State.

Political and administrative reforms must be accompanied by the reform of society economic and civil reform, reform of women's rights, and the legislation governing the family, reforms aimed at raising the educational and cultural level of the nation. These reforms must be carried out in such a way as to eliminate that gap between the world of politics and society in general which is the cause of crises in democratic institutions and, in the long run, the cause of their downfall.

The Party's objective is to shape a political and economic system in which every action is the result of a democratic choice, a choice aimed at furthering the general and social progress of working people and of the nation.

It is on these social and civic values, and the Socialist ideals of the freedom and dignity of the individual, that Socialists base their critique of capitalism and their struggle against it.

The fundamental problem posed by contemporary Capitalism is no longer

that of the anarchy of productive forces in a régime based on private ownership, or of recurrent crises endangering the whole economic fabric of the nation. The fundamental problem today is that of concentrations of power having at their disposal all the new resources provided by technological advance. The Socialist solution is to create a new order in which democratic planning and structural reforms will provide the conditions necessary for the exploitation and control of these resources in a way compatible with Socialist values.

Such an undertaking is urgently necessary because already we are faced with the problems of the next decade, in the course of which national boundaries seem destined to give way increasingly to economic forces on a European and world scale, and this will demand an ever more efficient and carefully planned intervention by the State and the public economic sector. The necessity of a national and European planning policy means that the State assumes a primary responsibility for stimulating and directing economic activities, by ensuring that public and private investment is made wherever seems most useful and most profitable, bearing in mind the needs of the community, and by harnessing the spirit of initiative and the desire for progress of the leaders of the country's economic and social life.

Relations with other parties

The policy of furthering democracy, of economic planning, of full employment and of reforms aimed at modifying the structure of society, involves a hard struggle against the Right, the Extreme Right and the conservative pressures within the State which, although repeatedly beaten in the last 20 years, nevertheless still constitute a danger for democracy whenever there are unstable political conditions.

In order to ensure this element of stability, the Party favours collaboration with other democratic political forces in carrying out a programme containing common objectives of progress and of advancement for the working classes and for the country. But even when the Party participates in majority or in Government alliances with non-Socialist forces it does not give up the struggle against capitalism, and the systematic critique of that system, nor does it cease to follow independently its own objectives. This collaboration at present takes the form of the Centre-Left coalition, which has made possible the realisation of important reforms in the social sphere and in the structure of the State. The coalition is also firmly pledged to economic planning which in itself

The Party's continued collaboration in the Centre-Left Government depends upon the full implementation of the agreed programme, the Party having pledged itself to overcome the internal and external resistance of vested interests and to face resolutely the opposition of the Right and of the Communists.

After the next general election it will decide on its future course and on the form of its contribution to national politics and will decide on the objectives to be attained in the new legislature.

As regards the relationship between national and local politics, the tendency of the Party is to follow the same general pattern in communal and provincial administration as in national politics, insofar as the characteristics and behaviour of the local parties make this possible. Where local parties decide to follow a different line, each case will be examined and decisions will be made bearing in mind the need to safeguard the autonomy and democratic life of the local parties. In every case the Party is pledged to protect by its policies the interests of the working classes.

The problem of Communism

In our country, more than elsewhere, Communism presents a problem. In dealing with it, Socialists are fully conscious of the dividing line which separates them from the Communists—their belief that there cannot be Socialism unless Party, society and the State are democratically organised. The thought and actions of the ruling group within the Italian Communist Party continue to be based uncritically on an attitude to the exercise of power which lacks validity for peoples and nations in whose history and customs the pluralism of democratic life has deep roots: the Socialist movement, in a century of struggle, has contributed greatly to the growth of this element of civilisation.

In such conditions a joint struggle for power by Socialists and Communists is not possible. For this reason, without excluding the possibility that the two parties may occasionally pursue the same course of action, the Party continues to insist on the need for a public debate on the respective policies of Socialism and Communism. This is the only way to accelerate within the Communist movement the process of self-criticism which has had far from insignificant results for European Communism and which will continue to produce change, despite the sectarian and dogmatic resistance to revisionism which comes from some quarters.

The Party in the world

The Party has its place in the Socialist International. The International has

the awareness that the circumstances of the class struggle differ from country to country, and from continent to continent, and have given rise to different forms of democratic Socialism, all united by the common ideals of freedom, peace and the emancipation of the working classes.

The Party brings as its contribution to the International the experiences of a movement which has always remained loyal to the principles of internationalism:

- the solidarity of workers throughout the world;
- support and help for those peoples who have still to reach independence or who have to defend their independence from foreign interference and from vestiges of colonialism;
- the struggle against imperialism in its traditional and new forms.

The chief problem for the world and for each individual nation is that of organising peace. In this connection, Socialists, whether acting within military alliances or outside them, have followed similar policies on the following questions:

- the need for a common effort to ensure that the U.N. organisation has the authority and universality which it needs for carrying out its duties as the supreme regulator of international relations, for providing a negotiated solution to disputes between nations, and for obtaining the ending of hostilities in local wars which still involve the world in bloodshed and which risk involving it in the fearful catastrophe of a nuclear war;
- support for the policy of relaxation of tension, of disarmament, and of the non-proliferation, non-dissemination and banning of nuclear armaments;
- awareness of the risks inherent in any unilateral alteration of the balance of power on which world peace is based, however precariously;
- the search for improved relations between the countries of East and West;
- encouragement for the neutral and non-aligned countries in their efforts at economic and political development and peaceful mediation.

Within this framework the Party accepts the bonds and obligations which Italian membership of the Atlantic Alliance imposes, provided that they remain strictly defensive and geographically limited in scope. The constant and supreme objectives of the Party still remain the banishing of war and the ending of military blocs.

The Party favours any limitation of

national sovereignty which can bring supporters of the P.S.D.I. to the U.I.L. about a more rational organisation of and some socialist-inclined workers peace.

It is pledged to work for European unification; economic unification through the E.E.C. and its extension to England and the countries of the Free Trade Area; political unification beginning with the election by universal suffrage of a European Parliament to which the various institutions of the European Community would be responsible. The lack of political unity in Europe today creates a void which Socialists should fill in the interests of peace.

The Party in Italian society

Because of its democratic organisation at all levels, the Party resembles the society which it intends to create. Its decisions are always the result of free debate and become binding on all members, although the Party guarantees freedom of criticism to all its members in the same way that it considers the State should guarantee freedom of speech to every citizen. It is an open party, able to express the needs of the working classes and in particular of the younger generation, whose new problems reflect the changes taking place in our society. Realising that there can be no effective action by the party without the understanding and participation of the mass of the population, the Party supports the formation of organisations which will provide information about the Party's activities and the problems which it faces. It participates actively in the development of ideas and in scientific and technical progress with its own study-centres which are open to all those who share the Party's immediate objectives, without necessarily belonging formally to the Party. Its organisation extends to a factory, the fields, to offices and schools without interfering in any way with the independent activities of the Trade Unions.

