VERBATIM REPORT

of the Negotiations
Between the
SECOND & THIRD INTERNATIONALS
on the Question of
Supporting
The Heroic Struggle
of the
Spanish Workers

THREEPENCE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

On October 9, 1934, the Communist International sent out a call to the men and women workers of the world, and in particular to the Labour and Socialist International, for immediate joint action to support the embattled Spanish proletariat and to organise the fight to prevent the Leroux government being aided by other capitalist countries. At the same time Marcel Cachin and Maurice Thorez, members of the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party, were instructed by the Commintern to "immediately establish contact with the representatives of the Labour and Socialist International for the purpose of agreeing upon the concrete forms and actual measures for carrying out such joint action."

As a result of their efforts a meeting of representatives of the Communist International (Marcel Cachin and Maurice Thorez) and of the Labour and Socialist International (Emil Vandervelde and Friedrich Adler) was held in Brussels on October 15, 1934.

In view of the intense interest which the question of the united action in general, as well as that of the international united front has aroused in the entire working class, we are publishing the present pamphlet, containing the stenographic record of this Brussels conversation, together with the subsequent documentary material: the answer of the Executive of the L.S.I. and a statement issued by seven social-democratic parties. In this connection we have further included an article reprinted from the organ of the E.C.C.I., The Communist International.
I. FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE HEROIC ANTI-FASCIST STRUGGLE OF THE SPANISH TOILERS

Stenographic record of the conversation between the representatives of the Communist International, Marcel Cachin and Maurice Thorez, and the representatives of the Labour and Socialist International, Emile Vandervelde and Friedrich Adler, held in Brussels, October 14, 1934.*

We publish below the official transcript of the Brussels interview. The Socialist workers regret as much as we do that the representatives of the L.S.I. did not accept the proposals of the Communist International for the organisation of immediate and joint action on behalf of our brothers in Spain.

After the interview, several sections of the L.S.I. passed resolutions decidedly rejecting these proposals. They persist in a hostile attitude towards united action.

We still hope that the examples of their friends, the Socialists of Italy, Spain and France, will be such as to change the sentiments of those sections of the L.S.I. which have up to now remained unfavourable to the proposals of the Communist International and cause them to be accepted at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Those present: Emile Vandervelde and Friedrich Adler, from the L.S.I.; Marcel Cachin and Maurice Thorez, from the C.I.

The stenogram was taken down by M. A. Montenez, stenographer of the Belgian Senate.

The meeting began at six p.m. at the Hotel Metropole.

VANDERVELDE: We have hurriedly drawn up a declaration which is at present being re-typed, and which will be brought to us. But I can tell you now what it contains.

We received the letter of the Communist International on October 11. At the time Adler was absent from Zurich; he was informed by telephone. He transmitted the text of the letter to some members of the Executive of the Labour International who happened to be meeting in Prague for another purpose. They immediately talked the matter over.

I shall not hide from you the fact that this letter affected the representatives of the Labour International in different ways. The situation in the different countries, as you know, varies greatly. There are some places, such as Austria, Spain, France, where the

* Translation from the authentic text published in French in l'Humanité, Paris, November 8, 1934.
idea of international collaboration finds support. As against this, there are others where the psychology of the parties is quite different, notably the Scandinavian countries, Holland, and England. There the fact that the two Internationals attempted to come together some twelve years ago at the Berlin Conference, and what has happened since then has created a certain wariness; they regard the present step as a renewal of what has been called the united front manoeuvre.

It is incumbent on us to inform you that we are not authorised to speak here in the name of the International. As president and secretary, our specific role is first of all to listen to you, taking it upon ourselves to transmit what you have to say to us, all details you care to give us, to our Executive. The latter is to some degree already concerned with the question, following what happened in France, and it is scheduled to meet in Paris on November 13 or 14, and there the question of joint action will be on the agenda.

We are definitely of the opinion that in case an agreement were to be effected, this could not come about before that time.

Your letter refers to events in Spain. By now the strike in Spain is practically over. Caballero, member of our Executive, has been arrested. Even before we received your letter we lent the moral support of the International to the Spanish workers. On this point we have made inquiries. We do not believe that it is possible to undertake anything in the way of joint action regarding events in Spain, in those countries where an agreement does not already exist.

We shall tell you, in our declaration, that we regret the fact that we received no reply from the Third International when we made overtures during events in Germany. This does not mean that we shall not consider the matter. We explain to you that just as in France considerable time was required to conclude a definite pact, we should not be under any illusions; the conclusion of a pact on an international scale will require even longer negotiations. It appears that our main concern should be first of all to prepare for the near future and to see if it is not possible, in future situations, not to be taken unawares, as we undoubtedly were as regards events in Spain.

We further point out in our declaration, that just as you promptly supported your friends in Spain, we did the same. This support naturally goes to all the workers in the struggle. For the moment we do not believe it is possible to do anything other than this parallel action which we began on our own initiative.

Adler and I are here with the desire to listen to you and to learn how the Communist International conceives joint action.
I will add on my personal account, no longer speaking as president of the International, that I am convinced that the main question will be in some way or other to organise the co-operation of the democracy of Europe with the Union of Soviet Republics. That, in my opinion, is the essential thing for the immediate future.

It is in this spirit that I shall listen to you, and I have no doubt Adler agrees.

Adler: Just one question. Have you received our letter with the appeal published this morning in *Le Peuple*?

**Immediate Joint Action for the Spanish Workers**

Cachin: Yes, and we thank you for this invitation, which we have answered with the greatest of pleasure.

We bring you this evening some concrete proposals to show you in a fully realistic way the meaning of the general proposal made you by the C.I. We shall return in due course to citizen Vander-velde's remarks. Let me tell you in all sincerity our impressions on the terms of the appeal. We shall then go on to the specific proposals for an immediate joint action on behalf of the Spanish workers and peasants. For the mandate which the C.I. has given us is far less to concern ourselves with the general aspects of the problem of a united front between the two Internationals than to pose this specific question of immediate action on behalf of our Spanish comrades.

We are facing a serious situation. Fascism threatens to install itself in a new country. This is an extreme danger, not only for Spain, but also for all the rest of the International. We have been commissioned to ask you if, aside from a general examination of the further problem, there is not some way, immediately, of taking practical action to help the Spanish strike, the great Spanish revolution which is under way. It is in a critical situation at present, but in our eyes it is not dead. Even admitting that it would now be hard to lend the revolution support for a new leap, the present situation in Spain is an extremely tragic one for both militant Socialists and militant Communists, for all the workers who entered the battle, and whose lives are in danger. This sentiment is not confined to us. This morning I read in *Le Populaire* that dire danger threatens all our Spanish comrades. Under these conditions we are principally charged with asking you whether, regardless of further conversations, and, perhaps, by way of happy preface, the two internationals as such could not immediately undertake defensive action on behalf of our Spanish comrades who are in such tragic danger. We submit to you the actual forms of this immediate action. We shall formulate them as precisely as
possible. Then we shall discuss the terms themselves of the matter.

I shall begin by reminding you of the text of the C.I.’s appeal.

ADLER: The one which was published in the Humanité, and which we received?

**THE APPEAL OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL**

CACHIN: Yes, perhaps it is not a bad idea to re-read it now.

"The fascist monarchist reaction in Spain has flung the forces of the army, of the navy and the aviation corps against the working class and peasants, struggling under the leadership of the Workers’ Alliance, which achieved unity of action between Communists and Socialists and cemented this union with blood shed in combat. The victory of the fascist monarchist reaction in Spain after the advent of fascism in Germany and Austria would not only bring incalculable suffering to the working class and the peasants of Spain, but would be a hard blow to the international proletariat as a whole.

"Only the fighting unity of the world working class can lend effective aid to the Spanish workers and bar the path to Spanish reaction and world reaction. At the decisive moment when the bourgeoisie is trying to crush one of the fighting detachments of the world working class, the Spanish proletariat, the Communist International has called on its sections to organise jointly with other workers’ organisations, meetings and mass demonstrations to affirm their solidarity with the Spanish workers.

"At the same time the Communist International has addressed to the Socialist International a proposal for immediately launching united action both on behalf of the fighting Spanish proletariat and in opposition to the support given the Leroux government by the governments of other capitalist countries.

"The Communist International instructs Comrades Cachin and Thorez to establish immediate contact with the representatives of the Socialist International so as to co-ordinate the concrete forms and carry these united actions into practice.

"The Executive Committee of the Communist International."

By way of united action we propose the following:

1. The organisation of joint demonstrations and meetings under the slogan: “Down with the Leroux government! Defend the Spanish workers and peasants fighting against reaction!”

2. A joint plan of trade union organisations to prevent the transport of troops or munitions to the aid of the Leroux government.

3. That the Communist and Socialist parliamentary fractions in each country jointly demand the convening of parliament to protest against the barbarous executions of which the Spanish people are at present victims. Also, similar action by Communists and socialists in municipal bodies.

4. The joint organisation of immediate material aid to the fighting Spanish proletarians and the victims of repression.

To these clear-cut propositions I shall add only one comment
relating to the first point. We believe that now, in the face of a
grave danger, not only the national sections of each of our Interna-
tionals should take vigorous action through joint meetings and
demonstrations, but, that in France, in some of the large European
capitals and perhaps more especially on the Spanish border, the
representatives of the two Internationals as such should lend their
aid and their support to the comrades who are at present subject
to the dangers of repression. We believe that if, without waiting
for the conditions and the guarantees which are required, as we
well understand, for broader and more complete action, we can
make known now to the hard-pressed workers and peasants of
Spain, that despite all disagreements and for this particular end,
we declare in face of the world that the two Internationals are
ready to enter the struggle to defend our Spanish comrades, we
think, I say, that it would be a great historic act, a great event which
would give the entire proletariat, not only the Spanish, but the
international proletariat, tremendous self-confidence.

