

REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION OF BRITAIN

ON

THE ORIGINS OF MODERN REVISIONISM

REVISIONIST BETRAYAL AT THE 7TH WORLD CONGRESS
OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

THE PERVERSION OF "UNITED FRONT" TACTICS

THE ROLE OF DIMITROV AND POLLITT IN THE
TRIUMPH OF MODERN REVISIONISM

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INTRODUCTION

The building of Marxist-Leninist Parties freed of all revisionist trends requires that these parties should have a clear understanding of the process by which the Communist Parties came to be destroyed, as revolutionary parties of the working class, by revisionism.

The Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain is currently engaged in the preparation of a series of Reports which, in their entirety, will provide a comprehensive analysis of the course of development through which world imperialism succeeded in bringing about the domination of the International Communist Movement by revisionism. These Reports will concentrate chiefly on the key parties of the Soviet Union, Germany and China. In the meantime, we are publishing a further section of this analysis, that dealing with the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, held in 1935. This Congress marked a turning point in the history of the International Communist Movement, in that it was on this all-important occasion that revisionist ideas and concepts, many of which were to fulfil a formative role in the systematisation of the full body of modern revisionist doctrine at the hands of N. Khrushchov and others 21 years later at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, came to be put forward openly for the first time.

In order that the anti-Marxist-Leninist perversion of "united front" tactics adopted by the Seventh World Congress under the leadership of the renegade Georgi Dimitrov may be more fully and thoroughly grasped, we publish, immediately following upon the main Report, the "Theses on United Front Tactics" adopted unanimously by the Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain on 20th February 1972.

The Editorial Committee,
M.L.O.B.

Announcement

Due to difficulties of space, it has not been possible to publish part two of the "Thought of Mao Tse-tung" in this issue. Publication of this important concluding article will be given priority in a future issue.

Editorial Committee

The aim of the MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION OF BRITAIN is to build a Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class in Britain which can lead the British working people to bring about the revolutionary overthrow of the present capitalist state, establish a People's Republic based on the rule of the working class, and build a socialist society based on planned production and the common ownership of the means of production.

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Rubbish! (eyi mi!)

The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International

The successful seizure in January 1935 by the revisionist faction headed by Mao Tse-tung of the organisational machinery and leadership apparatus of the Communist Party of China, the second most important Communist Party in the world, could not fail to have significant repercussions in the international communist movement. The Chinese delegation to the Comintern, mandated after January 1935 by the faction headed by Mao Tse-tung, threw in its lot with the then concealed revisionists who occupied leading positions in the Executive Committee of the Communist International - such figures as Cachin, Duclos, Marty and Thorez of France; Foster and Browder of the USA; Pollitt, Gallagher and Campbell of Britain; Lenski of Poland; Kuusinen of Finland; Pieck and Ulbricht of Germany; Buck of Canada; Kun of Hungary; Prestes of Brazil; Ibarri of Spain; Yezhov of the Soviet Union; and, above all, Dimitrov of Bulgaria who had begun to play a leading role in the Communist International since his arrival in Moscow in February 1934 and whose role will be considered later in this Report.

When the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International met in Moscow in July-August, 1935, under the overall direction of Dimitrov whose leadership was confirmed by his appointment to the new post of General Secretary of the Communist International on August 22nd, the "new tactics" which it formulated deviated fundamentally from Marxist-Leninist principles and laid the foundations for the complete victory of revisionism in the international communist movement and for its destruction as the vanguard of the world working class.

The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International is popularly known as the congress of the "united front" tactics. The tactics of the united front - of seeking to unite, in action and organisationally, workers of varying political levels and differing political affiliations around certain immediate aims - are, of course, fundamental to Marxist-Leninist practice:

"We need a united front. ... We adopted the united front tactics in order to help these masses to fight against capital, and we shall pursue these tactics to the end." (V.I. Lenin: "We Have Paid Too Much", in: "Selected Works", Volume 10; London; 1946; p.305).

"United front tactics occupy an important place in the tactics of the Communist Parties throughout the whole pre-revolutionary period as a means towards achieving success in the struggle against capital, towards the class mobilisation of the masses and the exposure and isolation of the reformist leaders." ("The Programme of the Communist International", London; 1932; p.62-63).

The "exposure and isolation of the reformist leaders" is an essential aim of united front tactics because these leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties, and their counterparts in the trade union movement, are representatives of the capitalist class within the working class movement, because they are the "labour lieutenants of capital", because they are traitors to the working class:

"Our Mensheviks (i.e., Russian Social-Democratic leaders - Ed.) like all opportunist, social-chauvinist, Kautskyan trade union leaders are nothing more nor less than 'agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement' (as we have always characterised the Mensheviks) or 'labour lieutenants of the capitalist class'". (V.I. Lenin: "'Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder", in: "Selected Works", Vol. 10, London; 1946; p.93).

"The majority of the Social-Democratic Parties ... have gone over to the side of their bourgeoisie, against the proletariat.

When a number of battalions have gone over to the enemy, they must be named and branded as traitors." (V.I. Lenin: "The Collapse of the Second International", in: "Selected Works", Vol.5; London; 1934; p.167-8, 172).

"The first condition of true Communism is rupture with opportunism. The sufferings the whole of the German working class has had to endure during the long and weary post-war period in the history of the German revolution are due to the fact that the German party did not break with the Mensheviks." (V.I. Lenin: "The Italian Question", in "Selected Works", Volume 10, London; 1946 p.275)

"Parties desiring to affiliate to the Communist International must recognise the necessity of a complete and absolute rupture with reformism.

Every Party that desires to affiliate to the Communist International must ... in the trade unions ... form Communist nuclei. These nuclei must at every step in their everyday work expose the treachery of the

of the social-patriots." (V.I. Lenin: "The Conditions of Affiliation to the Communist International." in: *ibid.*: p.203).

"Everyone knows that Leninism was born, grew up and became strong in its ruthless struggle against opportunism of every brand; ... This cannot be denied even by the outspoken enemies of Bolshevism. It is an axiom.

Every Bolshevik, if he is really a Bolshevik, knows that long before the war, approximately in 1903-4, ... Lenin pursued the line directed towards rupture, towards a split with the opportunists both here, in the Russian Social-Democratic Party, and over there, in the Second International. ... Every Bolshevik knows that it was for that very reason that even at that time (1903-5) the Bolsheviks won for themselves in the ranks of the opportunists of the Second International honourable fame as 'splitters' and 'disruptors', ...

Did not the Bolsheviks fight it out with the opportunists ... as no other Left group fought them anywhere in the world." (J.V. Stalin: "Some Questions concerning the History of Bolshevism", in: "Leninism", London 1942; p.389, 397).

"'Socialist' reformism, the principal enemy of revolutionary Communism in the labour movement ... has a broad organisational base in the social-democratic parties and through these in the reformist trade unions.

All the above-mentioned tendencies, being constituent parts of 'socialist' reformism, are agencies of the imperialist bourgeoisie within the working class itself." ("The Programme of the Communist International"; London; 1932; p.52, 55).

As long ago as 1924, Stalin, pointing out the essential role of Social-Democracy in preparing the way for fascism, characterised Social-Democracy as "objectively the moderate wing of fascism":

"Fascism is the bourgeoisie's fighting organisation that relies on the active support of Social-Democracy. Social-Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of fascism. These organisations (i.e., fascist and Social-Democratic - Ed.) do not negate, but supplement each other. They are not antipodes, but twins". (J.V. Stalin: "Concerning the International Situation", in: "Works", Volume 6; Moscow; 1953; p.294).

The Theses of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow in July/August 1928, held that the leaderships of the Social-Democratic Parties, and their counterparts in the leadership of the reformist trade unions, had degenerated even further in their role of "lackeys of the capitalist class", so that the struggle against these organisations must be intensified:

"In view of the intensified trustification of industry, the tendencies towards State capitalism, the grafting of the reformist unions with the organisations of the State and trusts, and in view of the new, thoroughly bourgeois and actively imperialist ideology of Social Democracy, the

struggle against the 'bourgeois Labour Party' must be intensified." ("International Press Correspondence", Volume 8; November 23rd, 1928; p.1573).

This, declared the Theses, made more necessary than ever the differentiation between the "sincere but mistaken" rank and file working class members of these organisations and their treacherous leaders, and made more important than ever the tactics of working for a united front from below:

"The intensification of the struggle against Social Democracy transfers the weight of importance to the united front from below, but it does not relieve the Communists from the duty of drawing a distinction between the sincere but mistaken Social Democratic workers and the obsequious Social Democratic leaders cringing at the feet of imperialism. On the contrary, it makes it more obligatory for them to do so." (Ibid.; p.1573).

The Theses adopted by the Eleventh Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, held in April 1931, declared similarly:

"It is absolutely necessary to carry on a fierce, consistent and all-round struggle against the Social-Democratic and Reformist leaders. Consistent work must be simultaneously carried on for winning over the Social-Democratic workers and members of the reformist unions, on the basis of the tactics of the united front from below." ("International Press Correspondence", Volume 11; 1931; p.416).

