

## Maurice Delonge

### The Communists and the trade unions – an open letter to the Members of the Khrushchevist Party.

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Dear comrade,

I'm not telling you anything new when I state the basic truth that the objective of the Communists is the overthrow of the capitalist regime, its replacement by a proletarian state under the direction of the avant-garde party of the working class. The task of the Communists is to make the workers aware of their strength, to direct them through daily action towards the final aim of the class struggle: the crushing of capitalism and the taking of power by the working class.

If you are in agreement with these principles, I would like to call your attention to the attitude of your leaders, especially during recent years, in regard to management of the trade unions.

There is no need to emphasize that the leaders of the FGTB [Federation Generale des Travailleurs Belges; General Federation of Belgian Workers] and of the CSC [Confederation des Syndicats Chretiens; Federation of Christian Trade Unions] are the direct representatives of the PSB [Parti Socialiste Belge; Belgian Socialist Party] and of the PSC [Parti Social Chretien; Christian Social Party] at the head of the workers' organizations. Their business is to slow down and sabotage all action for workers' demands and in general all action directed against the capitalist regime, to facilitate the application of the anti-workers policy of the successive governments of the bourgeoisie in muzzling the workers.

For several years, the leaders of the Khrushchevist party have practiced a policy of disgusting subordination, of the most patent opportunism towards these union leaderships — a policy which is in fact only new reformism corresponding to a theory of class collaboration.

Do we exaggerate? Not at all! Even during the strike of 1960-1961, this Khrushchevian leadership had odiously betrayed the admirable struggle of the workers. This wasn't known, generally, either at Charleroi or at Liege: at the moment when Dussart was encouraging the workers of the Black Country to carry on the fight, the leaders of his party were ordering the Brussels Communists to resume work in their shops, thus freeing hundreds of gendarmes to go to reinforce the forces of repression in the provinces. The same leaders likewise condemned the strikers who had shown their exasperation at the railroad station of Guillemins; they opposed the "march on Brussels" and the "laying down of tools" demanded by hundreds of thousands of workers.

This was a spectacular demonstration of the social-democratic orientation of this Khrushchevian leadership.

Today, all those who find themselves at the head of this misnamed "Communist" party have made their policy in this area clear, especially in the texts of their "congress" of October 1964. One also reads here that the militants of the Khrushchevian party should give their "unreserved support to the demands already worked out by the unions and people's organizations for the year 1965."

And Beelen specified that the workers had to carry the programs of these unions to a successful conclusion, "even if they are not perfect and even if they have not been worked out in a completely democratic manner. No higher bidding on the programs!".

This means that the workers should be content to follow the watchwords of the FGTB or CSC union managements, which in reality apply the policy of the PSB of Spaak and the CSC of Eyskens!

Since this "congress," the Burnelle group hasn't ceased emphasizing this line of conduct whose ultimate aim is integration into "common socialist action," into the PSB — actually, integration into the regime.

This regime, the capitalist regime — they want to do good housekeeping with it. Moreover, at the time of the closing of the shafts of the Battery at Liege, even though the miners were as a matter of fact struggling courageously, even though our party supported them with all its forces, even though this struggle had a profound effect throughout the country, Marc Druniaux, member of the Khrushchevian Political Bureau, declared in the Chamber: "The closings must be got under control so that they can be harmonized with the workers' organizations."

This amounted to saying: "Dear employers, don't go so fast; take counsel with the FGTB and the CSC."

Naturally they don't mention the popular demand to put an end to the closing of the shafts!

When the Miners' Central of the FGTB shamefully disavowed the workers on strike, Le Drapeau Rouge (The Red Flag) didn't devote a single line to denouncing this treason by the reformist leadership. On the contrary, one

can see the Krushchevist Dejace and the far-right Dujardin of the PCB meeting together for the great joy of the "People."

It is the same Dejace, moreover, who "found" a very appropriate formula for making the capitalists rejoice: he proposed to pay subsidies to the coal companies — on the account of the contributors, of course. Even though these companies have received fabulous benefits from the sweat and blood of the miners, and thus have all the means necessary to subsidize themselves!