These are the concrete, specific, practical terms of our mandate,
and while we are quite willing to discuss matters of a later bearing,
from an informative standpoint, we call your attention primarily to
these concrete proposals.

**We Must Act Quickly**

So then, without the least presuming to ask you to set an earlier
date for the forthcoming session of your Executive, all the same do
you not think there is some way of not postponing immediate
united action another month? For between now and then the
most serious things can happen. We ask you the question with
the utmost frankness.

Allow me to add one more word without going deeply into the
matter. You say that there will be long and perhaps ticklish dis-
cussions over the central problem of a United Front. That may be
so; I am not at all sure of it. Remember that the objections which
you have just made to us to-day were already raised by the Socialists
in France, and surely they must have told you the results of the
meeting which turned out so well for both parties. If we had any
difficulties after July 27, they must have kept you informed. At
present all these little questions of detail are on a way to being
ironed out, and it is acknowledged that mountains were made out
of many molehills which to-day seem very small indeed. In any
case, since united action began, one is forced to admit the obvious
and striking fact that the French proletariat is in a state of extreme
satisfaction, and shows it on every occasion. This is really a tre-
men-dous experience in favour of developing this unity of action.

These, then, are the concrete proposals which we wish to submit,
and regarding them, if you are willing, we shall make this more
than an informative conference; for we keenly wish that an agree­
ment between the two organisations may be reached as early as
possible on the four points we have submitted to you.

**Action in Countries with a Fascist Government**

**Adler:** Vandervelde has told you we are faced with the grave
difficulty that some of our parties are in a situation where it is
impossible to commit them without preliminary negotiations. The
situation in the various countries differs greatly, especially after these
twelve years which have passed since our first attempt at a united
front.

But let me briefly examine the present situation in the various
countries.

In accordance with your four propositions the essential country
for doing something on the Spanish border is France. There you
have your united front; you can act together, you have the basis of
united action.

So if I consider the other countries, allow me first to exclude the
Soviet Union, for I shall not ask if you will form a united front
with our Russian comrades at present. I do not wish to have a
futile discussion on this point, but I confine myself to saying that
in the Soviet Union I am convinced in advance you will do nothing
in this direction.

On the other hand we have a number of fascist countries, such
as Germany, Austria, Italy, Lithuania, Estonia . . .

**Vandervelde:** Poland.

**Adler:** That is semi-fascist. I shall first take the countries without
democracy, without parliament, without the slightest possibility
of doing anything practical. Undoubtedly our parties in these
countries can influence general opinion in illegality perhaps; but
they can accomplish nothing effective for our Spanish comrades.

There remain, then, the other countries. What can be accom­
plished in those countries, which are the very ones where the inter­
nal situation of our parties is most difficult? The countries
are namely: Great Britain, Denmark, Sweden and Holland. These
are the countries where our action can have real influence.

Now, in these countries right now our comrades have already
acted on behalf of the Spanish comrades.

**Solidarity Action in England**

In this respect the situation in England was excellent. When
things started in Spain our comrades were holding their annual
 congress. There they adopted a solemn declaration on behalf of
our Spanish comrades.

Now, after this I find a violent attack in the Moscow *Pravda* say­
ing that the Labour Party, those traitors in England, have refused
to do anything in favour of those who are defending themselves
against counter-revolution in Spain. When this article was translated to me I was unable to fathom it. I asked for information. The matter relates to a trifling incident at the last minute of the conference. A man proposed a resolution, when the fact of the general strike was not as yet confirmed. He was a young Communist who had come to the Congress of the Labour Party. The organisational conditions of the trade unions are such that this could happen. He made his proposal at a time when it was not on the agenda. And later an outcry was raised over this trifling incident in order to make of it a big attack on our English comrades, who had in reality declared themselves in favour of solidarity with our Spanish comrades. I don’t take this little incident tragically; I’ve had long experience with such accidents. But you will understand how this sheds singular light on the situation.

Do you really believe, then, that if action on behalf of the Spanish proletariat were carried out jointly with the little Communist Party in England the practical result for our Spanish comrades, now in danger of their lives, would be the better for it? I must confess to you that I would be entirely satisfied if we had a united front the world over. But as regards the influence which we might at present have on events in Spain, I am fully convinced that the practical results of action in England would be in no wise altered.

I believe that this very morning they made a big move in the government. For the moment this is between ourselves. I do not know whether one will find mention of it in English papers, such as the Daily Herald. But I am under the impression that something was already done this morning.

I can tell you, on the other hand, that in the case of Austria, where, since February, the situation has been fully as tragic as in Spain, we took the same sort of action in western countries, the only ones which might have had some influence. Vandervelde in Brussels, Leon Blum in Paris, Henderson in London acted, and it had a real effect in favour of our Austrian comrades.

These same three comrades also took effective action as regards Lithuania. We had reason to fear our young comrade Bruno Kalmin would be brought before a court-martial. We acted immediately in the various countries and we were successful. The trial will be held, perhaps, in a few weeks, but the big immediate danger was avoided.

In the case of Spain it is entirely natural that we should take action for the victims and that we should do everything in our power to aid them. Under present conditions we must do whatever we can. In France you can act in united front with the Socialists. But I do not see how, for the moment, we can make commitments for our parties in England, in the Scandinavian countries, in Hol-
land, as regards united action. We regret it, but united action cannot be prepared at the last minute, especially on an international scale. It must be prepared for a long time ahead, so as to be ready to act when events require it.

VANDERVELDE: The crystallisation occurs easily if, on both sides, there already exists beforehand a tacit agreement to act together. But you must yourself be aware that in certain countries where our International is powerful such is far from the case. You know the considerable strength of the British Labour Party; as compared to this the Communist Party is far from having the strength which it has in France. When it comes to harnessing together such unequal forces, they do not team up so easily.

We might assure you to-day that we are very anxious to organise this co-operation as soon as possible. We should be disavowed by those whom we represent and who would be very much against it. We are therefore obliged at the very beginning to state clearly that, anxious as we personally are to come to a result as soon as possible, we must confine ourselves to the limited mandate which was given us.

STATEMENT FROM THE SECRETARIAT OF THE L.S.I.

I told you just now that we have drawn up a declaration; we have just received it. I shall read it to you, excusing myself for its hasty formulation.

"We wish at the outset to make you the following declaration. The letter and the telegram whereby the Communist International charged you to get into contact with us only reached us on October 11.

"By a large majority our bureau immediately agreed that we attend this interview for purposes of information, though the suddenness of your appeal could not but give some members misgivings.

"In the twelve years that have elapsed since that Berlin Conference where, for the first and the last time, representatives of the Communist International met with us, much distrust has inevitably accumulated as regards the possibilities of joint action.

"It was further inevitable that in several countries, the first impression should be that this was nothing more than one of those so-called united front manoeuvres.

"The situation in the parties affiliated to our International differs greatly according to country.

"In France the basis and the guarantees for joint action have been found. In other countries, on the contrary, such as England, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries the mistrust and the objections have rather increased of late.

"In these countries the numerical proportions between Socialist and Communist Parties are such that one is inclined to regard the latter as a negligible quantity; whereas those who speak in the name of these Parties conduct themselves in their advances and in their proposals for
parts of united action as though they represented an extremely important fraction of the proletariat.

"Under the circumstances our parties in these countries do not receive with very good grace proposals inspired by such methods.

"You will realise that under these conditions it is impossible for us at to-day's meeting to undertake commitments which bind the parties we represent.

"But on the other hand we shall make it our duty to transmit to our Executive whatever propositions and suggestions you think proper to offer us.

"After what has happened in the last twelve years, joint action in the international sphere must under any circumstances be prepared by preliminary negotiations and does not lend itself to hasty solutions.

"This is why in an appeal which we transmitted to you, we charged our parties to take action, without waiting, in support of the workers of Spain.

"You on your side have pursued a similar course and you too have charged your sections to act without awaiting the outcome of the negotiations which you propose to engage in.

"It required long weeks in France to arrive at the conclusion of a pact of united action.

"You must realise that in the international sphere it is inevitable that the negotiations cannot go any quicker.

"We regret that these negotiations were not begun at the time when our International made you similar proposals, namely, on the morrow of the advent to power of the Hitlerite fascists.

"Had this been the case our united action could have been possible on the occasion of the events in Spain. But we believe that our negotiations can have important consequences on the course of events. What has just happened proves that the preparation of joint action is what enables one to intervene with real effectiveness.

"The question of our discussion to-day has long been on the agenda of our Executive which will meet in Paris mid-November.

"It was placed on the agenda as a result of events in France and, quite naturally, the information which you give us will be an extremely important element in the forthcoming discussions."

I also add the following: you know what an international organisation is. I regard it as materially impossible to discuss the question before November 13-14.

If at present we could count on the adherence of our sections I would say, go ahead, I personally and Adler, too, we ask for nothing better. But we know full well that if we did this, we would meet with extremely lively opposition in Holland, England and the Scandinavian countries, etc.

To Delay United Action will be to Disappoint the Socialist and Communist Workers

Thorez: Our friend Cachin has just set forth the wishes of the C.I. At such a serious time, when we may still by our organised
solidarity in those countries where this is possible, actively influence both Spanish and international events, we are anxious to arrive at united action very quickly.

Cachin has formulated some concrete proposals of which you apparently cannot accept a single one for the moment. You offer to submit them to a session of your Executive.

I would like to repeat, after Cachin, how regrettable it seems to me that you cannot achieve united action as regards events in Spain before what may be a long time. There we are, to put it frankly. I think I can assure you that this will be a gigantic disappointment for Communist and Socialist workers first of all in Spain, and especially in France.

We have had the good luck to be the first to achieve united action and we have the great satisfaction of witnessing the happy consequences of our unity of action. At the present in our country the Socialist and Communist workers have become accustomed to thinking that there were in reality no serious objections to the organisation of united action. Precisely because they have achieved united action, they have become accustomed to thinking that everything which from time to time was cited against the united front, whether or not it was a manoeuvre, was not of such great importance at a time when such serious events solicited our attention.