Likewise the Theses adopted by the Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, held in September 1932, declared:

"Only by strict differentiation between the social-democratic leaders and workers will the Communists be able, by means of the united front from below, to break down the wall which often separates them from the social-democratic workers." (International Press Correspondence", Volume 12; 1932; p.941).

The Theses adopted by the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, held in December 1933, also declared:

"For a United Front from Below:

While carefully exposing to the masses and refuting the hypocritical and treacherous sophistries of Social-Democracy, the Communists must win over the social-democratic workers for active revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the Communist Parties.

The Thirteenth Plenum of the ECCI calls upon all sections of the CI persistently to fight for the realisation of a united militant front with the social-democratic workers - in spite of and against the will of the treacherous leaders of social-democracy". ("International Press Correspondence", Volume 14; 1934; p.12).

The Theses of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, held in August 1935 (seven months after the seizure of the organisational

machinery and leadership apparatus of the Communist Party of China by the revisionist faction headed by Mao Tse-tung) put forward a "new tactical orientation" in relation to united front tactics :

"Ours has been a Congress of a new tactical orientation for the Communist International.

The Congress has taken a firm decision that the united front tactics must be applied in a new way." (G. Dimitrov: Speech at Close of Seventh World Congress, in: "The United Front"; London; 1938; p.136, 137).

This "new tactical orientation" in relation to united front tactics consisted in working for a united front with Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions, that is, for a united front from above with the leaderships of these organisations:

"The Seventh Congress of the Communist International declares that at the present historical stage it is the main and immediate task of the international labour movement to establish the united fighting front of the working class.

This task makes it the duty of the Communist Parties to take into consideration the changed circumstances and to apply the united front tactics in a new manner. ...

With this as its point of departure, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International enjoins the Communist Parties to be guided by the following instructions when carrying out the united front tactics:

The Communists must strive to secure joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties, reformist trade unions and other organisations of the toilers against the class enemies of the proletariat, on the basis of short or long-term agreements." (Resolution on the Report of Comrade Dimitrov, in: "Report of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International: Resolutions"; London; 1936: p.7,8).

"The establishment of a united front with Social-Democratic and reformist organisations (party, trade union, co-operative, sport and cultural and educational), as well as with mass national-liberation, religious-democratic and pacifist organisations, is of decisive importance for the struggle against war and its fascist instigators in all countries." (Resolution on the Report of Cde. Ercoli (Togliatti), in: *ibid.*; p.24).

The perversion of united front tactics into a "united front from above" with the leadership of a Social-Democratic Party, the representatives of the interests of the capitalist class, had been pursued in the 1920s by a group of **right** opportunists then in the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany, headed by Heinrich Brandler:

"The Brandler group - a Right-wing opportunist group in the Communist Party of Germany. Without regard to principles, the Brandlerites entered into collaboration with the leaders of German Social-Democracy and helped to cause the defeat of the German working class at the time of the revolutionary events in 1923. The Fifth Congress of the

Comintern (1924) condemned the capitulatory policy of the Brandler group. ... In 1929, Brandler was expelled from the Communist Party." (Note in: J.V. Stalin: "Works", Volume 6; Moscow; 1953; p.431-2).

As the Executive Committee of the Communist International expressed it in its Report to the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in June/July 1924:

"We understood the tactics of the united front as preparatory work for the revolution. But in some places it was misinterpreted as the idea of substituting the tactics of the revolution by peaceful evolutionary methods. ... Some comrades endeavoured to interpret them as an alliance with Social-Democracy." ("Fifth Congress of the Communist International", London; 1924; p.27).

As part of this "united front from above" tactics, the Communist Party of Germany in October 1923 entered into a coalition government with the Social-Democratic Party in Saxony. This "Workers' Government" adopted a counter-revolutionary stand, taking measures to prevent the arming of the workers, and was dispersed in less than three weeks by imperial troops:

"Five Social-Democrats and two Communists entered this government. ... The Communists in this government pursued the capitulatory policy of the Brandler leadership of the Communist Party of Germany and, jointly with the 'Left' Social-Democrats, frustrated the arming of the proletariat and the development of the revolution." (Note to: J.V. Stalin: "Works", Volume 6; Moscow; 1953; p.432-33).

Drawing attention in 1924 to the survival of Social-Democratic ideology in the Communist Parties in the West, Stalin instanced the perversion of the "united front" tactics in Saxony as an example of this survival:

"The danger that Social-Democratic survivals in the Communist Parties can represent for the revolution was strikingly revealed by the sad experience of the Workers' Government in Saxony, where the opportunist leaders tried to convert the idea of a united front, as a means for the revolutionary mobilisation and organisation of the masses, into a means for Social-Democratic parliamentary combinations. This marked a turning point, which opened the eyes of the Party membership and roused them against the opportunist leaders." (J.V. Stalin: "Concerning the International Situation", in: "Works", Volume 6; Moscow; 1953; p.305).

Eleven years later, at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, Dimitrov threw aside these verdicts and characterised the formation of the coalition government in Saxony as

"no mistake in itself; on the contrary, the revolutionary situation fully justified this step." (G. Dimitrov: Main Report Delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in "The United Front"; London; 1933; p.74).

Clearly, a united front between the Communist Parties and the leaderships

of Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions could be logically possible under one of three conditions:

1. If Lenin's analysis characterising the leaderships of Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions as representing the interests of the capitalist class, the class enemy of the working class, had always been incorrect;
2. If Lenin's analysis had been correct in the past, but was now no longer correct as a result of changed circumstances; or
3. If Lenin's analysis remained correct, but the leaderships of the Communist Parties, by embracing revisionism, were also coming to represent the interests, not of the working class but of the capitalist class, the class enemy of the working class.

Seeking to present themselves as "Leninists", still paying the most fulsome tributes to Stalin, the revisionist directors of the Seventh Congress did not attempt to repudiate Lenin, while they could hardly present themselves to the delegates openly as representatives of the class enemy of the working class. They chose, therefore, to present the second condition as the basis of the "new tactical orientation":

"This task makes it the duty of Communist Parties to take into consideration the changed circumstances and to apply the united front tactics in a new manner." (Resolution on the Report of Comrade Dimitrov, in: *ibid.*; p.7).

What were these "changed circumstances" which had transformed, or were in process of transforming, the leaderships of Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions from representatives of the capitalist class into representatives of the working class?

It is interesting to note that Dimitrov felt it necessary to refer to them, not in his long main report, but only in the reply to the discussion.

In the first place, the objective circumstances which were forcing sections of the working class to become increasingly disillusioned in Social-Democracy and its leaders, the objective circumstances which were undermining the influence of Social-Democracy and its leaders over the working class, were presented as circumstances which were changing the character of Social-Democracy and its leaders:

"The crisis has severely shaken the position of even the most secure sections of the working class, the so-called aristocracy of labour, which, as we know, is the main support of Social-Democracy. These sections, too, are beginning more and more to revise their views as to the expediency of the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. ...

Under the influence of the lessons learned from the defeat of the workers in Germany, Austria and Spain, a defeat which was largely the result of the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and, on the other hand, under the influence of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union as a result of Bolshevik policy and the application of revolutionary Marxism, the Social-Democratic workers are becoming more revolutionised and are beginning to turn to the class

struggle against the bourgeoisie." (G. Dimitrov: Speech in Reply to the Discussion on Dimitrov's Report at the Seventh World Congress of the International, in: "The United Front"; London: 1938; p.104).

In the second place, the imposition of fascism, which seeks to establish a political monopoly for its own party, was presented as a factor tending to revolutionise Social-Democratic Party leaders and reformist trade union officials since it threatened their social position, their liberty and even their lives:

"The bourgeoisie in a number of countries is itself compelled to abandon bourgeois democracy and resort to the terroristic form of dictatorship, depriving Social-Democracy not only of its previous position in the state system of finance capital, but also, under certain conditions, of its legal status, persecuting and even suppressing it." (G. Dimitrov; *ibid.*: p.104).

These were the factors which Dimitrov put forward as factors which had transformed, or were in process of transforming, the leaderships of Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions from representatives of the capitalist class into representatives of the working class:

"In a number of countries the position of Social-Democracy in the bourgeois state, and its attitude towards the bourgeoisie, have been undergoing a change. . . .

The combined effect of all these things (i.e., the factors described above - Ed.) has been to make it increasingly difficult, and in some countries actually impossible, for Social-Democracy to preserve its former role of bulwark of the bourgeoisie." (G. Dimitrov; *ibid.*: p.104).

Thus, declared Dimitrov, as a result of these "changed circumstances" it is objectively possible for the Communist Parties to form united fronts with the leaderships of the Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions to serve the interests of the working class, united fronts directed against fascism and the capitalist class:

"Is it possible to realise this unity of action of the proletariat in the individual countries and throughout the world. Yes, it is. And it is possible at this very moment. The Communist International puts no conditions for unity of action except . . . that the unity of action be directed against fascism, against the offensive of capital, against the threat of war, against the class enemy. This is our condition. . . .