The problem of the Trade Unions is one of the greatest the country has to face. The absence of a strong and united workers' organisation means that the working classes lack one of the principal means of emancipating themselves through their own efforts. Because of the divisions in the Trade Union Movement, we find that at this time of reunification, the supporters of the P.S.I. belong to the C.G.I.L.,

belong to yet other organisations.

For the time being the Party accepts this division of membership and calls upon all socialist workers to strive within the Trade Union to which they at present belong, for three objectives:

- a single, united Trade Union Organisation independent of management, government and political parties;
- active participation by Trade Unions in economic planning, which opens up to workers vast possibilities of controlling and participating in the management and development of the economy;

--permanent collaboration between the Italian Unions and the unions of the member countries of the Common Market whose interests are identical to ours, both as regards the struggle against capitalism and as regards planning at a European level.

- Peace between peoples, nations and continents;
- development of the democratic life of the nation; modernisation of the State and of the public services;
- thorough implementation of the principles of freedom, democracy and equality;
- effective participation of all citizens in the exercise and control of power;
- full integration of women into political, economic and social life;
- confidence in the younger generation responsible citizens;
- elimination of every privilege and abuse of power;
- the curing of the remaining national ills--poverty, unemployment and illiteracy, imbalance between North and South, between town and country, between areas of development and the depressed areas;
- the employment, education, housing, health services and social security for all; a planned economy leading gradually towards socialism.

This is the message, this the task which the reunited Party presents to the people.

It is a task which, just as it has required the unification of the P.S.I. and the P.S.D.I., also requires the participation of all those who, because of Party splits, have remained outside or on the fringes of active membership; of all those who, drawn from the most diverse ideological or religious backgrounds, socialist share the desire to build by their common efforts and their common labours a free, democratic and socialist Italy.

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT THE ECONOMIST OCTOBER 22, 1966

Italy

Togliatti no, Marx yes

FROM OUR ROME CORRESPONDENT

The new marxist-leninist party founded in Leghorn last Sunday by disaffected communists is only one, and probably not the most important, symptom of communist discontent in Italy. The real "Chinese," most observers reckon, are still inside the party where they can do more harm than by coming into the open. So far the communist papers have vied with the obtruser part of the rest of the press in making fun of the proceedings in Leghorn.

This is the holy city of Italian communism: here in 1921 a group of outstanding personalities including Gramsci, Bordiga and the then little known Togliatti founded the Italian communist party after breaking with the socialists. The theatre where they assembled was bombed during the war but a plaque on its ruins commemorates the historic occasion. Here the small band of nostalgics marched on Sunday to raise their emblems, and with the aim of erasing the unworthy name of Togliatti from those of the founding fathers. One malicious report said that after they had gone a group of orthodox communists went to erase the erasion and in doing so found they had burnished up the name of Stalin. Unquestionably the member of the new splinter party are few and obscure: the delegates in Leghorn were less than a hundred and included no names of national prestige.

In this respect the split differs essentially from the ideological breach which occurred in the Nenni socialist party three years ago, when some 25 deputies, including three or four of the party's more popular and more brilliant leaders, walked out to found the "socialist party of proletarian unity," which till now has been the only significant

marxist group to the left of the communists. The new splinter party, the Partito Comunista d'Italia Marxista-Leninista, is led by one Vincenzo Misefari. He is a Calabrian, but this does not seem to indicate a close connection with the dissident communist movement in the south. This was represented in Leghorn by Signor Aldo Pugliese, ex-mayor of Spezzano Albanese and acknowledged leader of a peasant revolt against the official party leadership. But

whether Signor Pugliese actually adhered to the new party is uncertain. It appears to represent some of the younger rebels among the industrial workers of north and central Italy, rather than the more serious and stubborn but as yet hardly articulate disaffection of the peasants in the south. It stands for the pure doctrine: the destruction of the bourgeois state, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It denies the possibility of peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism, and derides the communist leaders for their bourgeois proclivities, accusing them of connivance with the pro-American policies of the Kremlin.

In the present state of Italian politics, with economic revival in the air and the left-centre coalition gaining strength from the imminent unification of the socialists, it does not seem likely that these purists can offer much to their prospective supporters. The communist party is annoyed by the crack in its carefully cultivated image of unity, but probably not seriously alarmed. It is far more worried by the spread of disaffection in the south. Pundits claim that, while the new party is supported by China, the Calabrian peasants are encouraged from Tirana, which is said to appeal to the Albanian element in the population. This is far-fetched. Albanian immigration goes back to the fifteenth century. In reality the peasants have lost faith in everyone, Chinese, Albanians, Kremlin and all, and first and foremost in the Italian communist leaders. What happens in the south will depend ultimately on whether the socialists in turn are able to convince the peasants that they have their interests at heart.

November 1966

COMMENT BY THE NETHERLANDS PRESS ON THE MOVE TO GIVE
SEATS TO COMMUNIST DEPUTIES ON CERTAIN
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

The Catholic DE VOLKSKRANT (Oct. 5) describes as "a consequential decision" the readmission of Communists to the Second Chamber's permanent committees for defense and foreign affairs because confidential affairs -- touching upon the security of the Western world -- are said to be discussed in these committees. It explains:

"These discussions will presently be attended by people whose political allegiance is with the other side. Is that no longer considered a barrier to their membership? Or does it mean rather that the information placed before the permanent committees does not after all amount to much? That is what one is inclined to believe."

The Liberal ALGEMEEN HANDELSBLAD (Oct. 5) has "ambivalent feelings" about the move but remarks that "from the purely parliamentary democratic point of view the Communists should be included in the committees." The paper opposes the Catholic suggestion to create a separate subcommittee for NATO affairs without Communists. "This would affect the parliamentary significance of the present decision. We consider the admission of the Communists not incorrect but an unavoidable consequence of democracy." Another consequence will be, however, that at least for some time, the atmosphere in the foreign affairs and defense committees will be less confidential.

The Independent HET VADERLAND (Oct. 5) is more to the point in its discussion of how "democratic principles" apply in this situation:

"True, on democratic principles it is hardly possible to justify the exclusion of the Communists. But an equally grave threat to democracy would be posed by the Government withholding even more information from parliament on the ground that it is impossible to discuss strictly secret matters confidentially in the presence of Communists. Such pleas will certainly be made in the future, either tacitly or explicitly. It is unthinkable that exponents of an ideology, which the majority of us still oppose with all our might, should be told how we are planning our counter measures and what they are.... Also, our allies' willingness to give us information will not be improved if there is a possibility that it is 'passed on' to Communists."