The very fact that our C.I. has addressed itself to the L.S.I., the fact, which we consider very important, that the president and secretary of the L.S.I. have agreed to this first meeting with the representatives of the C.I., has undoubtedly provoked great interest and even great joy in all countries and especially in France. We were able to witness this in the big public gatherings, especially in the Salle Bullier in Paris, where we transmitted the appeal of the C.I., and where the socialist speaker Jiromski declared that he considered a favourable answer to this appeal as both possible and necessary.

And now there will be great disappointment when to-morrow we tell them that it is impossible for us even to agree on the organisation of an international meeting between Socialists and Communists, in France or in some other large capital.

FOR AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING

Here I shall forestall your objection. It is not simply a case of a meeting such as those we agreed upon in our committee of coordination formed in France between the two parties, but an international meeting where we wish to see a representative of the L.S.I. participate side by side with a representative of the C.I., both of them accredited as such. Such a meeting, in Paris or especially in the South of France would have far different significance, far different importance for the workers of Spain and France. It would be a demonstration of the common will of the two Internationals to
aid the workers of Spain with all their resources and to encourage with all their strength the realisation of united action in all countries.

I shall tell you very frankly, I think that great disappointment will result. Perhaps only if for the fact that your declaration is not of a nature to encourage the united front, for which we should aim, in those countries where it has not yet been achieved. When you say:

"We have already of our own accord decided on an action of fraternal solidarity on behalf of the Spanish workers, our Labour Party and our Belgian Workers' Party are taking steps all our big Parties, in Sweden, in Holland, will take action; we don't see how the co-operation of the small Communist Parties can add anything to this,"
you certainly are not encouraging the achievement of the united front.

VANDERVELDE: You know very well, Thorez, that in Belgium, as in other countries, the disproportion is such . . .

THOREZ: I would like to answer this objection quite frankly by saying that insistence on such an objection to the united front may be of greatest danger to the international working class. One cannot say that a party of the working class, even though it is as yet not as important numerically as a big party, is numerically negligible. You know very well that our small Communist Party in Austria has fought and continues to fight, that our small Communist Party in England is also fighting, that in Belgium our small Communist Party is fighting with the same effectiveness. An agreement has even been reached at this very moment between the Young Communists and the Young Socialist Guards.

VANDERVELDE: Our Young Socialist Guards have postponed the matter for three months, precisely because there are difficulties.

Please note that I deny none of the things you say, only put yourself in our place. We have been delegated to listen to you; by certain countries we have been refused the mandate to do anything more than listen, for the present. You are anxious to accomplish things very quickly; this is all very well, but before, when we made proposals, we received no answer.

IT WILL REQUIRE THE EFFORTS OF ALL TO DEFEAT FASCISM

THOREZ: I shall also say a word on this subject.

For the sake of the workers, we Communists fear this objection to the united front, coming as it does from those who lead a party of the working class and who think they have retained sufficient influence to enable them to erect a sufficient barrier to fascism single-handed. We regard this as dangerous, the experience of Austria is sufficiently significant in this respect, and even in France last Sunday and the Sunday before, we were able to witness that in those localities where the Socialist Party felt itself stronger and where there was some tendency to ease up on common action and not to
carry through the provisions of the pact to the full, neither of us made any headway, while the bourgeois parties gained. This was notably the case in Lille. While in those places where we struck hard together, both Socialists and Communists forged ahead side by side.

Furthermore, no one can say that the C.I. did not, in its turn, formulate an answer which allowed the organisation of united action. You know it. I will tell you quite frankly, our wish is to organise joint action immediately, but if we must discuss, we shall discuss. In France we have acquired the habit of talking things over very frankly with our Socialist comrades. And if anyone tells us: you should have accepted our offers earlier, we reply: perhaps the proposals of the Communist Party in Germany of July 1932 and and in January 1933 should have been accepted. Perhaps Social-Democracy should have accepted the proposals for united action made at that time by our Party. But how far would this get us? I remind you of this matter precisely because then too we were told that the matter of the united front was not an urgent one. Then, too, you thought you were strong enough and that the other Party was less strong.

VANDERVELDE: The German Communists represent a very large force.

THOREZ: That is why it was a great pity that you failed to listen to its appeals in 1932 and 1933 for the organising of joint resistance to Hitler.

And now, since March 1933 we have already given such answers as allowed the organising of joint action, for it was on the basis of these answers that we came to organise our united action in France. This is why I rather have some misgivings that your declaration does not encourage the achievement of the united front in those places where it does not yet exist and that your declaration only helps too much to leave matters where they were before.

Not that we are unwilling to discuss all the problems and calmly consider all the appropriate points of controversy, but the immediate problem for us is to discover how we might, from this very evening, agree at least on a minimum of two or three large meetings, of two or three big demonstrations on behalf of our Spanish comrades.

Such is the spirit in which we have come to secure united action.

THE APPLICATION OF THE PACT OF UNITED ACTION IN FRANCE

VANDERVELDE: I would like to call your attention to the fact that when our friends in France concluded the pact of joint action, they did it in violation of previous decisions of our International to the effect that we could not undertake this unity of action in the various countries until after an agreement between the two Internationals
and that, up to the present, the C.I. had not answered our overtures. Nevertheless, once our French comrades had on their own responsibility taken the initiative of concluding this pact of joint action, we held a meeting of our Executive Committee and no one thought of saying that because they had violated a previous decision, we disapproved of their initiative. Even more, there were in the Executive, and I dare say in the International Secretariat, men who publicly approved, as you are perhaps aware. I myself wrote an article on this subject publicly approving what had been done in France. Only, there is one thing which you yourself must not lose sight of, namely, that Adler and I are here not in our own name, not even in the name of our respective Austrian and Belgian Parties; but as representatives of the Labour International, and that it is undeniable that in many countries the opposition is very lively.

Under these conditions the only thing permitted us is to tell you that the question has already been placed on the agenda of this meeting of our Executive in November, and that the matter will come up for discussion then, and that, without a doubt, the experiences of France will be a very important element in favour, in the eyes of many of our delegates.

But you cannot reasonably require men who have received a specific and limited mandate to exceed this mandate by saying that they are ready to take the initiative of organising several joint meetings.

There is nothing to prevent each of our affiliated parties from doing what our French comrades have done and organising, along with the Communist Party in a given country, meetings, demonstrations, etc.

**Thorez:** Look, supposing that we, being in agreement, have decided to conduct a big campaign of meetings with the Socialist Party throughout the country, that someone from the Socialist International should speak at one of these meetings organised by the French Parties and someone from the C.I.; is that out of the question?

**Vandervelde:** If citizen Vandervelde were not president of the International it is entirely probable that he would accept the invitation. But, because he is the president and for Adler because he is secretary, this is out of the question for both of us.

**Thorez:** Just think what such a meeting would mean, even in Paris.

**Adler:** The problem is far bigger than that of whether or not there is a meeting this week. This step is so serious and of such importance for the future of the working class that one cannot lightly undertake it. We must not lose sight of the fact that your proposal
to conclude a pact now recalls to Socialists of every country memories of similar instances where the idea of thus improvising temporary pacts gave the impression of a manœuvre. And our Parties are on the lookout against such manœuvres. You know the history of your international Communist Congresses, you know all this.

Thorez: We also know something of yours. (Amusement.)

"We are ready to discuss"

Adler: You won't find any shadow of a manœuvre on our part. As for me I can say personally that I am the only one who, prior to the French experience, established and carried through the united front, joint action in Austria after the war, in our Workers' Councils on a democratic basis. For many years we really had a parliament of Communist and Socialist workers. We debated frankly, we were extremely successful, I believe that at the time we saved the revolution through this form of workers' democracy between the Communist and Socialist Parties.

I, who was also chairman of the Berlin Conference twelve years ago where the three Executives were present, I feel I have a right to say that what we want is a real and solid basis and not an improvised temporary solution proposed by a man in a meeting, regardless of how important this man may be. It is not for the International to conclude a pact which would cause misunderstandings in every country. Why have we accepted your proposal to come here? This is a serious question: what can be done in the future, under conditions such as those of to-day, to bring about joint action? And for our Executive it would be a real clarification to have your answer to this question.

Events in Germany have been much discussed; I would like to say in two words that I do not believe that what you said regarding Germany was quite accurate. Take the Vorwärts of January, 1933. You will find articles by Stampfer demanding the united front at that time. I could relate to you this whole story in detail, as I went into it because it interested me. At the time a man of whom it was not even known whether he was a Communist or agent-provocateur brought in a little piece of paper at the last moment, asking: do you want to make a united front? Such proceedings are not appropriate; what is needed to reach a conclusion is serious negotiations on a serious basis.

We do not believe that we can agree to organise a meeting with speakers of the two Internationals. This would be ideal had we conducted the preliminary negotiations prior to our meeting. We refuse to make a pact ad hoc.* First of all we need an organisational basis, such as you found in France, with assurances and

* For this particular purpose, especially.—Ed.
guarantees for the two parties in order to avoid all misunderstandings. You know that was not easy in France. But it is even more difficult for an organisation which includes parties in various countries under entirely dissimilar conditions. It is purely utopian to imagine you can come to us this evening and get results for next week. After all that has occurred in these twelve years, it will require really serious work to arrive at a real result.

We tell you then, by way of summary: we are prepared to discuss these conditions seriously, we hide none of the difficulties within our parties; but we do not believe that an improvised pact will help matters. It will require serious negotiations if we want to reach a real and practical result.

VANDERVELDE: To get somewhere the essential thing will be the assurance of co-operation between the Russian Revolution and the proletariat of Western Europe.

Even at the time when I had an extremely hostile attitude towards the Communist Party in the Soviet country, I always said that the day when I should have to choose between restoration and Lenin, I would be with Lenin. It is evident that many obstacles to common action which still existed a few years ago and seemed to have acquired a normal and permanent character, have disappeared, or tend to disappear. It is evident that what has happened in France is an element the importance of which cannot be overestimated.