The defence of the immediate economic and political interests of the working class, the defence of the working class against fascism, must form the starting point and main content of the united front in all capitalist countries." (G. Dimitrov: Main Report delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in: *ibid.*: p.32, 35-36).

Of course, the whole international experience of the working class movement before and since 1935 establishes that when Social-Democratic Party leaders and their counterparts in the reformist trade unions are faced with the

threat of the loss of their mass support, or with "redundancy" because the capitalist class has come to feel that their services are no longer necessary, their response is not to become revolutionaries, to desert their former masters and turn to the service of the working class, but to adopt new kinds of demagogy and to strive to serve their capitalist masters more desperately, in an effort to prove that their services in deceiving and disrupting the working class are still of value to the capitalist class.

In fact, a "united front" between a Communist Party and the leadership of a Social-Democratic Party is possible only when the latter has been satisfied that the leadership of the Communist Party has discarded Marxism-Leninism and the service of the working class in order to embrace revisionism and the service of the capitalist class.

But this could not be said openly and in just so many words. To justify the "united front from above", a change in the character of Social-Democratic leaders and their counterparts in the reformist trade unions had to be postulated.

Previously, Marxist-Leninists had stressed the necessity of a rupture between the Communist Parties, serving the interests of the working class, and Social-Democratic Parties representing the interests of the capitalist class:

"Everyone knows that Leninism was born, grew up and became strong in its ruthless struggle against opportunism of every brand. This cannot be denied even by the outspoken enemies of Bolshevism. It is an axiom.

Every Bolshevik, if he is really a Bolshevik, knows that long before the war, approximately in 1903-4, when the Bolshevik group took shape in Russia, Lenin pursued the line directed towards a rupture, towards a split with the opportunists, both here, in the Russian Social-Democratic Party, and over there, in the Second International. ... Every Bolshevik knows that it was for that very reason that even at that time (1903-5) the Bolsheviks won for themselves in the ranks of the opportunists of the Second International honourable fame as 'splitters' and 'disruptors'". (J.V. Stalin: "Some Questions Concerning the History of Bolshevism", in: "Leninism", London; 1942; p.389).

But with the transformation of the leaderships of Social-Democratic Parties from representatives of the capitalist class into representatives of the working class, declared Dimitrov, this process can be reversed; the formation of a united front between the Communist Party and the Social-Democratic Party in any country must be seen as the first step in the fusion of these two parties into a single party of the working class":

"The development of the united front of joint struggle of the Communist and Social-Democratic workers against fascism and the offensive of capital likewise brings to the fore the question of political unity, of a single political mass party of the working class. ... Duality in leadership impedes the further development and reinforcement of the joint struggle of the working class.

The interests of the class struggle of the proletariat and the success of the proletarian revolution make it imperative that there be a single party of the proletariat in each country. ... The Communist Parties ... must firmly and confidently take the initiative in this unification." (G. Dimitrov: *ibid.*; p.87).

Furthermore, because of the transformation of the leaderships of the Social-Democratic Parties from representatives of the capitalist class into representatives of the working class, a Communist Party can urge the working class to elect a Social-Democratic government - not in order to expose its anti-working class character in office - but in the knowledge that it can govern in the interests of the working class:

"We must tell them (i.e., the masses - Ed.) openly, as did the Thirteenth Congress of the British Communist Party: We have been and are fighting hand in hand with you for the defeat of the 'National Government'. We are prepared to support your fight for the formation of a new Labour government. ... We do not expect this government to carry out socialist measures. But we shall present it with the demand, in the name of millions of workers, that it defend the most essential economic and political interests of the working class and of all working people." (G. Dimitrov: *ibid.* p.44).

"The Communist Party is of the opinion that there are certain demands which represent the main immediate interests of the working class. ... We suggest that these demands should be the programme of the united class struggle now and at the same time they will become the central issue in the General Election upon the basis of which a Labour Government can be elected to immediately put this programme into operation. ...

The Communist Party will give its full support in the way of unceasing daily activity to secure the return of a Labour Government on this basis." (H. Pollitt: *Speech at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International: Speeches, Part 7*"; London; 1936; p.23).

Having said that the imposition of fascism, which seeks to establish its political monopoly, was in consequence bringing about the "revolutionisation" of the Social-Democratic Party leaderships, Dimitrov proceeded to extend this argument to the leaderships of other political parties, leaderships drawn from the ranks of monopoly capital:

"Fascism tries to establish its political monopoly by violently destroying other political parties. ... It puts an end to the legal existence of bourgeois parties." (G. Dimitrov: *Main Report to the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International*, in: "The United Front"; London; 1938; p.38).

Under certain conditions - presumably the "revolutionisation" of their leaderships - these parties can be drawn into alliance with the united front to form a broader "anti-fascist People's Front":

"In forming the anti-fascist People's Front, a correct approach to those organisations and parties which have in them a considerable number of the working peasantry and the mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie is of great importance.

In capitalist countries the majority of these parties and organisations, political as well as economic, are still under the influence of the bourgeoisie and follow it. The social composition of these parties and organisations is heterogeneous, ... but control is in the hands of ... the agents of big capital. ... Under certain conditions, we can and must try to draw these parties and organisations to the side of the anti-fascist People's Front, despite their bourgeois leadership." (G. Dimitrov: *ibid.*; p.40).

Marxist-Leninists "formerly" held, concluded Dimitrov, that a government representing the interests of the working class could be established only after the smashing of the capitalist state in a socialist revolution; this was an "ultra-Left" mistake:

"The ultra-Lefts ... recognised only a workers' government formed by armed insurrection, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie." (G. Dimitrov: *ibid.*; p.72).

This "ultra-Left" mistake arose from the fact that the establishment of a workers' government without the smashing of the capitalist state in a socialist revolution was not linked with: 1) the existence of a political crisis; 2) the existence of a militant mass united front movement:

"The first series of mistakes arose from the fact that the question of a workers' government was not clearly and firmly bound up with the existence of a political crisis. ...

The second series of errors arose from the fact that the question of a workers' government was not bound up with the development of a militant mass united front movement of the proletariat." (G. Dimitrov: *ibid.*; p.72-73).

Under conditions of political crisis and in the presence of a militant mass united front movement, proclaimed Dimitrov, a united front or People's Front government may be established which will govern in the interests of the working class:

"We recognise that a situation may arise in which the formation of a government of the proletarian united front, or of anti-fascist People's front, will become not only possible but necessary in the interests of the proletariat.

I am ... speaking ... of the possible formation of a united front government ... before the victory of the Soviet revolution. ...

Under what objective conditions will it be possible to form such a government? In the most general terms, one can reply to this question as follows: under conditions of political crisis." (G. Dimitrov: *ibid.*; p.70-71).

Such a united front or People's Front government will be a government representing the interests of the working class, one which will take "revolutionary

measures" against monopoly capital, one which will establish workers' control of industry, which will disband the police and replace them with an armed workers' militia, etc.:

"A united front government ... is primarily a government of struggle against fascism and reaction. It must be a government ... taking resolute measures against the counter-revolutionary financial magnates and their fascist agents. ...

We demand that it should carry out definite and fundamental revolutionary demands required by the situation. For instance, control of production, control of the banks, disbanding of the police and its replacement by an armed workers' militia, etc." (G. Dimitrov: *ibid.*; p.70,75).

"Yes, we are for such a government - for a government which would support itself on the mighty united front of the working class linked in a wide People's Front with the masses of the toiling peasantry, the small traders and toiling intellectuals: for a government which would really deal severely with the capitalists, bankers and big landowners, impose proper taxes on them and introduce workers' control of production in their enterprises; for a government which would mercilessly penetrate into the pockets of the rich so that work and bread could be provided for the people; for a government which would help the toiling peasants, artisans and traders at the expense of the big land-capitalists and big landowners." (K. Gottwald: *Speech at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International*, in: "*Report of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International*": *Speeches*, Part 6: London; 1936; p.15-16).

THE ROLE OF DIMITROV

The "new tactical orientation" in relation to united front tactics adopted by the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International was revisionist, that is, it represented a perversion of Marxism-Leninism in the interests of the capitalist class.

The Seventh World Congress did not throw overboard all the principles of Marxism-Leninism - that was still to come. It maintained, or at least paid lip-service to, the Marxist-Leninist principles that socialism could be established only as a result of a socialist revolution and that it could be maintained only by the dictatorship of the proletariat:

"The victory of the proletariat is possible only by means of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and ... the bourgeoisie would rather drown the labour movement in a sea of blood than allow the proletariat to establish socialism by peaceful means. The basic content of the proletarian revolution is the question of the proletarian dictatorship, which is called upon to crush the resistance of the overthrown exploiters, to arm the revolution for the struggle against imperialism and to lead the revolution to the complete victory of socialism." (G. Dimitrov: *Main Report delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International*, in: "*The United Front*"; London; 1938; p.89).