The Independent Socialist HET PAROOL (Oct. 5) criticizes "a fairly large majority" of the Second Chamber for its "decision which shows little notion of politics" to admit Communists to these committees. The paper says that the Ministers will beware of informing the committees of anything of real importance, and "they are right." Noting that the parliamentary decision "demonstrates a lack of political insight" the paper continues:

"The Communists' principles and program make them the avowed enemies of democracy and of the political and military organizations in which the democratic nations of the West have banded together. Our permanent parliamentary committees are the setting for confidential consultations between government and parliament on various aspects of Western political and military collaboration. It is absurd and improper to admit the Communists to these counsels. The fact that a majority in parliament has nevertheless decided to do just that demonstrates an utter lack of political acumen. No doubt, the Foreign and Defense Ministers will have more sense than to inform the committees affected of anything of any importance in future. But that means that parliament has by this decision denied itself the opportunity of being suitably informed by the government away from the atmosphere of public debate."

The Independent Conservative DE TELEGRAAF (Oct. 6) calls the decision "dangerous and absurd":

"Barring the Communists from certain parliamentary committees is in fact nothing but a common-sense way of protecting democracy. That the majority of the Lower House should now have changed its mind is foolish. The argument adduced by the majority is that the Dutch Communist Party has become more independent of Moscow and that the danger of information leaks has therefore become smaller. At once the question arises: how do they know? But aside from that, the point is not really that of the greater or lesser independence of the Dutch Communists. The adherents of Communism are convinced that theirs are the only true ideals and that, in order to achieve them, a good Communist may, nay must, try all possible means. Indeed, when a Communist betrays Western secrets, one can scarcely accuse him of treason. One knows in advance that that is his bounden duty.

"Now we have been saddled with a situation where a Communist will serve on the permanent defense committee, to which the Defense Minister is supposed to make confidential statements, for instance on Holland's state of armed readiness, which, be it noted, has within the NATO framework for its sole purpose defense against Communist aggression from outside. It is perfectly clear of course that no Defense Minister with any sense of responsibility is going to release any information of a really confidential nature under those circumstances. It might be objected that the Dutch Defense Minister will very rarely be in a position to disclose anything that really deserves to be labeled 'strictly confidential.' That does not alter the fact that admitting the Communists to committee membership is intrinsically dangerous as well as absurd."

The Independent Catholic DE TIJD (Oct. 6) also censures "this incredible" decision:

"The Lower House decision to allow Communists to serve on such committees as Defense and Foreign Affairs is disappointing and revealing. There was no need for parliament to respond to the softer line taken by the Communists -- because of their lack of internal solidarity -- with a show of soft-headedness. The Communists, who always have their eye on the main chance, know how to make the most of every opportunity.... The Lower House decision is revealing because it does one of two things: it either undercuts the usefulness of two or three important permanent committees, or it demonstrates only too clearly that parliament attaches no importance to them."

The Liberal NIEUWE ROTTERDAMSE COURANT (Oct. 8) calls the decision "particularly unfortunate" and says:

"We fear that the majority of Lower House members has been terribly naive. It is vitally important to bar from discussions of security aspects, both at a national and an international level, people who maintain friendly relations with foreign powers against which, in the view of the overwhelming majority, we must defend our national interests.... The composition of the parliamentary commissions comes up for review once a year. In theory the Lower House can make interim changes. Parliament might perhaps decide to adopt this unelegant procedure to rectify the mistake it made on Tuesday. And a serious mistake it undoubtedly was. It seems almost incredible that it could have happened. But it did happen all right!"

The Labor Party VRIJE VOLK (Oct. 8) says that "the debate in the Lower House has convinced no one":

"What was said about the nature and character of present-day Communism in Holland was completely irrelevant to the question whether Parliament should admit the Communists to committee membership.... Nor was the argument that in these committees no real secrets are revealed any more convincing. That has never been the reason for barring the Communists. They have been excluded on the ground of their totalitarian leanings, their subservience to foreign rulers, their disloyalty on principle. To Communists, Parliament is merely a place to spout their propaganda and throw dust in the public's eye."

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
25 July 1966

CPYRGHT

Dutch face political storms

By Egon Kasholine
Written for The Christian Science Monitor

Holland is drifting into increasingly heavy weather.

Perhaps neither the riots of Amsterdam "provos" or the extremist gains in the municipal elections do not mean, as the liberal paper *Vaderland* terms it, that democracy is losing ground in the Netherlands. But it certainly is proof of widespread discontent.

It is a good guess that the government's failure to stop inflation is one of the major causes of current troubles. At least this is the opinion of the Dutch central bank president, M. W. Holtrop, who in the bank's annual report blames the government for having promoted an over-rapid income growth at the cost of economic stability.

Nobody can doubt that Dutch leaders have been aware of the dangerous inflation problem for some time. In fact, early this year the government came out with a cooling-off plan aimed at holding the level of wages and prices.

Bank credits were restricted. Discount rates have been raised twice.

Yet the government has apparently been moving too late and too cautiously to stem the tide. Holland's economy is still considerably overheated.

Spending still strong

Most important of all, Dutch consumers continue to spend heavily. A new rise of domestic prices is the result. During the first four months of the current year Dutch living costs went up by not less than 4 percent as compared to the end of last year.

The government has failed until now to get a firm hold on industrial wages, which have increased by almost one third during the past two years and are scheduled to go up by another 10 percent in 1966.

If the "wage explosion" is the principal cause of Dutch inflation, heavy government spending has also been an important factor. Not long ago Premier Jozef Cals called in Parliament for an extraordinary meeting because the government had spent \$225 million over its budget—a good 5 percent of total

planned spending. In order to cope with the financial emergency, the state outlay for capital investments was reduced and wage and price controls reinforced.

Foreign trade is in a bad way, too.

Saying that Dutch firms are outpricing themselves on world markets would overshoot the mark. But Holland's trade deficit during the current year is almost twice as high as a year ago.

Payments balance slipping

The country's balance of payments also shows an adverse trend. Instead of the expected \$120 million surplus, the 1966 balance will most probably show a deficit of the same size.

Whether Mr. Cals' government will eventually be able to cope with the emergency is probably more a political than an economic question. Holland's "new wage policy," which is a basic cause of the trouble, coincided with the entry of the Socialist Labor Party into the government. The Dutch Labor Party and its trade unions accepted a deal with the leading [Roman Catholic] Peoples

Party on condition that Dutch wages be raised to a level with those paid in other European countries.

Political risk involved

However, both major parties lost heavily to right-wing and left-wing fringe parties in recent municipal and provincial elections. Can they risk losing more political face by taking highly unpopular deflationary measures?