THE QUESTION IS OF SUPPORTING THE WORKERS OF SPAIN AND NOT OF "MANŒUVRES"

THOREZ: So much the better.

CACHIN: I am sorry to hear you talk of manœuvres the way you do. It is the very objection which our French Socialist comrades made to us long ago. And see, the French experience is conclusive. Now, this was not done by our section alone, but in the name of the C.I., which more and more recommends the united front to all. So do not even dream of a manœuvre. I do not think it is possible to find men more serious and conscientious, endowed with a clearer and more loyal attitude than the Communist Party in France, and I hasten to add, than the Socialist Party. The elections of yesterday were extraordinary. The full returns in the first round are fully known in many localities.

VANDERVELDE: No one denies that.

CACHIN: If this objection about a possible manœuvre has proven thoroughly unjustified in France, in a big country where we had so many reasons for suspecting each other, and if the agreement was reached under conditions of absolute good faith, let us not talk any more of manœuvres.

I am not informed of the latest events in Spain; all the same, what I do know about the Workers’ Alliance in Spain is that in the
struggle our comrades marched in absolute harmony and that neither the one nor the other had any grounds for an instant’s suspicion that there was any manoeuvre on our part.

You may think what you will of what happened twelve years ago, but let me tell you that events are no longer the same. We are in a Europe which is two-thirds fascist. If to-morrow fascism should establish itself in Spain, what strength, what power will fascism not acquire, and will not fascism in France derive tremendous encouragement therefrom? How much more dangerous will fascism everywhere become? And so to imagine under the circumstances that we should dream of manoeuvring would, indeed, at the present time, be entertaining a very poor opinion of us.

The danger is there, our houses are on fire; the working class is everywhere endangered in most tragic fashion. This is why we are truly sorry that matters are held up because of certain past considerations. You are Socialists, we are Communists, but for the moment I again repeat, the danger is such, it is so tremendous, that we must come to terms.

And so, I return to our concrete proposals. Instead of telling us that nothing can be done till November 13, is it not possible right now to think of some action in line with our proposals? I do not see how the holding of a few large joint demonstrations could in the least injure subsequent negotiations which both of us desire. I believe on the contrary that this would aid them, would facilitate them.

For Working-Class Spain

The terms of your declaration, if you will allow me to say so, echoing Thorez, are restrictive; on the contrary, the terms of ours are the broadest possible in a unique sense. We propose to act jointly for immediate action on behalf of working-class Spain. This immediate action by the two Internationals right now, apart from national actions, would be an event of tremendous moral weight coming on the heels of the French experience. It would cause tremendous satisfaction everywhere in the working class. At once all discussions of detail would disappear; this would enormously facilitate a further rapprochement which is necessary in view of the seriousness of events. For to-morrow things will be perhaps more serious than to-day, forcing unity of action on both alike in spite of everything.

And this is why we keenly regret that it seems to you impossible to do anything before November 13. We insist in any case that you say that you will do everything you can to hasten the meeting of your Executive, that in addition in all countries moves will be made with every local section to involve the national organisations in an effort to organise a united front analogous to the one we have in France.
Vandervelde: I can do nothing more than repeat what we have already said; by so doing we would exceed the only mandate which has been given us.

However, in what Cachin has just said there is something that struck me and that I personally would be inclined to accept, since just now before we came here our chief concern when we drew up this declaration, was to tell you very frankly what the situation was. But in this declaration there are certain things which were a bit sharp and which, for my part, I would be much inclined to strike out if the declaration is to be published. If you will turn to the text I shall show you the passages which can be deleted.

First, the fourth point where it says:
“...It was further inevitable that in several countries, the first impressions should be that this was nothing more than one of those so-called united front manoeuvres.”

I do not in the least hesitate to admit that there is something a bit sharp in this which we can, without the least inconvenience, delete.

(Ascent.)

Likewise, we can further delete those two points relating to such countries as England, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian.

“In these countries the numerical proportions between the Socialist and Communist Parties are such that one is inclined to regard the latter as a negligible quantity; whereas those who speak in the name of these parties conduct themselves in their advances and in their proposals for pacts of united action as though they represented an extremely important fraction of the proletariat.

“Under the circumstances our parties in these countries do not receive with very good grace proposals inspired by such methods.”

I think that with a view to publication one can also suppress these few points. (Ascent.)

On the other hand there are two slight textual corrections in case of publication.

In the following third point the words “hasty solutions” could be replaced by “improvised solutions” and it would read:

“After what has happened in the last twelve years joint action in the international sphere must under any circumstances be prepared by preliminary conversations and does not lend itself to improvised solutions.”

Finally, one could delete one part of the next point at the bottom of the page which constitutes a repetition and simply say:

“This is why in an appeal which we transmitted to you we charged our parties to take action without waiting, in support of the workers of Spain.

“You on your side have pursued a similar course.”

(Ascent.)

In this fashion our declaration will have lost its sharp character, and I believe that we can thus correct it without in the least way exceeding the mandate given us. (Ascent.)
ADLER: These are questions of style and I agree with Vandervelde.

But the problem remains and in conversation I openly confess to you that in our first discussion of the matter I kept saying: we don’t yet know whether this is really a change of line in Moscow or a manoeuvre on a grand scale. We actually asked ourselves this question.

NO CRITICISM IN JOINT ACTION

THOREZ: Neither the one nor the other, but simply a wish for international unity.

ADLER: That is a phrase. But for us who know all that, it is a big question. Do they really by now realise in Moscow that the situation in those countries where democratic liberties and parliamentarianism are still in force demands a different attitude from that which the C.I. has maintained during all these years? Do they really understand by now that they no longer should say of us: these are social-fascists, traitors of the proletariat, who defend the bourgeoisie? Is this truly the case or is it a manoeuvre which we have not yet grasped in all its details? And this alternative is for us the real basis of decision.

CACHIN: It is formally understood, not only in our agreement with the French Socialist Party, but in a proposal of the Communist International written in black and white, that from the day the agreement on united action is concluded all criticism of the Parties, whatever they be, will be abstained from. Have we not accepted this formulation in France? Yes. Once the pact was concluded, have not we strictly observed this resolution? Yes. And it has surely resulted in considerable betterment for the working class; that is undeniable! And so, there you have it, in the International’s statement, in the pact concluded and carried out in France, and in the guarantees which can further be reaffirmed; these are assurances which must, it seems to me, seem completely satisfactory to you by now.

Yes, Adler, there have been on your part, as on ours, certain instances of violence; there were battles which were not lacking in outspokenness, but this is no longer relevant; the question at present is that we are within an inch of a general fascisation of Europe, within an inch of war, that is the real problem. (Signs of assent.) We again repeat, the present situation in Spain is exceptionally serious and the fact that to-morrow, for purely formal reasons, you will have rejected the possibility of united action, even though it be conditional, will not further the cause of the working class in Spain.

VANDERVELDE: It is true, only we are bound by our mandate.

CACHIN: Then, it makes me extremely uneasy to find on your
part nothing but this immobility and no possibility of finding a way to expedite a solution which is nevertheless urgent.

**VANDERVELDE:** You seem to think that we are avoiding the issue on the pretext of a point of procedure. This is not at all the case. It is a material impossibility for an institution such as ours to adopt improvised resolutions without our having even discussed the matter among ourselves. This indispensable discussion must involve us in certain delays.

**THOREZ:** The desire, which we regard as legitimate, to act only in the interest of the working class, in a way which seems just, the desire to protect one's party and obtain security guarantees for it, is one thing. We have concluded a pact with the Socialist Party in France; all these questions have been taken care of and there cannot arise any other difficulties. But to accumulate imaginary difficulties is something quite different.

I will tell you very frankly, citizen Adler, that this is neither a new line nor a manoeuvre on a grand scale on Moscow's part. There has not been and there will not be any change in the policy of the Communist International. It is unnecessary to open a discussion here on the policy of the C.I. We regard what we have done as correct. I even add that we consider that the experiences of the Bolsheviks, in contrast to the experiences of the Socialist parties in other countries, appear to us more than conclusive, I would even say decisive.

We Carry Out the Pact of Unity of Action Loyally

What we have pledged ourselves to, what we faithfully respect, as we have proved with the Socialist Party in France and as we hope to prove with the Socialist International as a whole, is to stop all criticism the moment we start acting together. According to the provisions of the pact in France each retains his own convictions as regards methods, programs, etc. We agreed to concessions on criticism in order to realise united action. Before our pact was signed in France we engaged in public controversies. Quite calmly, whenever anyone in the Socialist Party said: "We can form a united front in France because the Communists have changed their policy," we replied: "No, the Communists have not changed their policy; but the workers, Socialist and Communist, want the united front." And, perhaps because in France we have a strong Communist Party, this desire, which we aroused, was decisive in achieving the united front.

As regards the future, which is what concerns you at the moment, it is not a question of a small improvised matter. There will of course be an agreement, duly debated by the two Internationals.

But, before this, right away, we would like to arrive at something. And I am not joking when I propose a big international meeting.
In France, we did not conclude the pact at the very beginning; there were many forms of united action prior to that, many united demonstrations before the pact between our organisations was finally concluded. We are convinced that one of the elements which had the greatest influence on the decision of our comrades of the Socialist Party was that long before then we succeeded in establishing and maintaining connections with the Socialist Federation of the Seine. On July 8, when the Croix de Feu tried to come to Paris to demonstrate, and before the pact was signed we assembled 100,000 Parisian proletarians in the Bois de Vincennes; this was the decisive factor. And when we held imposing meetings at the Salle Bullier, the effect of such demonstrations thoroughly convinced our Socialist comrades that it was not a case of any manoeuvres and they accepted the pact. After that, as you know, there was still some resistance within the Socialist Party; this is now disappearing. At the last meeting of our committee we received a telegram from Montluçon announcing that they would no longer hesitate to carry out the pact of united action. I would not like to believe this occurred because in the last ballot we received as many votes as the Socialist Party of Montluçon. I prefer to think that they understood that the fratricidal war cannot continue, that in the face of the grave dangers threatening us, we must at last agree on joint action.