In 1935, when the capitalists of most of Europe were engaged in trying to "drown the labour movement in a sea of blood", when their agents within the Soviet Union had embarked on a skillfully organised but desperate campaign of the murder of Marxist-Leninists in leading positions, it would have been difficult for even the most politically backward delegate to accept the notions of "peaceful transition to socialism" and "pure socialist democracy".

The great unspoken question which arose from the Seventh World Congress was, of course:

If it is possible, without the smashing of the capitalist state in a socialist revolution, to establish a government representing the interests of the working class, a government which will take revolutionary measures against monopoly capital, a government which will establish workers' control of production, a government which will proceed to transform the state from an apparatus of coercion in the hands of the capitalist class to an apparatus of coercion in the hands of the working class - is a socialist revolution necessary at all?

This question was not asked publicly in leading circles of the international communist movement until ten years later - when Pollitt of Britain answered it, in the negative.

The revisionist directors of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, headed by Dimitrov, discarded just so many Marxist-Leninist principles as they judged the various delegations could be induced to accept:

"All the principal propositions contained in the report have met with the unanimous approval of the Congress. None of the speakers objected to the tactical line we have proposed on to the resolution which has been submitted.

The complete unanimity displayed at the Congress indicates that the necessity of revising our policy and tactics has come to be fully recognised in our ranks." (G. Dimitrov: Speech in Reply to the Discussion on Dimitrov's Report at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in: *ibid.* p.94).

The revisionist directors of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, headed by Dimitrov, discarded just those principles of Marxism-Leninism which presented, in operation, a threat to the immediate plans of the dominant sections of European imperialism.

The rise of Georgi Dimitrov from comparative obscurity to the post of General Secretary of the Communist International, just at the particular time when the revisionist policies associated with him were needed by the dominant sections of European imperialism, was not, of course, accidental.

The degeneration of Dimitrov into a tool of the imperialists is reflected not merely in his service to imperialism at the Congress of the Communist International in 1935 and as a titoite agent after the Second World War; it is reflected in the "surprising" kindness shown to him by the nazis. Arrested on trumped-up charges in connection with the Reichstag Fire of February 1933 and imprisoned at first under appalling conditions, his treatment suddenly improved. While thousands of honest German Communists were being tortured and murdered, the charges against Dimitrov were withdrawn, he was released from

custody and officially helped to go to Moscow.

It was said, by Dimitrov and others, that this "kindness" on the part of the nazi butchers was the result of the world-wide campaign waged on his behalf. But here again a "surprising" fact emerges: this campaign was carried on not merely by the Left, but by the capitalist press in almost all countries. The spectacle of the capitalist press giving unstinted praise to the "heroism" of a "revolutionary" facing a capitalist court is indeed an unusual phenomenon. But this press campaign was, of course, a campaign on behalf of imperialism, nudged gently by the nazi intelligence service, to secure the election of Dimitrov to the post of General Secretary of the Communist International - a position in which, at least formally, his authority exceeded that of Stalin, who was "merely" General Secretary of a Party of the Communist International.

Dimitrov served his imperialist masters well at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. The revisionist formulations adopted under his leadership not only admirably met the immediate needs of the European imperialists, but laid the basis for the complete triumph of revisionism in the international communist movement twenty-one years later.

Dimitrov held the post of General Secretary of the Communist International from August 1935 until its dissolution in May 1943. Already, at the Seventh World Congress in 1935 in which he played the leading role, a resolution was passed with the aim of safeguarding revisionists in the national parties from possible "interference" by the Comintern such as had occurred, to the advantage of the movement, in former years:

"The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International instructs the Executive Committee of the Communist International ... as a rule to avoid direct intervention in internal organisational matters of the Communist Parties". (Resolution on the Report of Comrade Pieck, in: "Report of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International", Resolutions; London; 1936; p.38).

The statement of the Executive Committee of the Communist International on the dissolution of the Communist International, dated May 15th, 1943, was signed by five revisionists (Georgi Dimitrov, Otto Kuusinen, Maurice Thorez, Wilhelm Pieck, Dolores Ibarruri) and one Marxist-Leninist (Andrei Zhdanov, soon to be murdered by the revisionists). With such a majority among the signatories, it is hardly surprising that the reasons given for the dissolution of the Comintern were linked with the concept of "national roads to socialism" on the development of which the existence of the Comintern had become a "drag":

"Long before the war it became more and more clear that, with the increasing complications in the internal and international relations of various countries, any sort of international centre would encounter insuperable obstacles in solving the problems facing the movement in each separate country. The deep differences in the historic paths of development of various countries, in their character and social orders, in the level and tempo of their economic and political development, and in the degree of consciousness and organisation of the workers, conditioned the different problems facing the working class of the various

countries.

The development of events in the last quarter of a century showed that the organisational form of uniting the workers chosen by the First Congress of the Communist International ... has been outgrown by the growth of this movement and by the complications of the problems in separate countries, and has even become a drag on the further strengthening of the national working class parties."

A few days later, on May 28th, 1943, Stalin administered what was, in effect, a rebuke to the revisionist-dominated E.C.C.I. when he declared that there was a valid reason for dissolving the Communist International, but a very different reason from those given by Dimitrov, namely,

"because it facilitates the organisation of the common onslaught against the common enemy - Hitlerism".

During and after the Second World War, as the Titoite former Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Traicho Kostov, revealed after his arrest in 1949, one of the cardinal aims of the United States and British imperialists was to bring about an "East European Federation", hostile to the Soviet Union and dependent militarily, economically and politically upon the western imperialist powers:

"I admit that in May 1942 ... I was won over by the department chief of the Bulgarian political police, Geshev, to collaborate with him in favour of British intelligence, and that until my arrest in June 1949 I carried out the instructions of the British.

Kardelj informed me, in strict confidence, that during the war the British and Americans had supplied the Yugoslav partisans with arms and munitions, on condition that at the end of the war Tito ... would not allow the USSR to establish its influence not only in Yugoslavia but in the Balkans as well. ...

Kardelj remarked that Tito and the entire Yugoslav leadership considered that the best way to accomplish this aim was the immediate accession of Bulgaria to Yugoslavia, utilising for that purpose the widely popular idea, among the peoples of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, for the federation of the Southern Slavs. ... Kardelj replied that in the opinion of Tito and the rest of the Yugoslav leaders Bulgaria should join the Yugoslav Federation as her seventh republic. The Bulgarian Army, continued Kardelj, would be under the supreme command of Tito.

Kardelj asked me to do everything possible to convince the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party to agree to the Yugoslav proposal and not to inform the Soviet Union." (Written Deposition of the Defendant Traicho Kostov Djunev, in: "The Trial of Traicho Kostov and his Group"; Sofia; 1949; p.74, 88, 89, 90, 91).

In conjunction with Tito, Kostov and other Balkan Titoites, Dimitrov took a prominent part in campaigning for an "East European Federation" following his return to Bulgaria in 1945.

On July 27th, 1947, on his way to Belgrade to sign the Bulgarian-Yugoslav

treaty of mutual assistance, Dimitrov stopped off at the frontier town of Tsaribrod to declare that the people of the area constituted a "living bridge" between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria:

"Strengthen that bridge until the moment comes when, through the will of the peoples of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, this bridge will not divide us any longer, but will unite us for ever in brotherly unity."

During his visit to Bucharest for the signing of the Bulgarian-Romanian treaty of mutual assistance, Dimitrov spoke at a press conference on January 17th, 1948 in favour of a Customs Union embracing Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia as the first step towards a federation of these states which would seek to establish trade relations with the United States, Britain and France.

Eleven days later, on January 28th, 1948, "Pravda", the organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, delivered a stinging rebuke to Dimitrov, declaring:

"These countries do not need a problematic and artificial federation or Customs Union. What they do need is the consolidation and protection of their independence and sovereignty through the mobilisation and organisation of domestic popular democratic forces, as has been correctly stated in the declaration of the Cominform."

In April 1949 it was announced that Dimitrov had been given leave of absence from his post as Prime Minister for health reasons, and he died in Moscow on July 2nd, 1949.

Kostov was expelled from the Bulgarian Communist Party for "nationalist deviation" on June 14th, 1949, tried for treason in December, and executed on December 16th.

The remaining revisionists were not able to save Kostov, but they exerted special efforts to cover up the guilt of Dimitrov. With this aim, a message was referred to at the Kostov trial which Dimitrov had sent to the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party from Moscow in 1944, urging that the federation plans should not be proceeded with "without preliminary foreign political preparation":

"The realisation of the federation without preliminary political preparation could have undesirable consequences." ("The Trial of Traicho Kostov and his Group"; Sofia; 1949; p.92-93).