On the other hand, stopping inflation is vitally important for the Dutch nation's future. During recent months it is the Netherlands that has shown the heaviest inflationary trend among European Common Market nations. This means that when customs barriers inside the community are abolished next year, Holland will be in an unfavorable position to compete with its European partners.

Torn between the need to placate domestic opposition and the need to defend Holland's place in Europe, Premier Cals and his government face a difficult choice.

Coexistence at The Hague

Netherlanders are a level-headed people—with the possible exception these days of the "provos" of Amsterdam. It should surprise nobody, then, that they are taking the latest government crisis in The Hague in their stride. The last time a Cabinet resigned—early in 1965—it took more than six weeks to put together another coalition in its place. The defeat of that administration in Parliament last Friday was on a strictly financial matter, the Cabinet's handling of the budget. But the Cabinet's inherent weakness has lain always in the combination of disparities which are a chronic feature of Dutch political life.

Overshadowing everything else is the often rigid but rarely blatant division between Protestant and Roman Catholic. (The Catholics are the fastest-growing group within the Netherlands; they now constitute between 40 and 50 percent of the total population.) Such is the political spectrum in the country that coalition government is almost a necessity. This in itself demands tact and compromise. But the situation is complicated by the fact that Catholic political solidarity—apparent at such moments as a general election—tends to fragment when politics are in the doldrums. And further by the fact that the approach of a general election tends to drive the parties within a coalition apart instead of together.

But it is difficult to understand Dutch politics without taking into consideration

the third leg that supports the tripod of political life. This leg is that of the "neutrals"—a label that can be applied in party political life to the Socialists and outside that life, to Netherlanders with no active commitment to any religious denomination.

The Cals Cabinet which has just been defeated was a coalition relying mainly on the cooperation of Catholics and neutrals (the Socialists), with the support of a minor Protestant party. Premier Cals and the other Catholic Ministers belonged, perforce, to that wing of the Catholic Party willing to cooperate with the Socialists in a left-of-center domestic policy. The initiative for the defeat of the Cabinet last week came from a Catholic further to the right, Norbert Schmelzer, who was able to rally Catholic backbenchers in Parliament to support his motion of no confidence in the government.

Mr. Schmelzer's move might well have been influenced by the thought that a general election is due in a few months time. In fairness to him, however, it must be conceded that observers less partisan than he feel that the Socialist Finance Minister's presentation of the budget invited challenge. What has to be worked out now is whether a revised Catholic-Socialist coalition is possible or whether the whole basis of the coalition should be changed. A possibility in the background, of course, is a strictly caretaker government until the elections are over.

WASHINGTON POST

23 October 1966

CPYRGHT

Holland's Gentle Crisis

It is always curious how so stable a people as servative Catholics and Protestants ought to the Dutch can have such seeming instability in coalesce around issues rather than religion. To their governments. The cabinet of Premier Joseph some extent this has been happening anyhow; the Cals which fell last week was the 12th Nether- government that fell was a cooperative arrange- lands government since World War II. One ment between the two major parties. In any event explanation has been the country's intense religious stratification that extends even to separate radio it is to be hoped that any new alignment will avoid more inflexibility so that communication can be and television facilities for Protestants and Cath- maintained when there is a change of sentiment. lics. But it was a division within the Catholic Party What is currently at stake is a question of itself that led to the withdrawal of support for the domestic economic emphasis rather than external himself a Catholic. The budget issue which policy. No other country has such low-key political occasioned the fall was only a symbol of broader crises as Holland, and things continue to function unhappiness with prices and the rising unemploy- normally under caretaker regimes. Whether or not ment that the government had hoped would curb the author of the present downfall, Catholic Party the inflation. floor leader Norbert Schmelzer, succeeds in form-

A case can be made that the old labels are in- ing a new government until the elections scheduled accurate in the present-day Netherlands—that the for next May, undoubtedly the problem will be Socialists, no longer Marxist, ought to encompass the liberal Catholics and their counterparts in the and without panic.

small Protestant parties; and that the more con-

Le bilan de la conférence sur le Front populaire de 1936 et l'action de Maurice Thorez

La conférence scientifique internationale consacrée au « Front populaire de 1936 et l'action de Maurice Thorez » s'est déroulée, à l'initiative de l'Institut Maurice Thorez, du 24 au 29 octobre avec un plein succès. Trente-cinq camarades étrangers, représentant les partis et les instituts d'histoire de dix-neuf pays européens et latino-américains, ont enrichi ses travaux de leurs interventions. La conférence a protesté contre le refus de visa opposé aux historiens de la République Démocratique Allemande au mépris des exigences élémentaires de la vie scientifique et de la libre communication des idées.

Ouverte par un exposé approfondi du camarade Waldeck Rochet sur « les forces sociales en présence en 1936 et aujourd'hui et la contribution exceptionnelle de Maurice Thorez à leur analyse », la conférence a entendu et examiné tous les rapports qui étaient inscrits à son ordre du jour, et ces rapports ont fourni une base solide à la discussion, voire à la controverse. Parmi les très nombreux participants français — historiens, hommes politiques de la période du Front populaire, jeunes militants ouvriers —, une vingtaine ont contribué aux débats, dont Pierre Cot, Louis Saillant, Jean Zyromski. La conférence a reçu toute une série de messages de salutation : la lettre chaleureuse de Suzanne Lacorre, ancien ministre de 1936, et la salutation de la Ligue des Droits de l'Homme ont été particulièrement applaudies.

La conférence s'est située à un niveau scientifique élevé. Elle a bénéficié d'apports de valeur exceptionnelle, comme celui du camarade Pospélov, directeur de l'Institut du marxisme-léninisme de Moscou, qui a produit et commenté des do-

cuments inédits de Georges Dimitrov.

Les actes de la conférence compteront certainement parmi les sources privilégiées pour tous les chercheurs, d'opinions diverses, qui s'intéressent à l'histoire du Front populaire en France et hors de France. Non seulement l'expérience française, mais l'expérience italienne, espagnole, chilienne, etc., ainsi que les positions de l'Internationale Communiste, ont été analysées.

La conférence a permis de dégager comme jamais encore auparavant la profonde liaison interne entre la donnée historique du Front populaire en France et les données de l'ensemble du mouvement international.

« N O U S » ne voulons pas retrouver l'état d'esprit des ouvriers de 1936 », déclarait le 20 octobre le ministre Debré, hôte à déjeuner d'un groupement patronal. « Ce qui est pour la grande bourgeoisie et pour ses fondés de pouvoirs source d'inquiétude et d'appréhension, est pour les représentants de la classe ouvrière et de la démocratie source d'inspiration, de confiance et d'optimisme.