Cachin: I add one fact. When on July 14, we met with the representatives of the Socialist Party, Blum quite frankly used the same language you are using this evening. We told him that where we were concerned he would soon revise his opinion that this is a manoeuvre. And now, when we meet once a week, and sometimes more frequently, what happens? Usually it’s Maurice Thorez who presents the resolution and more often than not it’s Leon Blum who asks him: “That suits you, does it?” This is how our agreement works. That is what has happened to the old mistrust in concrete life. We dwell on these facts, which are conclusive from our standpoint, because we believe that by now the French experience is a reality which can dissipate all obstacles.

We Must Face the Fascist Danger

I do not believe that in a single country in the world the working class can exaggerate the extreme danger of the present time. If in our country the working class, which has a fairly sharp political instinct, has flung itself into the united front, brushing aside all obstacles, it is because it felt the necessity of dropping all objections in order to present a common front to the danger. This is what fills our hearts. We have argued, we shall continue to argue, but the immediate question is that of facing an extreme danger. I do not know what may happen in France, if in six months you have a more powerful fascist attempt, I do not know what will happen. Perhaps
we shall bitterly regret having wasted time arguing while the danger threatened us. For if France fails, if fascism triumphs in Spain, what could the rest of the International do? The reaction could then say: Even now they don’t get together.

That is why, I repeat, we keenly regret that it is entirely impossible for you to give an affirmative answer to even one of the four points which we have submitted to you.

VANDERVELDE: Let us thoroughly understand each other.

On October 11, the C.I. sent us a letter, you are here speaking in its name by virtue of a mandate which it gave to you.

We received this letter, and promptly, without losing an hour, we asked the opinions of the members of our Bureau, who happened to be meeting in Prague. Without losing a moment, Adler telephoned to find out my feelings. I answered him immediately, agreeing that we should meet in Brussels on October 15, four days after the letter. And here we are, holding our meeting. We have just heard what you had to say to us. How can you expect us to give any other answer? We, too, represent an International. You simply must give us the time materially indispensable for our sections to discuss the matter. Fortunately that can be done fairly quickly, given the fact that the question was on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of our Executive. It is not so simple a matter to bring together an Executive which includes the representatives of numerous countries, not only of Europe, but even the United States.

Do not imagine we are here with the intention of holding ourselves to questions of procedure. No, we explain to you why, materially, certain delays are unavoidable. You may be sorry that the matter was not discussed sooner, but do not interpret the attitude which we are forced to adopt by virtue of our functions, as an unfavourable prejudice towards the proposals you have made us.

On the other hand, in the present state of affairs, nothing would prevent other parties of the International from doing what our French comrades have done and from taking joint measures wherever action is possible.

CACHIN: That’s an important point.

VANDERVELDE: I already told you that when we were confronted with the step taken in France there were among us those who said to our French comrades: “You have undertaken something which violates previous decisions of the International, we do not intend to invoke these decisions against what you have done.”

BEFORE NOVEMBER 13

ADLER: A few more words. When we tell you that the meeting of our Executive has been called for November 13, that does not mean that the examination of your proposals is adjourned till then. We
shall promptly inform all members of the Executive of the results of this evening’s interview. As soon as we have the report of the meeting, we shall send the text to the members of the Executive, and discussion will promptly begin everywhere.

Allow me this one observation, the situation within our International is more democratic than in yours. If you receive an order from Moscow, all is settled, in our case the members of our Executive are often obliged to confer with their respective parties.

CACHIN: The same holds true of us, comrade.

THOREZ: We also confer, but in general it turns out that we are pretty much agreed.

ADLER: With you the harmony is pre-established. (Laughter.)

With us, a member of the Executive must often confer with the Central Committee of the Party before he may speak on a question in the Executive.

So if our Executive can deliberate within a month, it will really be very quick. But from to-morrow on we shall begin to busy ourselves with the matter.

One more word on another point.

The problem is not quite as simple as you make it. You tell us: in France unity of action has been accomplished, experience is decisive. Very well, I shan’t go into the details.

But in my country, we also tried the united front, and at the outset we were carried away by the thought that we were fighting together against fascism. Unfortunately we did not have the same experience as in France, where the movement has spread during the last few weeks. In Austria, on the contrary, we had some regrettable experiences. If you read the Inprecorr you will find some articles on Austria written during the period of the united front, which contain some most regrettable things, which all of us, I hope, will condemn in the same fashion. Notably, you will find that Otto Bauer, the leader of our Party, is accused of dealing with the Schuschnigg government, etc.

THOREZ: The other day Vandervelde quoted a passage, taken from I don’t know whom, where the Communists were likened to scoundrels.

VANDERVELDE: I cited that to show a certain frame of mind prevalent in certain countries such as England, but without myself endorsing the characterisation.

ADLER: I was even astonished, Cachin, by your article on the subject.

CACHIN: My article merely recorded a fact. I emphasised the fact that I was astonished, for it seemed to me that Citizen Vandervelde
did not to any great extent dissociate himself from the insulting characterisation which he quoted.

VANDERVELDE: I was not aware of such an insinuation.

ADLER: You were glad to discover an unflattering term used of you in an article by someone in England; but we have no difficulty in discovering, not single words, but whole polemics against us.

VANDERVELDE: A year ago I was invited to take part in a joint meeting in the Rue de Flandre with some Communists. I went quite willingly, but I had been forced to go, in the Communist paper, the following day. (Laughter.)

Remember that such incidents are the symptoms of a state of mind which has existed for years.

ADLER: We are chiefly concerned with knowing whether truly, as you say, the French experience is typical and valid for all countries. Or whether, if the situation in France is, from the standpoint of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, a special case, while other countries are treated the same as before. If the experience of France is typical, then this would indeed be a hope for all of us. But if we see that in other countries, as in Austria, other things happen, then there are reasons for fearing this is nothing but a manœuvre. You understand, then, that it is essential for us, as functionaries of the International, to know whether the French example is typical or not. If it is, we say it is a change of line in Moscow. You don't like hearing that. We hope that the resolution of your next Congress will give us the opportunity of getting clear on the matter.

THOREZ: Allow me to tell you that you are not taking the right road to reach the united front.

ADLER: I know that you, a Frenchman, would like things to be otherwise, but I have my responsibilities and you must understand that I am anxious, before all else, not to create misunderstandings within our International. We want to be quite frank and fair; our first duty is to our parties, and on this basis we hope we shall get somewhere. And I think that along this road to-day's conference will have been a useful stage for our common good. But if tomorrow we publish articles in our papers saying there are some who want united action, others who do not, who regard it as a manœuvre, the situation will be aggravated. If in your papers to-morrow we find accounts from you to the following effect: there are, perhaps, some in the L.S.I. who want united action, but there are traitors who do not; then our to-day's meeting will have a bad effect in a direction we do not want.

CACHIN: We are so far from such a frame of mind that we have decided to ask you to formulate the report of the proceedings jointly. I take the liberty of discerning in your last objections a sort of uneasiness that the Communists want to out-manœuvre you.
ADLER: Not you, personally!

CACHIN: Nor anyone else. I repeat that even to think of maneuvers, at the present time, in the face of the immense danger which threatens all of us, would be really to insult us.

**WE MUST AGREE ON UNITED ACTION**

VANDERVELDE: I am convinced that the working masses of France wanted unity of action and that they were the decisive factor in bringing about the pact, I don't doubt it for a single instant.

Only, see for yourselves, on the other hand; in those countries where the danger is less acute, where the disproportion of forces is infinitely greater, there are within the Socialist parties obstacles, objections, opposition which perhaps have no basis in France, but which really exist in other countries. We must see the situation as it really is, if we wish to get anywhere.

CACHIN: So we have, I think, reached the end of our explanations. (Assent.)

What are we going to say? There will be a stenographic report of our meeting. With the understanding that it be polished up a bit, we shall be glad to have it transmitted to the comrades of our two Executives.

But as regards what is to be released immediately, we shall, I believe, state the simple truth. (Assent.)

That we have met, that we made you certain proposals, that we regret that the two delegates of the L.S.I. were unable to accept them immediately, but that they will submit them as soon as possible to their Executive. (Assent.)

ADLER: We might, perhaps, draw up a joint statement?

VANDERVELDE: That would be rather difficult. It would be better for each of us to draw up our own. We have sufficient confidence in each other.

THOREZ: We can assure you that in the formulation of our statement as in our comments on your declarations, there will be absolutely nothing which might injure what we both look forward to: to united action.

VANDERVELDE: We give you the same assurance.

The conference ended at 8.15 p.m.
II. THE ANSWER OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

LETTER FROM ADLER AND VANDERVELDE TO THOREZ AND CACHIN

To the citizens Marcel Cachin, and Maurice Thorez,

"L'Humanite," Paris, 138 rue Montmartre

Citizens: November 17, 1934

In your conversations with the undersigned in Brussels on October 15, we informed you that we would make a report to our Executive on your proposition.

In the course of a discussion that lasted four days, the Executive took up the position of the International Labour movement as well as the Brussels negotiations and has instructed us to give you the following information.

Solidarity action for the Spanish proletariat had already been undertaken, as you know, before we received your proposal to organise this action jointly with the Communist International.

Meanwhile, we collected extremely detailed information on the situation in Spain, and our comrade Vincent Auriol, who was sent to Spain to study the situation, made an extremely important and instructive report to our Executive, that will be made public in the near future. In our joint session with the Executive of the I.F.T.U., we heard an account of the situation in Spain from our Spanish comrades Prieto and Del Vayo, and on the basis of this information, we organised action to aid the victims of a repression that has barely begun, and above all on behalf of the thousands of prisoners still threatened with cruel reprisals, among whom figures foremost citizen Cabellero, member of our Executive.