After the trial, the Yugoslav Director of Information, reflecting the irritation of the titoites at the exposures made, stated on December 9th, 1949, that Dimitrov had shown

"a profound sympathy ... for the New Yugoslavia and her struggle for relations of equality with the Soviet Union. ... We want to emphasise that the strained relations between the Bulgarian government and Yugoslavia, and the mass arrests of Communists in Bulgaria, only began after Dimitrov had been taken to Moscow."

At a press conference three days later in Sofia, Reuter correspondent

Peter Furst noted:

"The Yugoslav Government maintains the version that 'Dimitrov has always upheld the Yugoslav thesis against the Cominform'"

To which the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vladimir Poptomov, responded:

"The reference to Georgi Dimitrov on the part of the titoites is a shameful sacrilege on the memory of the great deceased. The words attributed to Georgi Dimitrov represent absolute political rascality, of which only political gangsters are capable." ("The Trial of Traicho Kostov and His Group" Sofia; 1949; p.629).

Facts, however, speak louder than words.

When the history of the international working class movement of this period comes to be written, the name of Dimitrov will figure, along with those of Trotsky, Khrushchov and Mao Tse-tung, as one of the most notorious traitors to the movement, as one of the architects of the modern revisionism which has temporarily destroyed the world Marxist-Leninist movement.

THE ROLE OF THE "PEOPLE'S FRONT" IN FRANCE

In an earlier section of this introduction it was stated that:

"The directors of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, headed by Dimitrov, discarded just those principles of Marxism-Leninism which presented, in operation, a threat to the immediate plans of the dominant sections of European imperialism."

During the 1930s the primary director of the foreign policy of the dominant sections of the French and British imperialists may be summed up in the notorious word "appeasement": to assist in deeds, while deploring in words, the aggressive expansion of the German, Italian and Japanese imperialists with the aim of bringing them into conflict with the Soviet Union. They hoped that in that conflict the world's only socialist state would be destroyed, while their German, Italian and Japanese rivals would be so weakened as to enable them, the western European imperialists, to dominate the whole Eurasian land mass. The appeasement policy of Paris and London was, of course, highly acceptable in Berlin, Rome and Tokyo.

The conflict between deeds and words which was an essential feature of "appeasement" necessitated unprecedented demagogic deception of the people: the "trustworthiness" of Hitler and Mussolini; the desirability of concessions to them "in order to save the world from war"; the need for "non-intervention" in the Spanish Civil War (that is, an embargo on the sale of arms to the legal Republican government, while the German and Italian imperialists poured in arms and troops to aid the Spanish fascists).

The most serious threat to the policy of "appeasement" was in 1933 undoubtedly the rapid development in France of the united front against fascism being built from below by the French Communist Party, on the directives of the Communist International.

The plan which the imperialists evolved to counter this threat was complex in its organisation, which required the cooperation of the leaders of the Labour and Socialist International, the nazi secret service and the press of many countries, but simple in its aims: to gag and bind the anti-fascists in the united front being built from below by perverting it into a "united front from above" as a prelude to its destruction.

As a part of the tactics of building a united front from below, the Communist International long before 1935 had recommended approaches by Communist Parties to Social-Democratic Parties with proposals for a united front on a principled basis - not because it was believed that these proposals were likely to be accepted, but as part of the process of "exposing and isolating" the leaderships of the Social-Democratic Parties.

"In the twelve years since 1923 we addressed the Socialist Party 26 times. Each time we met with a refusal, sometimes even a rude one." (M. Thorez: Speech at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in: "Report of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International", Speeches, Part 4; London; 1936; p.30).

On February 19th, 1933 - eight days before the nazis set light to the Reichstag - an event occurred which was regarded by many people as being as strange as if Queen Victoria had sought to bestow the Order of the British Empire upon Karl Marx: the Bureau of the Labour and Socialist International issued a statement declaring the readiness of the Social-Democratic Parties affiliated to it to form united fronts directed against fascism with the Communist Parties.

("International Press Correspondence", Volume 13; March 9th, 1933; p.262)

The Executive Committee of the Communist International correctly viewed this offer as insincere, and maintained that a united front in deeds and not words could be set up only from below:

"This declaration stands in sharp contradiction to the whole of the previous actions of the L.S.I. and social-democratic parties. The whole policy and activity of the L.S.I. hitherto justifies the C.I. and the C.P.s in putting no faith in the sincerity of the declaration of the L.S.I. Bureau.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International firmly believes that the social-democratic and non-party workers, regardless of what attitude the social-democratic leaders adopt in setting up the united front, will overcome all obstacles and, together with the Communists, set up the united front not in words but in deeds." (Ibid.; p.262).

In spite of this - or rather, because of this - the Executive Committee of the Communist International called

"upon all Communist Parties to make yet another attempt to set up a united front of struggle with the social-democratic workers through the medium of the social-democratic parties", (Ibid. p.262),

on the principle that the probable refusal of the united front in practice would further assist in the "exposure and isolation" of the social-democratic leaders.

On the international scale, indeed, nothing whatever came of the L.S.I.

declaration of February 19th, 1933. A month later, on March 18th-19th, 1933, the Bureau passed a resolution advising affiliated parties not to conclude united front agreements until and unless agreement on their form had been agreed between the two Internationals, and the conference of the L.S.I. in Paris in November 1934 repealed this resolution and left each affiliated party to take such action as it thought fit.

On July 15th, 1934, however, taking its stand on the L.S.I. declaration of February 19th, 1933, the National Council of the French Socialist Party voted to accept the public proposal of the French Communist Party for a united front "against war and fascism", adding:

"It welcomes it all the more as it hopes to see in this unity of action a means of preparing the organic unification of the two parties."

The price which the Communist Party paid for the conclusion of the united front pact, on August 27th, 1934, did not at first sight appear heavy or unreasonable, although it was to prove fatal to the cause of anti-fascism and to the fight against war: this was to abstain from criticism of the Socialist Party for the duration of the agreement:

"In order to conclude the pact, we had agreed to a concession with regard to criticism. ... We subscribed to the following text:

'During the common action, the two parties will reciprocally abstain from attacks and criticism.'" (M. Thorez: Speech at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in: "Report of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International": Speeches, Part 4; London: 1936: p.31).

On July 14th, 1935 the bourgeois Radical Socialist Party - led by Edouard Daladier, who had resigned as Prime Minister in February 1934 at the demand of fascist rioters, and who later accompanied Chamberlain to meet Hitler and Mussolini at Munich for the partition of Czechoslovakia) agreed to extend, by its participation, the Socialist-Communist united front into a wider "anti-fascist People's Front", with the "non-criticism" pact also correspondingly extended.

In the General Election of May 3rd, 1936, the "People's Front" won a decisive majority, securing the election of 146 "Socialists", 136 "Radical Socialists", and 72 Communists.

On June 4th, 1936 the "Socialist" leader, Leon Blum, became Prime Minister and selected a cabinet consisting of "Socialists" and "Radical Socialists", with no Communists.

Within a few weeks of the formation of the "People's Front" government, however, it became clear that in its foreign policy it was determined to line up completely with the "appeasement" policy of the British Conservative government, headed then by Stanley Baldwin. The Foreign Secretary of the "People's Front" government, Yvon Delbos, in fact, became popularly known as "the British Under-Secretary for French Affairs".

On June 19th, 1936 the British government dropped the sanctions imposed by international agreement against Italy in connection with that country's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935. The French "People's Front" government followed suit on June 23rd; announcing this to the Chamber of Deputies, Delbos was at pains to

stress that he had complete faith in Hitler's protestations of "friendship" for France:

"We have no intention of doubting the word of a man who during four years knew the horror of the trenches."

When the Spanish fascists, headed by Franco, began their counter-revolutionary war against the Republican government of Spain in July 1936, the French "People's Front" government issued on August 2nd an appeal to the British and Italian governments urging

"the rapid adoption and rigid observance of an agreed arrangement for non-intervention in Spain",

and four days later, on August 6th, imposed an embargo on the export of arms to the legal Spanish government in Madrid.

At a mass meeting in Paris on September 6th, 1936, three days after the fall of Irun to the fascist forces, Blum declared, with tears in his eyes, that his heart was with the Spanish people, but if the "People's Front" government had sent arms to Madrid:

"... the most immediate consequence would have been a competition in the supply of armaments to both sides."

When interjectors pointed out that Italy and Germany were known to be sending massive armed support to the Spanish fascists, in violation of the international 'non-intervention' agreement, Blum replied:

"There is not a single proof, not a single piece of evidence, to show that the agreement has been violated."

On December 9th, 1936 a joint Socialist Party-Communist Party communique said :

"The representatives of the Communist Party emphasised their confidence that the government presided over by Comrade Leon Blum will pursue in close and fraternal collaboration the application of the programme of the People's Front".

On January 14th, 1937 the "People's Front" Government proceeded to extend its policy of "non-intervention" in the Spanish Civil War by a Bill to ban the enlistment of volunteers for Spain.