L'idée que l'état d'esprit de 1936 n'est pas un simple souvenir historique, mais qu'il est toujours actif, qu'il prend une vigueur et une extension nouvelles dans l'aspiration à l'union de toutes les forces démocratiques et nationales, contre les parasites des monopoles, cette idée a animé les travaux de la conférence. Elle leur a donné sens et portée pratiques. Les participants ne revivaient pas seulement une période exaltante du passé : ils s'assuraient de la liaison intime qui existe entre cette période et les luttes d'hier, celles de la Libération, comme les luttes d'aujourd'hui pour l'union de la nation, pour les

grands objectifs de la paix, de la démocratie et du socialisme. La conférence a actualisé l'expérience historique sans l'adapter, sans la déformer.

Des changements profonds et lourds de conséquences se sont produits dans le monde depuis trente ans. Mais les leçons du Front populaire restent valables, le rôle décisif des masses populaires et de leur intervention, la fonction démocratique et nationale de la classe ouvrière, l'importance de l'unité de ses rangs, la nécessité de rassembler autour d'elle toutes les classes et toutes les couches qui sont ses alliés potentiels, la liaison intime de la lutte pour la démocratie et de la lutte pour le socialisme.

Les rapports et les interventions ont souligné comment les réalisations du Front unique ouvrier et du Front populaire sont inséparables du nom de Maurice Thorez. Ils ont mis en lumière des traits de sa personnalité comme l'esprit novateur et l'audace politique, le rôle éminent qu'il a joué non seulement dans la vie française, mais dans le mouvement ouvrier mondial. Maurice Thorez a fait la preuve de la possibilité d'une approche nouvelle de la vie politique, de l'efficacité propre à la recherche créatrice et à l'initiative. Il a montré qu'il faut non seulement adopter l'héritage théorique de Marx, d'Engels et de Lénine, mais le développer et, dans un certain sens, le repenser chaque jour.

Si positif qu'apparaisse le bilan de la conférence, elle n'a certes pas eu la prétention d'épuiser le sujet qu'elle s'était proposé. La ligne qu'elle a atteinte doit plutôt servir de ligne de départ pour de nouvelles études, pour de nouvelles recherches, aussi bien dans le domaine de la collecte des documents historiques

que dans le domaine de l'approfondissement théorique. Pas de point final. On voudrait au contraire donner l'élan à de nouveaux progrès.

Ces progrès seront aidés par la prochaine publication « in extenso » des rapports et des débats dans les « Cahiers » de l'Institut.

D'autre part, la conférence a créé une commission d'historiens français pour rassembler et étudier les souvenirs, les témoignages et les pièces d'archives sur la période de 1936. Elle a émis le vœu que le même travail soit fait méthodiquement pour l'Espagne, le Chili et d'autres pays.

Enfin, la conférence a décidé la rédaction, sous la responsabilité de l'Institut, d'une histoire du Front populaire comme phénomène international. Elle a institué à cette fin une commission préparatoire, composée de représentants des divers partis et instituts, dont le président est Jacques Duclos.

Telles sont les principales décisions de la conférence. Manifestation non négligeable d'internationalisme prolétarien, elle a donné une nouvelle impulsion à la fois à la recherche scientifique et théorique, indispensable pour la fécondité de la pratique, et à la coopération fraternelle entre les Partis communistes et ouvriers et les Instituts créés par eux.

The Significance of the Popular Front in France

GEORGES COGNIOT

On February 6, 1934, fascist organisations in France attempted to seize power. The economic crisis and the desire of the capitalist oligarchies to shift the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the workers, the tendency of the big bourgeoisie to resort to violence, to anti-labour and anti-democratic methods, and last but not least, the advent of Hitler to power in Germany, played into their hands. But the road to fascism was barred by the policy of united action pursued by the Communist Party. With tenacity and political foresight the Party fought at first for a united front with the Socialist Party and, after the conclusion of an agreement on united action on July 27, 1934, for the Popular Front, which won its first big victory with the mass demonstration in Paris on July 14, 1935.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International hailed the prospects opened up by the broad policy of unity pursued by the French Party.

Thirty years ago in April-May 1936, the electoral bloc of democratic parties, chiefly the Communists, the Socialists and the Radicals, won the general election, gaining 376 seats in the Chamber of Deputies as against 222 seats for their opponents. The Communist group increased the number of its seats from 10 to 72. The Socialist Leon Blum became Prime Minister.

The Positive Social and Political Balance

The election was the signal for the great strikes of May and June. Eight million workers stopped work, occupied the factories, offices and big shops and, with the full support of the public, forced the hitherto intransigent employers (who had taken advantage of the crisis to fleece the workers) to carry out some substantial reforms. The workers won considerable wage increases, recognition of trade union rights, a 40-hour working week, paid holidays and collective bargaining.

These measures, set forth in the Popular Front programme, were now embodied in social legislation adopted by Parliament with all speed. The presence of a strong Communist group in Parliament played an important role in this respect.

The conditions of the workers notably improved. Life became pleasanter, happier, and they enjoyed greater freedom. It was not only the standard of living that had risen—the very tenor of life changed. For the working class of today the events of the summer of 1936 will always stand out as a landmark in their history. They regard the Popular Front days as the days of their power and dignity, of a just policy that fitted in with their aspirations.

A number of other legislative measures improved the position of the civil servants, ex-servicemen, artisans and small shop-keepers whose interests had suffered under the previous governments. The Popular Front was above all an alliance of workers and peasants whose incomes had been cut by three-fifths during the economic crisis. It rendered effective aid to the peasants by setting up a State Grain Board to regulate the grain market.

Apart from the social progress, one of the biggest achievements of the Popular Front was the progress made in the sphere of culture. Much was done to bring culture, formerly the exclusive domain of the privileged few, within reach of the masses. Sport, tourism, music became more accessible to the working man. The school-leaving age was raised. Many intellectuals, eager to serve the workers' interests, drew closer to the working class.

But, as Maurice Thorez stressed in December 1937 at the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party, notwithstanding the achievements even in the social sphere, much still remained to be done.

And he urged that the pace of progress be accelerated.

Beginning with May 1936 the cost of living rose 40 per cent on the average. This was due primarily to the repeated devaluation of the franc, despite Communist protests, and to nonfulfilment of the financial programme of the Popular Front. The government did nothing to prevent the outflow of capital or to create new reserves by taxing large incomes. The Communist slogan "Make the Rich Pay!" was not carried out.