The demonstrations of sympathy for the Spanish proletariat and of protest against its executioners were organised in different ways in the various countries, in conformity with the situation of the labour movement. Thus in France there were united demonstrations of Socialists and Communists, while in Belgium, for instance, where there is no Communist Party of importance, the big demonstration in connection with Spain, where the undersigned president of the L.S.I. spoke, was organised by the Belgian Workers' Party alone. A few days later, this Party, in the course of a congress, held an impressive demonstration against the carrying out of the death sentences.

You declared, in the course of the Brussels negotiations, that among the questions relating to united working-class action, the only one you were authorized to discuss with us was that of solidarity action for Spain.

On the other hand, in its resolution of March 18 and 19, 1933, the Executive of the L.S.I., recalling the overtures made to the C.I., with regard to the achievement of a pact of united defence against
fascism, advised its various sections not to conclude local pacts before a reply had been received from the C.I. on the said overtures.

But, since then, new events have occurred, notably in Austria, that have led various sections of the L.S.I. to take it upon themselves to conclude pacts of united action, taking account of the difference in the situations in the various countries.

While in France and in some other countries, united action was achieved, in Great Britain, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries, in Czechoslovakia, and in other countries, the Communist proposals for pacts of united action were rejected, for reasons given by our affiliated parties, reasons that you are familiar with. Under these conditions, the recommendation contained in the resolution of March 18 and 19, 1933, has lost its basis in this respect, each of our sections remains free to act to the full extent of its autonomy.

With Socialist Greetings,

EMILE VANDERVELDE, President.
FRIEDRICH ADLER, Secretary.

Leon Blum, after the vote, handed in the following declaration in the name of the French and of a number of other delegations.

A DECLARATION OF SEVEN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

The undersigned delegates to the Executive of the L.S.I. affirm their conviction that under the present circumstances, before the growth of fascism and the aggravation of the dangers of war in Europe, in view of the movements that have spontaneously arisen in the midst of the working class in the direction of united action, the L.S.I. should have renewed with insistence its proposal of March 1933 and asked the Communist International if it is ready to consider, on the basis of complete equality of rights for all affiliated parties, the conditions of united action on an international scale, against war, for the defence of democratic liberties in those countries where they exist, for the revolutionary struggle in those countries where fascism has suppressed these liberties.

The undersigned at the same time express their satisfaction that the Executive recognised the freedom of each of its national sections to organise the struggle against fascism and war in accordance with the particular conditions in each country. They express their warm and confident wish that the results of united action in all the countries where it has been undertaken up to now will within a short time induce the L.S.I. to carry out the unity that the dangers of the present situation and the interest of its international struggle impose on the world proletariat.

Signed:

BLUM, BRACKE, LONGUET (France); NENNI, MODIGLIANI (Italy);
GRIMM (Switzerland);
ERLICH (Bund-Poland);
DEL VAYO (Spain);
DAN (Russia, S.D.);

THREE DELEGATES FROM AUSTRIA.
III. FOR THE MILITANT UNITED FRONT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT

The Executive Committee of the Second International which met in Paris on November 13-16, 1934, rejected the proposal of the Communist International to enter a united front to defend and help the fighting proletariat of Spain.

It took the Second International more than one month to reply to the Comintern proposal

"for immediately launching united action both on behalf of the fighting Spanish proletariat and in opposition to the support given the Leroux government by the governments of other capitalist countries."

The Comintern delegation, Comrades Cachin and Thoréz, who met the representatives of the Second International, Vandervelde and Adler, on October 15, proposed forms of joint action that were perfectly concrete, practical, and acceptable to the masses of workers, viz.:

1. The organisation of joint demonstrations and meetings under the slogan: 'Down with the Leroux government! Defend the Spanish workers and peasants fighting against reaction!'

2. A joint plan of trade union organisations to prevent the transport of troops or munitions to the aid of the Leroux government.

3. That the Communist and Socialist parliamentary fractions in each country jointly demand the convening of parliament to protest against the barbarous executions of which the Spanish people are at present victims. Also, similar action by Communists and Socialists in municipal bodies.

4. The joint organisation of immediate material aid to the fighting Spanish proletarians and the victims of repression.

The representatives of the Second International, Vandervelde, its president, and Adler, its secretary, on purely formal grounds, maintained that only the Executive Committee of the Second International could decide this question and refused to indicate the attitude of the Bureau of the Executive of the Second International toward the proposal made by the Comintern.

Further, on the same formal grounds, referring to the restrictions placed upon their mandate, they even refused to speak together with Comintern representatives at one of the meetings organised jointly by the Communist and Socialist Parties of France. They further refused to hasten the calling together of the Executive of the Second International. At last, more than a month later, the majority of the Executive of the Second International has rejected the proposal made by the Comintern, although, it is true, they are no longer in a position to insist upon the prohibition of the united front in those countries where it already exists.

These are the facts. They prove that as an international organisation, the Second International has rejected all forms, even the most
elementary, of the joint expression of class solidarity by the International proletariat on behalf of the fighting Spanish proletariat. To conceal this fact, the antagonists of the united front in the ranks of the Second International have done their utmost to slander the Comintern proposal, and Adler, in opening the meeting of the Executive of the Second International, resorted (not for the first time) to calumnious attacks to the effect that "the proposal made by the Comintern came too late," and therefore the proposal is "an unscrupulous manœuvre." Friedrich Adler cannot but be aware of the fact, known to the proletarians of all countries, that the armed struggle of the Spanish proletariat against the bestial fascist bands of Leroux and Robles is going on to this very day in the highly industrialized provinces of Spain, in Asturia and Biscay, and that therefore the Comintern proposal was in no way too late.

Is not the best answer to Adler and all the opponents of the united front in the Executive of the Second International, the fact that the chief journal of the bloody hangman, Gil Robles, the *El Debate* of November 15, gave the following appraisal of the resolution adopted by the Executive of the Second International:

"even the Socialist International is against the insurgents in Asturia."

This was the estimate given of the position taken by the Second International by the chief organ of the reactionary fascist bourgeoisie of Spain. Can the Spanish proletariat, can the workers who support the united front in other countries, characterise the position taken up by the majority of the Executive of the Second International as anything other than *strike-breaking*?

What excuses does the Executive of the Second International make in the attempt to justify its refusal?

First of all, in rejecting the proposal made by the Communist International to organise immediate, joint demonstrations and meetings, the Executive of the Second International refers to "the solidarity campaign that was begun even before the Comintern proposal was made." Can this "excuse" hide from the working masses the obvious truth that if the Second International had agreed to joint action, this would not only have further *stimulated* the solidarity campaign and the struggle of the Spanish workers themselves, but joint action of this kind on the part of the two Internationals would have strengthened the position and the struggle of the proletariat in other countries, and a united front of this kind on the part of the international proletariat would have delivered a heavy blow against fascist reaction, not only in Spain, but in other countries?

By way of concrete examples of the campaign of solidarity being conducted by the Second International, the Executive, in its reply,
refers to France and Belgium. In France, as we know, on the initiative of the Communist Party of France and thanks to its untiring work among the masses, agreement was arrived at, before the events in Spain, on the united front between the Socialist and Communist Parties, despite its general prohibition by the Second International; and during the events in Spain joint action was organised in defence of the Spanish revolution.

Referring to Belgium, the leaders of the Second International emphasise the fact, in their reply, that

"... in Belgium ... where there is no Communist Party of importance ... the big demonstration in connection with Spain, where the ... president of the L.S.I. made a speech, was organised. ..."

The "argument" that it is impossible to develop the united front on an international scale in view of the small membership of the Communist Parties in some countries has been advanced previously by the leaders of the Second International, and in particular by Vandervelde in connection with the negotiations between the representatives of the Second and Third Internationals in Brussels. The Pravda, the central organ of the C.P. of the Soviet Union, has given a worthy retort to this:

"The leaders of the Second International have missed the fact that besides several mass parties in capitalist countries, the Communist International includes the C.P.S.U., which stands at the head of proletarian dictatorship, which is building socialism in the U.S.S.R. over one-sixth of the globe. Is it necessary to speak of the incomparability from all points of view of such magnitudes as the C.P.S.U. and the Labour Party?"

Moreover, the leaders of the Second International should not forget that it is not so long since the leaders of Austrian and Spanish social-democracy, particularly Otto Bauer, used this same "argument" against the united front, and that a year has not yet passed since the working masses of Spain and Austria have turned towards the Communists. The relation of forces in the working class of these countries has changed sharply and is still changing in favour of the Communist Party.

Secondly, in reply to the proposal made by the Communist International to afford immediate material assistance to the fighting workers of Spain and the victims of repression, the Executive of the Second International states that

"Meanwhile, we collected extremely detailed information on the situation in Spain, and our comrade Vincent Auriol, who was sent to Spain to study the situation, made an extremely important and instructive report to our Executive that will be made public in the near future."

Needless to say, this intimation of the publication of Auriol's report at some future date, instead of immediate material assistance to the Spanish workers, can only evoke furious indignation from all
honest proletarians. Incidentally, as may be seen from the Populaire of November 15, 1934, Auriol’s mission was to hand a letter to the president of the Spanish Republic, M. Zamorra, which stated that:

“T should like to have a word from you which will make it possible for me to tell my comrades that the republic will not adopt repression towards those who created it, and will not betray our organisations, their best fighters and their leaders, to the most ferocious enemies of freedom who have become more insolent than ever before throughout the world. Permit an enthusiastic friend of Spain, permit republicans and socialists, still to nourish hope in this direction.”