When the union leaderships made the famous "agreements" with the employers in metallic establishments, our party immediately denounced this collaboration, which "programmed" the two-year prohibition against the workers' going on strike! — whereas the "agreement" gave them a mere pittance of a pay raise.

As for the Krushchevists, they declared themselves quite satisfied with the results obtained through what they called "the unity of the workers" — actually, the unity of the union leaderships and the employers against the workers.

Finally, when the leaderships of the PGTB and the CSC got together to present to the Federation of Belgian Industries a "joint memorandum" barring all immediate demands, Le Drapeau Rouge had only praise for this ultrareformist document, which was radically opposed to the interests of the workers.

Today, the Krushchevist leadership openly declares that in response to the furious attack of the reaction against the workers, it proposes a "program of change" enabling the regime to be saved, enabling the Spaak-Syskens crew to fulfill its commitments to NATO and Washington.

In the Senate, the freemason Jean Verfve declared that it was necessary "to look for remedies" to the government's difficulties, wishing "to orient the government's concerns in a more proper direction, in a good direction"! And he oriented his whole statement against the "fiscal fraud," exactly like the PCB, like the PGTB. Even if it is necessary to denounce this "fiscal fraud," it is completely false to call it the source of all the evil and not attack the very bases of the regime or the grip of American imperialism on our country.

Furthermore, it has been openly declared, in Le Drapeau Rouge as well as in the statements of the Krushchevist representatives in Parliament, that this "plan for change" is for...the unions! — with Louis Major, assigned by Rumelle, Beelen, etc., thus becoming the "programmer."

Louis Major? Have you read what this long-time betrayer of the working class wrote in Syndicats (Trade Unions)? In the 13 November issue, for example:

When we demand social and economic measures from the government, we must be consistently logical and give it the necessary means for carrying out the proposed program. It is not possible to ceaselessly impose budgetary imbalances on the government with impunity.....

And, in the following issue:

...that it is normal for the state to have the necessary revenue at its disposal..., that any government whatsoever must have the resources for its policy, rather than manage its policy on the basis of its resources.... As trade union members, we are very happy with the declarations of the government and of the Minister of Social Administration, our friend Brochon; specifying that the greater part of our program of social demands will be realized within the time periods we have proposed. This is an important victory.

You read right: Major thanks the government for the policy carried out by it. According to Major, the Spack-Byskens crew will accomplish the program of the union leaderships. Thus: Long Live the Spack-Byskens-Spinoy-Harnel government.

The Krushchevist leadership presenting the "plan for change" of the FGVB and CSC unions to this government — this means that it too must be satisfied with the assurances of "friend Brochon"!

Moreover, everything in Syndicats constitutes glorification of the policy announced by Harnel, the defense of the new taxes contained in the new "super single law."

See, comrade, what I wanted to call your attention to. A true Communist Party must never follow in the wake of the unions, but on the contrary, should be at their head. In the case of the unions directed by social-democrats, by reformists, in a word by accomplices and agents of the bourgeoisie, it is quite obvious that the Communist Party not only can't follow in their wake, but must indeed denounce the right-wing union leaderships and call on workers to struggle against these leaderships.

The Krushchevist leaders' attitude of unprincipled approval of what the union leaderships do is clear proof that these leaders are abandoning all Marxist-Leninist positions in all areas and have become authentic social-democrats.

At the same time that it affirms the necessity for the avant-garde workers to militate in the union organizations, our Party refuses to subordinate its action to the objectives followed by the unions. It has the right and the duty to denounce the leaderships of the unions when, as is the case in Belgium, they are the instrument of a policy of class collaboration, when at every moment they work to perpetuate the capitalist exploitation of the working class.

Our Party affirms that the Communists have the duty to be the avant-garde of the working class, and in its relations with the unions, to orient them unhesitatingly in the area of the class struggle.

If you agree with these positions, you can no longer consider the leaders of the party you still belong to as Communists.

These are the reflections I wanted you to know about.

Dear comrade, accept my Communist salutations.



Maurice Delogne,  
Member of the Political Bureau