In the absence of a serious programme of public works unemployment remained at a high level. In the latter part of 1936 the big capitalists launched an offensive against collective bargaining and for the abolition of the 40-hour week. Many of the demands of the working peasant remained unsatisfied. The question of old age pensions was not settled. In February 1937 the government announced a "pause" in the reforms. Nevertheless the major gains won in the summer of 1936 continued to exert the dominant influence in the sphere of social relations.

From the political standpoint, on the other hand, no-one could deny the success of the united front and the Popular Front. The people had routed Hitler's French imitators. The sacrifices had not been useless; those who lost their lives in the great anti-fascist demonstration in Paris on February 9, 1934, had not died in vain. Thanks to the unity and activity of the masses, fascism had been defeated in France. The political designs of the reactionaries, who had been preparing for civil war, were foiled.

Naked fascist dictatorship together with all the anti-parliament demagoguery expounded for years by the advocates of "strong government" in the service of "Electricité" and Comité des Forges, and all the agitation in favour of an authoritarian system were swept away by the popular struggle. The ravings of the fascists and other reactionaries evoked revulsion among the public and heightened the fighting spirit, the confidence and enthusiasm of the democratic camp.

True, fascism was not completely extirpated in France. The repeated acts of violence by fascist-type elements during the Popular Front period, and such acts of police brutality (no clean-up had taken place in the police force) as the shooting of an anti-fascist demonstration in Clichy on March 16, 1937, showed that the danger had not been completely eliminated. Nevertheless fascism had been dealt a crushing blow in the struggle for the masses (which explains why it resorted to terror and provocation). Political developments in France offered a striking demonstration above all of the *vitality of democracy*. The existence of the Popular Front and its achievements clearly showed that the *role of democracy had not been exhausted in our country*.

It had been demonstrated that not only was fascism not inevitable, but that the Popular Front had proved to be a constructive force in the economic, social and cultural spheres. It preserved and even extended democratic rights, notably by recognising trade union rights and introducing workers' representation in the enterprises.

The General Confederation of Labour (CGT), whose membership after the strikes had risen to five million, enjoyed great prestige among the population. In the eyes of the world the People's Front was the victorious affirmation of democracy, its latest political and social achievement. The working class substantially strengthened its political and organisational positions. It was fulfilling its historical role in the life of the country, its destiny as the motive force of social and national progress.

The question of a united working-class party now came sharply to the fore. The Communists stressed the importance of solving this problem on a class basis. The Socialist Party agreed in principle

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and showed a readiness to discuss ways and means of putting the 1935 Pact, and by making concession after concession to the idea into effect. Clearly, had the two parties continued along this path a powerful force could have been built that would have been of inestimable value to democracy.

The Negative Aspect

But the activity of the French working class was not unaffected by what was happening outside the national boundaries. Its very achievements were additional reason for the reaction to seek to impose a fascist dictatorship on France by other means—by the bayonets of Hitler and Mussolini, supported of course by the "fifth column". The reactionaries hoped to achieve by outside intervention what they had failed to bring about from within. Thus, for our people the fight for freedom merged with action for peace, security and national independence. The fight for freedom and progress could not be a purely national issue without betraying its very essence. It was not just an internal matter; by force of circumstances it acquired a universal character, as the Communist Party had repeatedly pointed out.

Hence beginning with June 1936 France should have taken the initiative in pursuing a policy of safeguarding peace. And she could have done so, because the role of the Soviet Union in world affairs was steadily growing, and because in the United States, Britain, Belgium, Holland and other countries the balance was tipping in favour of the democratic forces, as was demonstrated in the report of the Central Committee at the Ninth Congress of the Party.

France could have become strong had she placed her stakes on the alliance in defence of democracy uniting the masses all over the world inspired by the idea of the People's Front. In France the widespread social and political movement, the unity movement in the trade unions and Communist participation in the government majority were of inestimable significance for the country insofar as they reflected the emergence of popular unity capable of effectively upholding the nation's independence.

Have not the masses affirmed time and again their right to be the custodians of the national flag, their army and their country, with all the duties and responsibilities ensuing therefrom? Would they not have all the more reason to defend a country in which there would be greater freedom and less injustice?

The report of the Central Committee to the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party stressed:

"The policy of fascism is preparation for war, it is war. The policy of democracy is a policy of fidelity to one's commitments, respect for the League of Nations Charter, recognition of the principle of the indivisibility of peace and international solidarity in the struggle against war. The policy of democracy implies organisation of collective security through the conclusion of mutual aid pacts, 'in accordance with the principles of the Franco-Soviet pact', as the programme of the Popular Front declares."

The Blum government, formed as a result of the victory of the Popular Front, did not adhere to this policy. Instead it blockaded Republican Spain, while Hitler and Mussolini were supporting the Franco rebellion.

The policy of "non-intervention", running counter as it did to the letter and spirit of the People's Front programme which set forth concrete conditions for collective security and applying sanctions in the event of aggression, opened the first serious breach in the alliance of the democratic forces. This compelled the Communist deputies on December 4, 1936, to table a motion of non-confidence in the government.

Needless to say, this policy was accompanied by all kinds of promises and overtures to the fascist powers. The result, as we know, was deplorable. The government assumed it could appease them by desisting from strengthening the peace front, rejecting any agreement between the general staffs of the USSR and France, which would have been a natural and essential complement to the

In the circumstances the Communist Party was duty bound to open the eyes of the people to the gospel of war and hatred preached by the Nazis, by quoting from *Mein Kampf* even from the rostrum of the Chamber of Deputies and demanding that the implications of this book be explained and commented on in all schools.

The policy of the government facilitated the strengthening of the aggressive bloc built around the Rome-Berlin axis and increased the danger to peace.

Sabotage by the Employers

It need hardly be said that this wishy-washy foreign policy was accompanied by criminal connivance in the economic subversion resorted to by the capitalist oligarchy. Believing that sabotage was the best way to discredit the policy of the Popular Front, the big employers began to curtail production in every way they could, dooming skilled workers to unemployment. They literally followed the advice given to Lambert Ribot, their delegate in the ILO, by the representative of fascist Italy in June 1936: "The only way to bridle the working class is to close the factories and paralyse economic life".

The "200 families" crippled the economy and the national defences in order to break the Popular Front. The plutocracy betrayed the national interests. The employers took their cue from agencies such as the Social Security and Action Committee founded after the events of June 1936 and headed by the ex-Minister Germain Martin. This Committee made no secret of its admiration for authoritarian regimes abroad; it lauded the fascist movements which, it believed, should have been organised in France as well. It maintained the best relations with the General Confederation of Employers.

Even bourgeois journalists noted that "certain groups of the financial and industrial oligarchy, prompted by their class interests and greed for profit, are playing a defeatist game in our democratic country. They would be the losers if Hitler and Mussolini were to fall".