On June 21st, 1937, after its financial reform Bill had been rejected by the Senate, the Blum government resigned. It was succeeded on the following day by a new "People's Front" government headed by the Radical Socialist, Carnille Chautemps; it included Socialist Party members, but no Communists.

At the Socialist Party conference in July 1937, by which time the fiction that Germany and Italy were observing "non-intervention" in Spain could no longer be sustained even by the widest stretch of the imagination, Blum defended the "People's Front" government's policy of "non-intervention" on the grounds that it had "saved peace", declaring:

"I recognise that mistakes have been made, that we have suffered

certain disappointments: but, above all, I ask you to reflect on the fact that for a year Europe has been kept free of war, ... Is non-intervention a lie? Yes! Yes! A thousand times yes, if you like, But in spite of this I am not sure that this lie, this fiction, has not enabled us to avoid the catastrophe."

On March 13th, 1938 Blum returned to head a new "People's Front" government, composed again of Socialist Party members and Radical Socialist Party members, but no Communists. It lasted less than a month, resigning on April 8th, 1938 when its financial reform Bill was once more rejected by the Senate.

On April 10th, 1938 a new "People's Front" government took office, with Edouard Daladier, leader of the Radical Socialist Party as Prime Minister; it included neither Socialist Party members nor Communists, but both the Socialist Party and the Communist Party gave it their support.

In September 1938 Daladier, as the head of a "People's Front" government dedicated to "anti-fascism", made his infamous journey with Chamberlain to Munich to meet Hitler and Mussolini and sign approval for the handing over of Czechoslovakia to the nazis.

The "People's Front" had completed its allotted task. The anti-fascist movement in France had collapsed in disillusionment, but the Communist Party had nobly carried out the policy of taking no action which would break up the "People's Front". This was now done for them.

After abolishing in October 1938 the 40-hour week which was the main positive achievement of the "People's Front" administration, in November the "People's Front" and the "People's Front" government ceased to exist when, on November 11th, the government party, the Radical Socialist Party, formally left its association with the "united front".

In the summer of 1939, the "united front" also ceased to exist, when the Socialist Party withdrew from it. On August 27th, 1939, all organs of the Communist Party were banned, and shortly after the outbreak of the "phoney war" on September 3rd, 1939, the Party itself was outlawed and the mass arrests of Communists began.

At the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International just four years earlier, in 1935, Cachin had declared:

"The People's Front ... was initiated by our Communist Party. These tactics of the People's Front, which we have already implemented and which we intend to intensify by all the means at our disposal, present a certain danger. Nevertheless, when one is in a well-steered ship, one can always escape the rocks". (M. Cachin: Speech delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in: "Report of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International": Speeches: Part 3, London 1936; p.8, 10).

In fact, of course, the "anti-fascist People's Front" was steered by the west European imperialists through Munich to fascism and war.

"THE THOUGHT OF HARRY POLLITT"

At the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935, Harry Pollitt had sworn, along with his fellow revisionists, never to abandon the Marxist-Leninist principle that socialism could not be attained through parliament, but only by means of a socialist revolution:

"The Communist Party in its revolutionary agitation and propaganda among the workers must popularise its revolutionary programme of Soviet power, concretely applied to British conditions and industries as the only way in which all their basic problems can be solved, ..

The Communist Party does not believe that Socialism can be achieved through Parliament, and will always state this standpoint in its agitation and propaganda." (H. Pollitt: Speech at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International", in: Report of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International": Speeches, Part 7; London; 1936; p.23, 27).

Ten years later, Pollitt was accorded by international revisionism the dishonour of testing out whether the time was now ripe to bring to completion the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism by the International Communist Movement, to bring to completion the process begun at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. This he did in a pamphlet entitled "Answers to Questions", published by the Communist Party of Great Britain in May 1945.

Just as the "new situation" created by the attempt of Japanese imperialism to convert China from a semi-colony of imperialism into a colony of imperialism had been the pretext for the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism in relation to colonial-type countries by Mao Tse-tung, just as the "new situation" created by the threat of fascism had been the pretext for the partial abandonment of Marxism-Leninism in relation to the developed capitalist countries by Dimitrov, so the "new situation" which would arise out of the victory of the United Nations in the Second World War was made the pretext for the complete abandonment of Marxism-Leninism in relation to the developed capitalist countries by Pollitt.

The unity between US imperialism, British imperialism and the socialist Soviet Union, brought about during World War II as a result of their common interest in the defeat of the Axis powers, would be, declared Pollitt, even "stronger" in peace time:

"The essence of the Crimea perspective is that there shall exist between Britain and America (the two strongest capitalist nations in the world) and the Soviet Union (the powerful Socialist nation) a stronger unity in peace time than has existed in war,

The principal capitalist countries and the Socialist country have found a unity of interest in war and peace." (H. Pollitt: "Answers to Questions"; London; 1945; p.22-23).

This post-war world would be one in which war would be impossible:

"The force and violence used in this war has also settled the question of future wars," (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p.40).

In this idyllic post-war world, in which the principal imperialists would live

in peaceful harmony with each other and with the working class which ruled the Soviet Union, British capitalists - like their counterparts in China according to Mao Tse-tung - would, according to Pollitt, have a common interest with the working class in abolishing capitalism, at least in its pre-war form:

"Capitalism, in its pre-1939 set-up, had become such a 'fetter on production' that the capitalists themselves find these very fetters a nightmare. ... Hence, there is, up to a point, a common interest between all the progressive sections of the nation, labour and capitalist alike, in finding a common solution." (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p.44).

The "new form of capitalism", in the creation of which both capitalists and workers would have a "common interest", was, said Pollitt, one in which the economy would be planned by the state in the interests of the whole people, including the working class:

"The more far-sighted elements of the capitalist class understand that if the State has to take supreme control in war time, it will have, in the new situation after the war, to maintain various forms of control. In such a situation, State capitalism can mean that the sectional interests of the capitalists are to some extent subordinated to the needs of the whole (which include the workers).

It is in the interests of both the working class and the capitalist class that this should happen." (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p. 29, 30, 31).

Of course, the establishment of state capitalism, planned in the interests of the people as a whole, would require "changes" in the state apparatus:

"To achieve this (i.e., state capitalism planned in the interests of the people as a whole - Ed.) the apparatus of the State itself will have also to undergo changes." (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p. 30).

Because the capitalist class and the working class have a "common interest" in bringing about these changes, they can be achieved by means of a "government of national unity" (i.e., by a coalition government including the Conservative Party, but with a majority of Social-Democratic and "progressive" members in the House of Commons) ;

"In present conditions we shall fight in the General Election to secure the ending of the Tory majority, and after that Election the continuance of national unity, but national unity based on a new government having behind it a majority of Labour and progressive members of Parliament. This will give a new meaning to national unity, one that corresponds to the real meaning of 'nation'". (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p.45).

By these means the State could be transformed from an apparatus of coercion on behalf of the capitalist class into an instrument for "democratic advance":

"The will of the people shall prevail and the State become the instrument and guiding power through which can best be realised the aims which this war has been fought to win.

To win a new type of Government and Parliament, . . . they (i.e., the working class - Ed.) will draw to their side wide sections of the people. Together they will make possible great social progress, in which their direction of the State is the guarantee that it becomes the custodian for democratic advance." (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p.37).

In this new post-war situation, therefore, Pollitt concluded, conditions are objectively favourable for "the peaceful transition to socialism":

"The conditions created by the great political changes arising out of this war are now objectively more favourable for the peaceful transition to socialism than they have ever been. . .

The force and violence used in this war.... has made it doubly difficult for the reactionary capitalist forces, after a war waged with extreme violence to defend democracy, to resort to violence to crush democracy. . .

We are making the greatest possible contribution towards the possibility of a peaceful transition to Socialism," (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p. 39, 40, 42).

These concepts are, of course, completely revisionist.

Revisionism is the perversion of Marxism-Leninism to meet the needs of the capitalist class, and already in 1945 Pollitt - recognising that United States imperialism would emerge from the war as by far the strongest imperialist power in the world, was preparing to place the Communist Party of Great Britain at the service of that section of the British imperialists (then the dominant section) which favoured the subordination of British imperialism to Washington:

"What causes both American and British capitalists their greatest concern? How to use the new gigantic productive powers within the limits of this profit-making system. . .

The only immediate line of policy which can offer even a temporary solution for this problem of modern capitalism ... lies ... in forms of economic co-operation that will at the same time help to solve some of the basic differences that exist between the British and American capitalist classes. . .

What is to be done with this immensely increased productive power? Where is it to find markets? It can find them only ... by developing other countries through investment as markets for its goods; ... by international planning; in order to help each country to specialise in its exports on what it is most fitted to produce and on what other countries need, and to reduce competitive rivalries to the minimum, a considerable amount of joint planning of international trade is needed, and this can best be organised if in the first place there is the closest co-operation between Britain and America," (H. Pollitt: *ibid.*; p. 12, 13).