This is the “moving letter of Vincent Auriol” (as the Populaire christened it), on the magic effect of which the Second International builds up its ... help to the fighting proletariat of Spain. Auriol’s “hope” that the interference of the President of a Republic on the road to fascism would be a substitute for the struggle against fascism, was as justified as the hope of German social-democracy on another day, concerning the interference of Hindenburg against Hitler. The government of Zamorra, who is so “friendly” towards Auriol, immediately prohibited all trade union organisations in Spain and began to smash them up, increasing the fascist terror against the toilers still further. This is how things stand with regard to the other “argument” of the Executive of the L.S.I. against the united front of struggle of the international proletariat.

Thirdly, in rejecting the proposal of the Communist International to act jointly against support to the Lerroux government, the proposal that the trade union organisations should elaborate a common plan of action with a view to preventing the transport of troops and ammunition for this government, and to making joint protests in Parliament and the municipalities against the bloody terror raging in Spain, the Executive of the Second International is only repeating what Vandervelde and Adler referred to during the negotiations in Brussels, namely, that “the situation in the parties affiliated to our International differs greatly according to country.”

But the different position existing in the different sections of the Second International did not prevent the Executive prohibiting the conclusion of the united front in individual countries until such time as agreement was reached between the Internationals, in its resolution of March 18-19, 1933, in reply to the appeal made by the Comintern of March 5, 1933, which recommended its sections to enter into an agreement for the united front with the Social-Democratic Parties on the basis of the concrete conditions existing in their countries.

Thus, in 1933, when Hitler’s fascist dictatorship was set up, and
fascist terror raged throughout Germany, the Second International forbade the conclusion of the united front in separate countries, on the pretext that agreement was first of all necessary between the Internationals. Now, in 1934, when fascism is advancing against the Spanish revolution, when the way for international joint action has been prepared by the big successes achieved by the Communist Party in establishing the united front in several countries, the Second International refuses to establish a united front between the Internationals, on the pretext of the different situations existing in the social-democratic parties in different countries.

We all know that the Central Comittees of several of the Social-Democratic Parties (and they form the majority), on the basis of the resolution of the Second International of March, 1933, rejected the proposal of the Communists for the establishment of a united front, and especially the proposal for joint action in defence of the Spanish revolution. Now, by giving freedom to its sections, the Executive of the Second International sanctions in advance the policy of the leaders of those Social-Democratic Parties who, on the grounds of the peculiar features of their particular country, will hinder and sabotage the united front of the proletariat.

All the "reasons" and "arguments" put forward in reply by the Executive of the Second International cannot conceal the fact that the Second International does not want to organise the united front of struggle of the workers of all countries against fascism, war, and the capitalist offensive. What are the real reasons for the Second International's refusal to adopt the united front of struggle of the world proletariat?

The main reason is that the Second International is an organisation that pursues the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. This policy was and remains the main obstacle to the realisation of the united front of proletarian struggle.

The last meeting of the Second International is a glaring confirmation of this.

The parties that were in favour of categorically and unconditionally rejecting the proposal made by the Comintern were those that pursue a policy of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie, in the form of participation in bourgeois government, such as the Social-Democratic Parties of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Czechoslovakia, as well as those parties which intend, in the near future, to participate in capitalist governments, such as the British Labour Party, the Social-Democrats in Holland, and others. It should be emphasised that it is just these parties that constitute the majority in the Executive of the Second International.

Long before the meeting of the Executive of the Second International, a furious campaign against accepting the proposals of the
E.C.C.I. on the united front was launched in the columns of the press of these parties. The central organ of the Danish Social-Democrats, *The Social-Democrat*, wrote outright on October 18:

“One must not expect any positive results from these negotiations (between the Second and Third Internationals.—Ed.), neither do we want any.”

The leader of Dutch Social-Democracy, Albarda, published a series of articles in the leading organ of the party, the *Het Volk*, in October, in which he threatened the Second International with a split if the Comintern proposal for the united front were accepted. He foretold two possibilities: The first, that the Executive would give the parties a free hand on this question; and the second, that the International would split into two parts. The *Nye Tid* (the central organ of Swedish Social-Democracy) also reported the organisational measures that were taken by the enemies of the united front in connection with the appeal of the Comintern to the Second International:

“During the last few days, a lively exchange of opinions has taken place with the Social-Democratic Parties of Denmark, Holland, and Great Britain. These parties, like Swedish Social-Democracy, are strongly opposed to even a mere meeting being held with Moscow. It is impossible for the Socialist and Labour International to make a decision on this question in defiance of the desires of its strongest and most influential parties.”

And a few days later the *Nye Tid* openly threatened a split:

“We, together with our party comrades in Denmark, Holland and Great Britain, consider that Vandervelde and Adler have taken on themselves an utterly fruitless task. . . . One thing is true: if any kind of ‘united front’ with Moscow is established, it will be done without the Social-Democratic Parties of Sweden, Denmark and Holland, and the International will have to choose between these parties and Moscow.”

One of the main forces preventing the conclusion of any agreement on the united front between the Internationals is the British Labour Party. Meanwhile, in England itself, the forces of fascism are developing, which can be held back by a militant united front of the proletariat.

True, the leaders of the British Labour Party try to conceal their resistance to the united front by references to their sympathy for the U.S.S.R., and declaring that support for the U.S.S.R. in England does not require a united front with the Communists, but votes cast in favour of a Labour Government. This attempt to oppose the defence of the U.S.S.R. to struggle against the capitalists of their own country is an attempt to deceive the workers. The workers, including the English proletarians, who really wish to prevent an onslaught
on the U.S.S.R., know that the two preceding Labour governments did not slacken the preparations made by English imperialists for a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. They are being more and more convinced that by developing the struggle of the masses—by strengthening and extending the united front against fascism, war and the capitalist offensive, they are actually defending the U.S.S.R.

The last meeting of the Executive of the L.S.I. once more revealed that the Labour and Socialist International is passing through a deep ideological and political crisis, and a process of organisational collapse. The depth of the crisis and collapse is proved by the fact that (1) it was compelled to allow the parties a free hand on the question of the united front (true, after four days’ searching after formulae for the rejection of the proposals made by the Comintern); and (2) the special declaration made at the Executive by the representatives of several parties.*

Any intensification of the contradictions between the imperialists has always brought about an intensification of the struggle among the parties of the Second International. During the world imperialist war of 1914-1918, the Second International went bankrupt and broke down organisationally. It is not surprising that to-day again, on the eve of the second round of revolutions and wars, when the contradictions among the imperialists have become extremely intensified, and when “the revolutionary crisis is ripening and will continue to ripen” (Stalin)—that now, a political crisis and a process of organisational collapse is going on in the Second International.

The decisive thing that precipitated the present crisis in the Second International is the historic turn being made by the working class (and first and foremost by the Social-Democratic workers) on the

* The central organ of the Italian Socialist Party, the Nuovo-Avanti, of November 21, in the report on the recent plenum of the Executive of the Second International, describes very vividly the difficult position in which the Executive found itself, in connection with the Comintern proposal:

"When the Executive met again on the night of the 16th, common ground for agreement had still not yet been found; the text of a letter was produced which on the 3rd and 4th had been approved unanimously, but the last part of which again raised the question in all its scope with two diametrically opposed proposals: in one it was emphasised that it was impossible to make the pact a general one, and in the other, it was proposed to call a conference to discuss the question of the conditions, principle and organisational, under which collaboration between the two Internationals would be possible.

"The second part of the discussion took place in an extremely tense atmosphere. It would have been risky to take a vote because the Executive was divided approximately in two equal parts, while those who were against unity of action would probably have got the majority of something like 20 votes out of a total of 250 votes.

"And so Vandervelde proposed—and the Executive approved—to delete the passage under dispute, which in sporting language is called ‘ending in a draw.’"
one hand, in connection with events in those European countries where Social-Democracy led the majority of the workers and fascist dictatorship has been set up or the danger of fascism is a direct menace, and on the other hand, the world historic victories of socialism in the U.S.S.R., where the proletariat is guided by the leading section in the Comintern, the C.P.S.U.

Ever vaster masses of the Social-Democratic workers are being convinced of the correctness of the Communists' line. The Communists always have fought and are still fighting against the Social-Democratic policy of class-collaboration with the capitalists. They are developing the struggle of the proletariat on the basis of united front against the bourgeoisie. These Social-Democratic workers are being convinced that this policy of Social-Democracy, whether in the shape of a policy of tolerating the fascisation of the state as the "lesser evil," or a policy of "defence only" against fascism (Austrian Social-Democracy and others), or again participating in a bourgeois government after the fascist dictatorship has been overthrown (Spanish Social-Democracy in the first years after the 1931 revolution) will not save the toilers from fascism. It is but helping fascism to muster its forces. It will not stave off fascism. It clears the way to power for fascism. Just this explains why the masses of Social-Democratic workers, and whole Social-Democratic organisations, unlike their conduct in previous years, now seize upon the proposal of the Communist Party for the united front. This is why, in countries like France, Austria and Spain, where the Communists have been able to guide this urge of the workers for a united front, and develop the mass struggle against fascism independently, the united front between the Social-Democratic and Communist Parties has been realised. In turn, this explains why the Second International has now been unable to annul the agreement on the united front between the Socialist and Communist Parties in places where it has already been brought about.

Concerning the Special Declaration of the Minority of the Executive of the L.S.I.

The process of revolutionary development of the Social-Democratic workers, who are breaking down the barriers in the path to the united front with the Communists—and this is the most characteristic point about the present crisis in the Second International—has produced, indeed, it could not fail to produce, friction and strife inside the Executive of the Second International itself. At the meeting of the Executive, the representatives of several sections of the Second International presented a minority special declaration.