The oligarchy regarded Hitlerism as an excellent weapon against the "social danger", Hitler and Mussolini as the custodians of capitalist "civilisation", and the fascist states as the champions of privilege.

The Popular Front disintegrated in 1938. In the course of that year more and more concessions were made to the fascist powers and this led in September to the shameful surrender at Munich, which completed the collapse of the Popular Front and which was immediately followed by a government offensive against the working class. This found expression in the November ordinances aimed at annulling the social gains of 1936. Experience showed—and no-one has any doubts on this score today—that it was "non-intervention" that engendered Munich, that Munich opened the way to war in 1939 and eventually led to the defeat of 1940. The line pursued in relation to Spain fully corresponded to the general foreign policy course of our country before the war. History thus passed stern judgement on a foreign policy too similar, alas, to that pursued from the summer of 1936 to the autumn of 1938.

The Achilles' Heel of the Popular Front

The masses fought to prevent the degradation of policy, especially foreign policy. The numerous demonstrations held under the slogan "Guns and Planes for Spain!" revealed above all the political farsightedness of the working people and their love for their country. Why, then, were they unable to safeguard peace and the national interests? Why could the Popular Front not withstand the pressure of foreign and domestic reaction which was supported by the subversive manoeuvres of some leaders officially described as "Left"?

The main weakness of the Popular Front was that despite all the efforts of the Communists, the movement did not rest on a ramified

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system have made it possible to give free rein to the independent activity of the masses. These committees should have become the primary rallying centres of the supporters of the Popular Front in factories, urban communities and villages. Instead, the Popular Front remained only an association of the parties and organisations affiliated to it. It was never more than a meeting place for the leaders of organisations, a cartel of organisations.

With a view to promoting unity, carrying out the programme of the Popular Front, stimulating its activity, and building the necessary local committees, our Party proposed that a broad national congress be called of all organisations belonging to the Front. This idea was advanced in July 1937 when serious difficulties were encountered with the establishment of the Chautemps government, which marked a new stage of retreat for the Popular Front. Our Party proposed submitting to the congress all the problems relating to a common programme and its implementation. This congress, as our Party pointed out later, could have elected a national committee empowered to advise the government, which would have had to take this advice into account. The idea of such a congress was again advanced at the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party in December 1937.

Regrettably, however, the Socialist and Radical leaders rejected the Communist proposals. The concept of the Popular Front as a cartel of organisations on local and departmental scale and at national committee level prevailed. The road was opened for the degeneration of the Popular Front from an alliance of the working class and the middle strata with deep roots in the country, from an expression of a real mass movement against fascism and for an advanced and dynamic democracy, into a simple top-level association of affiliated organisations susceptible to reactionary pressures and vulnerable to disruptive manoeuvres.

In June 1937, with the reactionary counter-offensive threatening the very existence of the Popular Front, the Communist Party, which until then had not taken part in the government, declared its readiness to enter a broad government which would champion the interests of the working people. This was the only way out of the difficult situation that had arisen. But it could become feasible only if it had sufficient support throughout the nation. And here too it became patent that the absence of a ramified mass democratic Popular Front organisation had made an adverse imprint on the country's political life. The proposal to appoint Communist ministers to a government of national salvation—a proposal that was never withdrawn—was not accepted.

The Popular Front—A New Form of Alliance of the Working Class and the Middle Sections

The Popular Front existed for only two or three years. But it left a vivid and ineradicable mark in French history. To this day the parties and the masses frequently refer to it. In the memory of those who lived in that period, in the history that has recorded it for others, the Popular Front is not a transitory and commonplace episode in the coalition of democratic forces with a democratic government of a more or less traditional type. Memories of it are evoked today by the new situation, a new spirit representing a break with customary politics; they are linked with a genuine, developing democracy, a dynamic democracy in a continuous process of evolution.

June 1936 witnessed the birth not only of a great popular hope, as some historians see it, but also of a profound conviction that a mutually advantageous alliance of the working class and broad middle strata, primarily the peasantry, is possible. Both the working class and the middle strata suffered from monopoly policy, longed for reform, and together formed the living heart of the nation. All this refuted the "theory" current among bourgeois sociologists and historians that in the conditions of the twentieth century, the small and middle bourgeoisie are bound to side with the big reactionary

bourgeoisie, are fated to fall under the political influence of the latter and hence join forces with it against the working class. The Popular Front was not an electoral combination of secondary importance. Nor was it a temporary common front of resistance to the fascist danger (fascism raised its head on February 6, 1934). It was something more: a great militant initiative aimed at accelerating the march of history, at striking a blow by the united forces of the sound, hardworking core of the nation, against the two hundred families who were plundering the country and were set on betraying it. The Popular Front was a new departure, the product of a broad movement uniting the proletarian and petty bourgeois masses who had awakened to the fact that their common interests were injured by the monopolies and that they bore a joint responsibility for the future of the nation.

The Popular Front had nothing in common with previous "Left blocs", in the first place because it included the General Confederation of Labour and other organisations which were not political parties, and, secondly—which is most important—because the political content of the coalition was quite different. In the "Left blocs" and "Left Cartels" of the old type, say, before 1914 or after 1918, which took in the Socialist and Radical parties, the working class was at best an ancillary force, a mere political appendage to some capitalist parties and sacrificing its freedom of action. In 1936, on the contrary, the working class began to fulfil its historical role, to act as a force determining and guiding the destinies of the country.

No longer did the working class confine itself merely to proclaiming its leading role. It began to exercise that role. In particular it worked out a completely new social policy and effected a profound change in its own mode of life. This is evident from the fact that the social legislation of 1936 underlay the reforms carried out after liberation in 1945-46 and to this day determines the tenor of the workers' life (despite such setbacks as for example the abolition of the 40-hour week).

The working class proved that it is loyal to its alliances, and that the middle strata do not lose by co-operating with it. The demands of the latter were in considerable measure satisfied. More could have been achieved as regards, for instance, the demands of the peasants, had the persistent representations of the Communist Party on their behalf been heeded.

In upholding the interests of the middle sections, the Communist Party was the champion of the Popular Front of which it was also the initiator.

The Role of the Communist Party in the Popular Front

The Popular Front did not spring up spontaneously and not simply because of the objective need to combat fascism and extend the united front of the working class. The broad masses undoubtedly went into action and were awakened to political activity by the consequences of the economic crisis and the threat of putsches. The birth date of the Popular Front of struggle for bread, liberty, and peace is known precisely—October 9-24, 1934. And so is its initiator: the French Communist Party. It was then that Maurice Thorez on behalf of the Party put forward the idea of creating such a front and defined it as an alliance of the working class and the middle strata.

Subsequently, too, the Communist Party played an indispensable role in the development of the Front. At each stage it was the Communists who provided the theoretical groundwork for a policy expressing the aspirations of the masses.