Eighteen months before the publication of Pollitt's "Answers to Questions", the leader of the Communist Party of the United States of America, Earl Browder, had also put forward a completely revisionist programme:

"Our post-war plan is national unity.

Adherents of socialism must make it clear that they will not raise the issue of socialism in such a form and manner as to endanger or weaken that national unity. ...

The policy for Marxists and all adherents of socialism in the United States is to face with all its consequences the perspective of a capitalist United States.

The American national unity which we have under examination of necessity includes, and must include, a decisive part of the big capitalists. ...

For American capitalists on the whole 'free enterprise' is sacred and untouchable. ... We face the necessity to take it fully into account and avoid any direct challenge to its validity. The problem is somewhat similar to that of religious freedom and toleration.

We Marxists are accepting for a long period the necessity to cooperate in making capitalism work in America. ...

Nothing could be more fatal for the perspective of Teheran, so far as the United States is concerned, than an attitude of uniform and undifferentiated hostility to the ranks of big capital from the side of the labour and liberal sections of our democracy. ...

I insist ... that labour shall make clear beyond all question that such conflict (i.e., class conflict - Ed) is not the desire or aim of the labour movement." (E. Browder: "Teheran": New York: 1944; p.66, 67, 69, 71, 74, 87).

These formulations are less subtle than those put forward later by Pollitt in Britain, but they differ little from them in essence. What was unacceptable to world imperialism, and so to world revisionism, was the practical conclusion which Browder drew from the above analysis:

"American Communists are relinquishing for an extended period the struggle for partisan advancement for themselves as a separate group. ... The existence of a separate political party of Communists ... no longer serves a practical purpose but can be, on the contrary, an obstacle to the larger unity.

The Communists will, therefore, dissolve their separate political party. ...

There will no longer be a Communist Party in the United States." (E. Browder: *ibid.*; p.117).

Thus, in the interests of "national unity", the Congress of the Communist Party of the USA in May 1944 dissolved the Party, and transformed it into an "educational body", the "Communist Political Association".

This move was unacceptable to world imperialism because the objective role of revisionism is to serve the capitalist class, to divert away from the path of revolutionary struggle the most politically conscious elements in the working class: it cannot perform this role if it liquidates the political party required for this purpose.

In the following year, therefore, the leading French revisionist, Jacques Duclos, was allotted the task of "exposing" the revisionism of Browderism, which he proceeded to do in the organ of the French Communist Party, "Cahiers du

Communism". In response to this "fraternal criticism", a special National Convention in July 1945 re-established the Communist Party of the USA under the leadership of the revisionist William Foster. In February 1946 the National Committee expelled Browder from membership of the Party, and he took up, appropriately, the role of an information agent for Big Business.

At the same time the task was allotted to Pollitt of testing whether the time was now ripe for Communist Parties to adopt an outright revisionist programme, from which the Marxist-Leninist principles that socialism could be established only by means of the smashing of the capitalist state in a socialist revolution, and that it could be maintained only by the establishment of the dictatorship of the working class, could be discarded. This he did in "Questions and Answers".

The reaction to Pollitt's "creative Marxism-Leninism" demonstrated that in 1945 this was still "premature". For the next five years, therefore, Pollitt devoted his oratory to assisting British monopoly capital solve the "national crisis" - by urging the working class, in the name of "creative Marxism-Leninism", to work harder and collaborate with the employers in "rationalisation measures" to increase production under "a state of emergency":

"The job of this Congress is to advance the solution of our country's grave problems. ...

The unions should demand that joint production machinery - national, regional, local and factory - should be set up in all industries without delay.

....

We are fully aware how difficult it is to convince the workers of the need for increased production. This is understandable when the workers see pools of unemployment." (H. Pollitt: Report to the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain: "Britain's Problems Can be Solved"; London; 1947; p. 6, 17, 18).

"If the unions wish to play a real part in planning they must undertake a systematic campaign to revive the Joint Production Committees and to induce the Government to make them legally compulsory in all firms employing more than 50 workers.

It is the job of the Production Committees in all industries to secure greater output per man employed on the basis of the existing equipment. ...

The Production Committees must be prepared to show how output can be increased by the better layout of existing machines, the more skilful forwarding of supplies of materials and components, the better organisation of inner factory transport, a better organisation of available labour. ...

The workers must be prepared to support a more rational use of labour." (Economic Committee of the Communist Party (of Great Britain): "Britain's Plan for Prosperity"; London; 1947; p.110,111).

"The Government should declare an emergency situation, and take emergency powers to organise the nation's resources. ...

The Government should organise a great political campaign for increased production, showing exactly what positive improvements it will

bring to the workers and their families in the form of better conditions, no more queues, higher wages, more goods, more houses, schools and new factories, ...

Wipe out defeatism, cynicism and doubt, so that, for example, the Joint Production Committees can really be organised and got going in a manner we have never seen before, just because all the workers understand the gravity of the nation's position, its need for increased production." (H. Pollitt: "Looking Ahead"; London; 1947; p.67, 76, 123).

At the same time Pollitt was turning his attention to the "People's Democracies" which had arisen in Eastern Europe following the Second World War. According to Marxist-Leninist analysis, these states had arisen as a result of the smashing of the former state apparatuses in a process equivalent to a working class socialist revolution and represented a form of the dictatorship of the working class:

"The tremendous social upheaval which took place after the war in the countries of Southern and South-Eastern Europe, an upheaval which resulted in the consolidation in these countries of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of the People's Democratic State, had the character of a proletarian revolution, of a socialist revolution." (H. Minc: "People's Democracy in Eastern Europe"; London; 1951; p.6).

Already in 1947, however, Pollitt was presenting the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe as examples of a "new road to socialism", a road without the dictatorship of the working class, a road without revolution:

"In a number of countries where popular democracies have been established, a new road to Socialism has opened before the people.

In these countries, it is possible to see how the people will move towards Socialism without further revolution, without the dictatorship of the proletariat." (H. Pollitt: "Looking Ahead"; London; 1947; p.90).

Then, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain in July 1950, Pollitt put the case for a new Party programme for the establishment of "socialism" in Britain on the basis of "British institutions" and "People's Democracy", without revolution and without the dictatorship of the working class:

"Our Party must and can formulate such a statement of policy as ... will attract wide attention, discussion and support. ... It must be immediately practicable and not only possible after some capitalist and Transport House bogey of a 'bloody revolution'. It must be applicable to British conditions and be based upon them and British institutions." (H. Pollitt: cited by J. Gollan: "People's Democracy for Britain"; London; 1952; p.3-4).

The new programme, "The British Road to Socialism", was adopted by the 22nd. National Congress of the Communist Party at Easter 1952.

The programme repudiated as a "lie" the concept that the Communist

Party was bent on destroying that British "institution" known as the British Empire:

"The enemies of Communism declare that the Communist Party ... is aiming at the destruction of the British Empire. But it is a lie". ("The British Road to Socialism"; London; 1951; p.11).

On the contrary, the Communist Party would establish "normal" relations between the British people and the people of the Empire, would establish relations under which Britain would export industrial products to the countries making up the British Empire, together with technical specialists, and would receive from them essential food and raw materials:

"'The Communist Party', our Programme states, 'would put an end to the present abnormal relations between the British people and the people of the Empire by establishing durable friendship with them. ...

Our People's Government, the Programme declares, would enter into mutual arrangements with these Governments to ensure Britain 'the normal supplies of the vital food and raw materials necessary to her economic life', ... To the colonial countries we would send 'the products of British industry needed by those countries for their own economic development'. ... We would offer technical specialists." (J. Gollan; Report to the 22nd National Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, "People's Democracy for Britain"; London; 1952; p.8).

The establishment of close association between Britain and the people of the Empire is necessary for "mutual defence against US imperialism":

"All this, continues our Programme, 'would provide the basis for a new, close association of the British people and the peoples of the present Empire to promote mutually beneficial economic exchange and cooperation, and to defend in common their freedom against American imperialist aggression'. ... This fight requires close association and cooperation for victory". (J. Gollan: *ibid.*: p. 8, 9).

Thus, the Communist Party would not dissolve the British Empire but transform it into a new association - a "Commonwealth" perhaps - based on neo-colonialism, i.e. on the "independence" of the member countries:

"All this, continues our Programme, 'would provide the basis for a new, close, voluntary and fraternal association of the British people and the liberated peoples of the present Empire to promote mutually beneficial economic exchange and cooperation, and to defend in common their freedom against American imperialist aggression'". (J. Gollan: *ibid.*; p.8).

The programme also repudiated as a "slandorous misrepresentation" the concept that the Communist Party sought to replace capitalist "parliamentary democracy" by a working class state, the dictatorship of the working class, expressed by that alien term "Soviets":

"The enemies of Communism accuse the Communist Party of aiming

to introduce Soviet Power in Britain, and to abolish Parliament. This is a slanderous misrepresentation of our policy." ("The British Road to Socialism"; London; 1951; p.14.)