The signatories to this special declaration are not homogeneous. Besides the big parties of the Second International, like the Social-
Democratic Parties of France and Spain, which have already entered into agreement with the Communist Parties, the declaration was signed by the representatives of Swiss Social-Democracy, who have more than once rejected proposals for a united front in Switzerland, and representatives of the Polish Bund who recently broke the agreement with the Communist Party of Poland on the united front. Finally, among the signatories of the special declaration there is Fedor Dan, also a "representative" of a "section" of the Second International. He represents the emigrant remnants of that same Menshevik Party which fought (and is still fighting) against the Soviet government. This party fought alongside the interventionists during the civil war, supplying ministers for white-guard governments, took part in uprisings (the Georgian Mensheviks organised a counter-revolutionary uprising in Georgia even as late as in 1924; the Georgian Mensheviks in emigration openly speak of the need for preparing for a new uprising now). In recent years, as the trial of the Mensheviks showed in 1931, prominent leaders of this party engaged in wrecking work against socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., and provided secret materials for General Staffs of capitalist governments who are preparing a new counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R.

**What is the position of this minority?**

In their special declaration they declare that the Executive of the Second International:

"should have renewed with insistence its proposal of March, 1933, and to ask the Communist International if it is ready to consider, on the basis of complete equality of rights for all affiliated parties, the conditions of united action on an international scale, against war, for the defence of democratic liberties in those countries where they exist, for the revolutionary struggle in those countries where fascism has suppressed these liberties."

Unlike the majority of the Executive, the minority in its declaration expressed the desire that the Second International should propose to the Comintern that it "should seek for conditions" for joint action on a mass scale. If the declaration is made seriously, and if the parties that have signed it are striving to bring about joint action on an international scale, then they must not limit themselves merely to wishing this. But we must at first examine the basis on which the signatories would desire joint action to be established.

The declaration advocates "revolutionary struggle" only in those countries where fascism has destroyed democratic rights. And in all the other countries, where fascism has not up to now completely destroyed these rights, in the countries of bourgeois democracy where the fascist danger is a direct menace, where bourgeois democracy itself
is passing through a process of fascist development, revolutionary struggle is not required.

As though the experience of events in Germany, Austria and other countries has not sufficiently shown that the defence of even the most elementary rights of the workers is only possible by means of a consistent revolutionary struggle. And if the declaration limits the recognition of revolutionary struggle to countries where fascism has destroyed democratic rights, then what policy must be operated in all the remaining countries? It is absolutely clear that the rejection of a revolutionary policy in countries where bourgeois democracy prevails can mean nothing else than the sanctioning of a policy of class collaboration for the defence of bourgeois democracy. And this is exactly how the parties of the Second International that participate in bourgeois governments or support bourgeois governments, understand the meaning of the term "defence of democratic rights." The declaration counterpoises the countries of fascism, where there is to be revolutionary struggle, to countries where there is bourgeois democracy, and where "the defence of democratic rights" is needed. On this most important question the declaration repeats word for word the resolution adopted by the Paris Conference of the Second International in August, 1933, a resolution adopted by all the parties in the Second International, and that endorsed the policy of German Social-Democracy prior to and after the advent of Hitler to power.

But the period since August, 1933, has shown that some Socialist Parties, and primarily the most important section of the Second International, the French Socialist Party, have been compelled under pressure of the working masses (who are becoming convinced of the fatal nature of the path pursued by German and Austrian socialism) to form a united front with the Communist Party as distinct from the policy of German Social-Democracy, which systematically rejected the united front.

If the parties which have signed a separate declaration really desire to achieve the joint action of the international proletariat, then they must not limit themselves to merely wishing it. If the French socialist workers had waited until the Second International withdrew the ban, the united front would not have been realised in France to this day. With this as their starting point, the Spanish Communist Party addressed a proposal to the French Socialist Party that a conference be called where the socialists of France, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Poland (the Bund) could meet with the Communists so as to bring about unity of action.*

* This article was already prepared for press when a reply was received from the Socialist Party of France to this proposal. Without stating any reason the S.P. of France turned this proposal down, merely indicating its agreement to arrange one or
The Communists are developing the struggle for the united front of the international proletariat for the purpose of fighting against fascism, war and the capitalist offensive, in defence of the democratic rights of the workers, and of leading the masses in the struggle to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie, and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in the shape of Soviet power.

Conclusions to be Drawn

We must organise, strengthen and extend the united proletarian front of struggle with still greater energy than before. The threat of a new war has increased. The offensive of capital and fascism is increasing. The bourgeoisie is concentrating its forces on preventing the ripening of the revolutionary crisis. It is necessary now more than ever before to set the united front of struggle of the international proletariat against the front of the reactionary fascist bourgeoisie. In making the proposal to the Second International for a united front of struggle in defence of the Spanish workers, the Comintern took as its starting-point the fact that it had already been possible, in several countries, to establish the united front between Communist and Socialist Parties, despite all the differences that exist on all questions of programme, strategy and tactics, and all the difference of aims that arise in establishing a united front between the Parties of the Second and Third Internationals.

Despite the refusal of the Second International, the Communist Parties will consolidate and extend the united front of struggle of the proletariat with revolutionary determination.

In those countries where the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties are against agreement on the united front, the Communists will appeal again and again—on the lines of the Comintern appeal of October 11th, 1934—to the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties, to their local organisations and to the Social-Democratic workers with practical proposals for joint united front action in connection with concrete attacks of capital and fascism. And what is most important—the Communists will, without waiting for a reply, immediately and independently develop the struggle of the workers against concrete forms of the bourgeois offensive. The Communists will not let themselves be driven off their course by any refusals on the part of the Social-Democratic leaders.

The Social-Democratic proletarians who are sincerely striving after a united proletarian front with the Communists have become convinced that it must be brought about more decisively than hitherto. They have become convinced that the Executive of the Second International withdrew this ban after the united front had several meetings jointly with the Communists throughout France. This shows that the Socialist Party of France has no desire to really do anything to bring about joint action on an international scale.
been brought about in certain countries, in spite of the prohibition of the Second International. Now it will be more difficult to hold the Social-Democratic workers back from the united front by referring to discipline and the ban laid down by the leadership. The Social-Democratic workers will reply to the opponents of the united front that discipline is not necessary to fetter the workers and keep them back from the struggle, but in order to fight more successfully against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and war. Practical experience has shown that the numerous barriers that have been set up against the united front inside the Second International could not prevent the Social-Democratic workers and Social-Democratic organisations in a number of countries from realising the united front with the Communists.

No power exists capable of preventing the Communists from making contacts with the Social-Democratic workers, and their local organisations, from establishing a united front with them in workshop, factory and in the localities, districts and provinces, and thus, together with them, laying down the road to a united front throughout the whole country and on an international scale.

In countries where it has been possible to achieve agreement on the united front between the Communist and Socialist Parties, the Communists will strive to strengthen, consolidate and extend the united front. In the same way, the Communists will strive in other countries to organise united front committees in factories, workshops, and depots—local, district, village, united front committees of the toilers in town and village, and to organise anti-fascist self-defence on the basis of the united front. The Communists will strive to extend the agreement concerning the tasks and forms of struggle, and achieve the transition to higher forms of struggle (economic and political strikes).

The Communists will not restrict themselves to the framework of the agreement already arrived at, but will prepare and develop the struggle of the masses independently, thus convincing the workers in actual practice of the fact that the Communist Party is able to organise and lead their struggle.

The Communists will, on the one hand, unmask those who oppose the united front, by analysing the concrete excuses they make for rejecting it, and declaring them to be strike-breakers in the proletarian cause; on the other, they will criticise in a comradely and business-like manner the hesitation and indetermination of those who participate in united front agreements but hinder the transition to more mature, higher, forms of struggle.

The instructions given by Lenin in connection with the conference of the three Internationals in 1922 are extremely real in connection with our struggle for the united front to-day. The Comintern delegation (Radek, Bukharin and others) made a concession to
the representatives of the Second and Two-and-a-half Internationals
(Vandervelde, Adler and others), in agreeing to allow representa-
tives of these two Internationals to be present at the trial of the
socialist revolutionaries, and promising that the Soviet Government
would not bring in the death sentence against the S.R. terrorists.
Lenin called this concession a concession to the reactionary bour-
geoisie, and stigmatised the rôle of the leaders of the Second and
Two-and-a-half Internationals as "the rôle of extorters of political
concessions." At the conclusion of his article, Lenin wrote:
"The representatives of the Second and Two-and-a-half Inter-
nationals need a united front, for they hope to weaken us by exces-
sive concessions on our part; they hope to penetrate into our Com-
munist premises free of charge; they hope through the united front
tactics to convince the workers of the correctness of reformist, and
the incorrectness of revolutionary, tactics. We need a united front,
because we hope to convince the workers of the opposite. We will
throw the blame for the mistakes of our Communist representatives
on them and on the parties that make these mistakes, trying to
learn from the experience of these mistakes and striving to prevent
their repetition in the future. But on no account shall we throw
the burden of the mistakes of our Communists upon the prole-
tariat, which throughout the world is faced with the offensive of
capital. For the sake of helping these masses to fight against
capital, of helping them to understand the cunning mechanism of
two fronts in the whole of international economics and the whole of
international politics, for the sake of this we have adopted the united
front tactics and will pursue them to the end."
Throughout the whole of the struggle for the united front, the
Communists are carrying out the instructions of Lenin in practice,
and in spite of all the barriers and obstacles set up by the opponents
of the united front from the Second International, they are carrying
this struggle to its culmination. The Communists will not allow
themselves to be driven from this course by any attempts to replace
the united front of struggle, and immediate joint action, by dis-
cussions about unity (organisational, political) of the working class
in general. The Communists will not allow themselves to be
driven from this course by the opportunists in their own ranks who
hide mistakes made by the Communists from the workers, but will
fight mercilessly both against "Left" sectarianism and against the
opportunist danger which is the main danger at the present stage.
In the course of the struggle in a united proletarian front, the
Communists will convince the proletarian masses of the correct-
ness of the whole policy of the Communist International, and
standing at the head of the majority of the working class, will lead
the millions of the toiling masses forward to the victorious struggle
for Soviet power throughout the world.

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