The entire period from 1934 to 1938 offered daily evidence of practical steps taken by the Communist Party to build, develop and safeguard the Popular Front even at the most difficult times. But no less important was the Party's theoretical work in this period. Particularly noteworthy was the Party's sober assessment of the

results of the 1936 elections. The returns revealed the limited nature of the victory won by the Popular Front. The urban middle sections continued to vote for parties hostile to the Popular Front.

Should the country have been left split in two? All the forces of reaction were working to deepen the division. In particular, the Church hierarchy made full use of the June strikes of 1936 and later of the Spanish events to set the Catholics against the Front. The Communist Party, which at its Eighth Congress in January 1936 steered a course towards uniting the nation, advanced on August 6, 1936, the idea of a broader alignment, of expanding the Popular Front by bringing in representatives of other parties on the basis of a democratic and national programme.

This initiative was epitomised by the slogan of a *French Front*, reflecting a striving to save France from being divided into two irreconcilable blocs capable of leading to civil war or to the collapse of the Popular Front. This slogan embodied a resolve to unite the nation in the face of the growing danger of war and betrayal on the part of the ultra-reactionary elements of the big bourgeoisie.

The Socialist and Radical leaders did not accept the proposal for a French Front. Some chose to regard it as a means of "heightening patriotic feeling . . . in anticipation of a conflict which they in their heart of hearts believed to be inevitable". Actually the issue was one of averting war, curbing those who would instigate conflicts and engineer aggression, by building an alliance of all the sound forces of our country. The French Front, which was rejected in 1936 when it could have prevented the subsequent development of events and forestalled disaster, was formed only much later, in the grim but glorious years of struggle against the Nazi invader.

In any case the French Communist Party was farsighted. Its role in the Popular Front was decisive. History has confirmed this.

The Lessons Remain Timely

The trends which emerged in French society thirty years ago have become more pronounced since then. The lessons of the epoch-making experience of the Popular Front, if due account is taken of the dictates of our time, have lost none of their significance. What was then an alliance of the working class and the middle strata now takes the form of the unity of all anti-monopoly forces against the financial oligarchy and its instrument—one-man rule.

To achieve this union the aims must be precisely defined. Just as in 1936, the programme of the united democratic forces remains the basic issue. The question of the programme of the united democratic forces is as basic an issue today as it was in 1936, a question of political clarity and integrity in the relations between classes and the democratic strata of the nation, in relations between the parties which speak in their name.

On January 12, 1936, when the programme of popular unity came into being, the importance and novelty of this development was clear to all. For the first time since the establishment of the Republic all the Left parties and groupings came to agreement on a precisely defined range of demands. The previous types of purely electoral alliances had had no common programme. But this time the country was offered a bold and realistic platform and perspective marked by a creative, pioneering spirit.

As for the programme the democratic forces need today, it can derive a great deal from the lessons of the Popular Front. The period of the Popular Front was one of economic subversion by the "two hundred families" whose sense of civic duty and patriotism is no keener today than it was thirty years ago. These families should be stripped to the maximum of economic and political power through nationalisation of monopoly-owned industry, profound democratisation of management in the nationalised sector, vesting real economic power in a democratic parliament, and extending the rights of the working class at both nationalised and non-nationalised enterprises.

Moreover, much was said at the time of the Popular Front about "instilling a republican spirit" in the state institutions. Little was achieved in this respect. Diplomacy and higher financial bodies, for example, remained in the hands of the old office-holders. A clean-up in the police. The consequences were grave indeed. By and large the old office-holders retained possession of the levers of

administration. Today democratisation of the political, administrative and judicial institutions should be the concern of all the Left parties.

If the state administration was not democratised during the Popular Front period, the fact remains that democracy flourished in everyday life. The social gains of 1936 ratified by Parliament were above all the result of the activity of the masses. The Popular Front signified the release of new energy, the conscious participation of the masses in public affairs. Maurice Thorez never tired of repeating that working class unity, the Popular Front, should mean *activity, real and constant, carried on jointly and on all sectors*. Nothing could be more *timely* than this lesson. The new and dynamic republic which will take the place of one-man rule should rest on profound democracy in public life, on extensive initiative from below, and the combination of parliamentary activity by the people's representatives, faithful to their mandate, with high-minded civic activity on the part of the electorate. This is an essential precondition for the new democracy to become a powerful driving force of progress.

The Popular Front offered confirmation of the decisive role played by the working class. This class cannot be reduced to a subordinate role, relegated to the background, as is desired by the advocates of today's "centrist" combinations designed to substitute one reactionary policy for another in order to enable the big bourgeoisie to continue the Gaullist home policy without de Gaulle. And since the working class is destined to play the leading role it is of the utmost importance that its ranks be united! The unity of action of the parties speaking in its name is precious beyond measure.

The social gains of 1936 were the fruit of Communist-Socialist unity. The same was the case in 1945. Unity, then, is the way to victory.

Lastly, nothing is more urgent than the need to bring home to the people the close affinity of the working-class, democratic and national interests. The programme of the Popular Front, which called for collective security and the application of sanctions against aggressors, was a just and national programme. The foreign policy programme of the two hundred families was anti-national and disastrous for the country. Is not collective security in Europe an obvious necessity today too? The interests of the working class are inseparable from the interests of the nation: peace is a blessing for all, and to safeguard peace practical steps are needed.

From this standpoint the study of the foreign policy problems of the Popular Front period acquires particular significance today. As never before, the world is now the witness of a confrontation of two antagonistic policies: the policy of aggression and intervention manifested in the events in Vietnam, and the policy of safeguarding peace. Today, as thirty years ago, the defenders of peace must seek the support of all those forces which for one or another reason are opposed to aggression and want an improvement in international relations.

In our time the aggressive policy of the militarists in West Germany is encountering a stronger rebuff than thirty years ago but it is dangerous nevertheless. Yet a durable peace should have been established in Europe immediately after the Second World War, a peace ruling out the resurgence of the German militarist threat. Bonn insists on re-carving the map of Europe and clamours for nuclear weapons. It allows inveterate Nazi killers and war criminals to remain at large, even those who have been convicted by Federal German courts. This is a situation which calls for vigilance and maximum activity on behalf of peace.

Children are the richer for the experience of their fathers. The new conditions require of today's generation not restoration of the Popular Front, however great its significance and however high a pitch the working-class and democratic movement reached at that time. Today's generation should learn from the lessons of the Popular Front in order better to accomplish its own tasks: to rally all the anti-monopoly forces of the nation around the united working class in order to establish genuine democracy, a democracy in which the working class would fulfil its role and convince the people of its country of the need to embark on the road of rapid advance to socialism.