In what Gollan described as the "now famous key formulation" of the new programme, the Communist Party declared that the parliament of the capitalist state could be transformed into "the democratic instrument of the people's will, into an instrument of "People's Democracy", by means of which socialism could be introduced constitutionally:

"The British Communists declare that the people of Britain can transform capitalist democracy into a real People's Democracy, transforming Parliament, the product of Britain's historic struggle for democracy, into the democratic instrument of the will of the vast majority of her people." (Ibid.; p.14).

"Socialism is achieved through the mass movement of the people transforming Parliament into an instrument of its will and using it to legislate for Socialism." (J, Gollan: ibid.; p.15).

Since 1951, the "British Road to Socialism" has been revised three times - in 1952, 1958 and 1968 - and the "pure democratic" character of the "socialist state" to be established along this road has been clarified:

"Democratically organised political parties, including those hostile to socialism, would have the right to maintain their organisation, publications and propaganda, and to contest elections." ("The British Road to Socialism"; London: 1968: p.52).

But the "now famous key formulation" of 1951 remains virtually unchanged:

"By political action, using our democratic rights to transform traditional institutions, Parliament can be made into an effective instrument of the people's will, to carry through major legislation to challenge capitalist power, and replace capitalism by socialism." (Ibid.; p.49).

In February 1956, following the seizure by the Soviet revisionists of the machinery of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the 20th Congress of the CPSU adopted Pollitt's "key formulation" to give it an international implication:

"The question arises of whether it is possible to go over to socialism by using parliamentary means. No such course was open to the Russian Bolsheviks.

Since then, however, the historical situation has undergone radical changes which make possible a new approach to the question.

The present situation offers the working class in a number of capitalist countries a real opportunity to capture a stable majority in parliament and transform the latter from an organ of bourgeois democracy into a genuine instrument of the people's will. In such an event this institution, traditional in many highly developed capitalist countries, may become an organ of genuine democracy - democracy for the working people." (N. Khrushchov; Report of the Central Committee to the 20th Congress of the

CPSU: London; 1956; p.30).

In November 1957 the Communist and Workers' Parties of the "socialist countries", including the Communist Party of China, endorsed Pollitt's "key formulation":

"Today in a number of capitalist countries the working class, headed by its vanguard, has the opportunity ... to unite a majority of the people, win state power without civil war and ensure the transfer of the basic means of production to the hands of the people. . . The working class can secure a firm majority in Parliament, transform Parliament from an instrument serving the class interests of the bourgeoisie into an instrument serving the working people, launch a non-Parliamentary mass struggle, smash the resistance of the reactionary forces and create the necessary conditions for peaceful realisation of the socialist revolution." (Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries, in: "For Peace ! For Socialism !"; London; 1957; p.12).

In November 1960 the above formulation was endorsed, without change of wording, by the conference of representatives of the 81 Communist and Workers' Parties.

(Statement of the World's Communist Parties, in: "36 Million Communists say ..."; London; 1960; p. 30-31).

CONCLUSION

By 1960, therefore, the leadership of the international communist movement had abandoned Marxism-Leninism and had completely embraced revisionism. The international communist movement had ceased to be the vanguard of the world working class, and the building of a new international Marxist-Leninist movement had barely begun.

At the core of the new revisionist programme lay the concepts of the "united front" and the "people's front" - built not, in accordance with Marxist-Leninist principles, "from below", in conjunction with the exposure and isolation of the Social-Democratic Party leaders and their counterparts in the trade union movement, but the "united front" and the "people's front" built "from above", with these representatives of the capitalist class:

"The Communist Parties advocate cooperation with the Socialist Parties. ...

Today, in a number of capitalist countries the working class, headed by its vanguard, has the opportunity, given a united working class and popular front or other workable forms of agreement and political cooperation between the different parties and public organisations, to unite a majority of the people, win state power without civil war and ensure the transfer of the basic means of production to the hands of the people." (Ibid.; p.30, 31 - my emphasis - Ed.)

The Labour Party and the Communist Party, working together for their socialist aim, are the working class political organisations on which the success of the change to socialism depends. ...

The ending of all bans and the development of united action between the Communist Party and the Labour Party is also a step towards electoral unity against the Tories. ...

At every stage in this struggle a strong Communist Party, working in full association with the Labour Party, trade unions and Cooperative Movement, is essential." ("The British Road to Socialism": London; 1958; 23, 29, 30).

This "united front from above" is seen as an important step in the direction of the fusion of the two parties into a single party:

"The split in the ranks of the working class ... remains the principal obstacle to the achievement of the aims of the working class. Communists work resolutely to eliminate this split." (Statement of the World's Communist Parties, in: "36 Million Communists say ...": London, p.28).

"The removal of the bans and proscriptions directed against the Communist Party is the first step in restoring unity to the movement. This could lead to further steps towards unity, including the possibilities of affiliation (i.e., of the Communist Party to the Labour Party - Ed.), and eventually of a single working class party based on Marxism." ("The British Road to Socialism": London; 1958; p.29).

When the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International put forward the perspective of the eventual unity of the Communist Party and the Social-Democratic Party in each country, the condition that the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party should "accept Marxism" included the unacceptable

"condition that the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets be recognised." (G. Dimitrov: Main Report Delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in "The United Front": London; 1938; p.88).

Now that the "new creative Marxism" of the revisionist-led world communist movement has thrown overboard the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, no obstacle remains to the fusion of the Communist Party and the Social-Democratic Party in each country into a single party: this has become a process dependent purely on the tactical requirements of monopoly capital in each country, the interests of which such a "united party of the working class" will inevitably serve.

The concept of a "united front from above" with the counter-revolutionary class enemies of the working class is a key concept of the revisionist "Thought of Mao Tse-tung". But far from being peculiar to Chinese "Left" revisionism, this concept is fundamental to modern revisionism as a whole.

The restoration of the correct Marxist-Leninist tactics of the united front, and the rejection of its revisionist perversions, is an important task for the new Marxist-Leninist International.

Central Committee,
MLOB

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THESES ON UNITED FRONT TACTICS

1. The socialist revolution can be accomplished only when a majority of the working class has been won to the cause of revolutionary socialism and to acceptance of the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party.
2. At the present time the majority of the working class support organisations ostensibly within the working class movement but which, as a result of the policies of their leaders, objectively serve the interests of monopoly capital (e.g., the Labour Party, the reformist trade unions).
3. The winning of a majority of the working class to the cause of revolutionary socialism and to acceptance of the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party can be accomplished not by propaganda alone, but as a result of the Party and its members playing a leading role in the day-to-day struggles of the workers for reforms. In these day-to-day struggles the workers learn from their own experience that it is the Marxist-Leninist Party and its members which genuinely represent their interests.
4. The Marxist-Leninist Party supports these struggles for reforms not as ends in themselves, but as part of the strategy of mobilising the working class for socialist revolution.
5. In so far as the Party can win the cooperation of non-Party workers for a particular partial objective and this cooperation takes some organised form, the latter constitutes a UNITED FRONT around that particular partial objective.
6. Appeals for united front action must be directed primarily at the non-Party workers who form the rank-and-file to form a UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW. In so far as such appeals are directed to organisations under reactionary leadership, they must be open and public, so that the leaders may not prevent the appeals from coming to the attention of the rank-and-file.
7. Provided the policy of the Marxist-Leninist Party is a correct one of principled defence of the interests of the working class, the reactionary leaders (who objectively serve the interests of the capitalist class) will normally reject appeals for a united front made to their organisations. Such rejections must be used to expose the leaders to as wide sections of the rank-and-file as possible.
8. Where an appeal for a united front is rejected by the reactionary leaders of an organisation, every effort must be made to win the lower bodies of that organisation (branches, districts, etc.) to defy the reactionary leadership and respond positively to the appeal.
9. In exceptional circumstances, rank-and-file pressure for a united front may be strong enough to force the reactionary leaders nominally to agree to a united front (UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW AND FROM ABOVE). The Marxist-Leninist Party will accept such a united front.

10. In entering a UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW AND FROM ABOVE, the Marxist-Leninist Party will insist on maintaining its independent role outside the united front, including its critical exposure of the reactionary leaders concerned in all fields outside that of the united front.
11. When the reactionary leaders take action to try to sabotage the united front in the interests of the capitalist class, the Marxist-Leninist Party must see that their wrecking, anti-working class role is exposed to the widest possible section of the working class.
12. The Marxist-Leninist Party must be constantly on guard to prevent deviations from these correct united front tactics either to the right or to the "left".
13. The principal deviations to the right consist of making concessions of principle to the reactionary leaders in an effort to maintain the united front in being, in particular the renunciation of criticism of the reactionary leaders in fields outside that of the united front.
14. The principal deviations to the "left" consist of opposing united front tactics as "opportunist", of putting forward partial objectives which are beyond the political level of the workers concerned, and of couching united front appeals in terms which are so abusive of the reactionary leaders as to repel their supporters.

Central Committee,
MLOB

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