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ALLIANCES AND THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The Tactic of the United Front

and How It Differs from

the Popular Front

by Les Evans

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following two lectures were given at the August 1971 Socialist Activists and Educational Conference at Oberlin, Ohio.

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ALLIANCES AND THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The Tactic of the United Front and How It

Differs from the Popular Front

by Les Evans

I. The United Front and the Popular Front

In discussing the question of the united front, we should bear in mind at the outset that this is a discussion about tactics, one of the most important tactics in the political arsenal of the revolutionary party. For Marxists, there can be no tactical blueprints, good for all times and places. Tactics must always be concrete and devised to fit particular situations and relationships of forces. But this does not mean that there are no criteria by which to judge the effectiveness or permissibility of one tactical course or another. In its most schematic form there are three conditions that must be met by any tactical prescription put forward by the revolutionary movement for any of its campaigns or actions: it must not be divorced from or run counter to the basic strategy of working toward a socialist reconstruction of society; it must aim to mobilize the mass in independent struggle and not substitute a relatively small group of individuals for this task, whether the substitution consists of the left organizations themselves or individual politicians; and lastly, the tactic should aim to weaken the capitalist class as a whole, including its liberal wing.

What is the United Front?

The revolutionary party sets itself the task of organizing the whole of the oppressed, first and foremost the industrial working class, for the socialist overturn of the capitalist system. But except in a prerevolutionary situation the party can expect to count in its own ranks and among its followers only a minority of the working class and sometimes a numerically insignificant minority in relation to the population.

For sectarians the thing to do in such a situation is very simple: you unfurl your revolutionary banner and wait for the masses to come to you. Passive sectarians such as the SLP announce their presence by putting out their newspaper and an occasional leaflet. The more active variety, such as the Progressive Labor Party or the Workers League attempt to initiate actions in the name of their own group or of organizations created and controlled directly by their group.

Of course the revolutionary party sees as one of its central activities the circulation of its press and occasionally helps to set up committees that for one reason or another do not extend far beyond the party's immediate members or sympathizers. But it does not have any illusions that by these means alone great masses can be won to the fight for socialism.

Revolutionists participate directly in existing mass organizations of all kinds where, in counterposition to the reformist leaderships, they propose campaigns of action around concrete immediate or transitional demands that can involve the members in struggle. This also is a necessary though by itself insufficient course.

The question remains how the revolutionary party, disposing of limited forces, can draw into action genuine masses in defense of their interests against the capitalist rulers. The majority of workers and their potential allies, the students, oppressed national minorities, women

as an oppressed sex, the so-called middle classes, the peasantry in those countries where it remains a significant section of the population, do not yet agree with the party's full program and are not prepared to follow its call to action. They are influenced to a greater or lesser extent by reformist or even directly bourgeois leaderships that have no intention of organizing mass struggles.

But the failure to reply massively to the threat or reality of imperialist war, to attacks on basic democratic rights, or on the standard of living of the working class, weakens the revolutionary party as well as the position of the proletariat vis-a-vis the bourgeoisie. Thus the need to unite the whole of the working class or whatever sector can presently be won to struggle around anticapitalist demands is an objective necessity that faces the party as a prerequisite of its future growth.

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The tactic of the united front was developed by the leadership of the Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky in 1921-22 to meet the challenge of this vital task facing the Communist parties of Europe. The revolutionary wave of the post-World War I period had passed and a measure of capitalist stability had been restored. The bourgeoisie was on the offensive against the workers' organizations. The left, both politically and in the narrower sphere of the trade-union movement was dominated by mass radical parties, generally the social-democrats.

There were no mass ad hoc formations of struggle such as the antiwar movement or the women's liberation movement which we have seen in the present radicalization. These have taken form outside of any political party in part because the great mass of youth and others who have been radicalized entered the political arena in the absence of mass socialist or communist parties that would appear as the natural champions of their demands.

On the one hand this meant that in the twenties the focus of the united front tactic was to find a basis of common action between mass working-class parties; hence, from the organizational point of view, it had a more obviously proletarian character than the united fronts we enter into today when the trade unions are locked in a bureaucratic stranglehold and remain outside of politics. But it also meant that the Communist party, which in almost every country represented a minority of the politicalized workers, had to forge an alliance with the powerful bureaucracy of case-hardened reformists which controlled the much larger Social Democratic parties, which were imbued with a thoroughly class collaborationist and antirevolutionary outlook.

The united front tactic was first proposed in December 1921 and the details of its implementation worked out at the Fourth World Congress of the Communist International in November 1922. It was denounced at the time by ultraleftists in the world Communist movement, who saw in it a capitulation to reformism. Lenin and Trotsky demonstratively described themselves as representatives of the *right* wing of the Comintern in this debate to indicate their impatience with this sterile sectarianism. The most succinct statement of the tactic is to

be found in Trotsky's article, "On the United Front," based on his report for the leadership to the enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern which convened in February 1922.

"Does the united front extend only to the working masses or does it also include the opportunist leaders?" Trotsky asked. "The very posing of this question is a product of misunderstanding," he replied. "If we were able simply to unite the working masses around our own banner or around our practical immediate slogans, and skip over reformist organizations, whether party or trade union, that would of course be the best thing in the world. But then the very question of the united front would not exist in its present form." [*First Five Years of the Communist International*, Volume II, pp. 93-94.]

There are two sides to the united front. On the one hand it allows the most massive mobilization of the working class in defense of its immediate interests by bringing together on a single issue or limited set of issues organizations that have fundamental programmatic differences on other questions. From this standpoint the whole purpose of the united front is precisely for the revolutionists to take the initiative in forcing the reformist leaderships into a common coalition even against their will. For the very reason that workers still follow the reformists it is impossible to go over the heads of the reformist leaders by appealing directly to the ranks of these organizations. This latter policy was tried by the Communist Party in Germany in the early 1930s under the ultraleft slogan of the "united front from below," with the disastrous result that there was no common struggle against Hitler by the Communist and Socialist parties. Inherently the united front means negotiations with and agreements with the reformist tendencies.

The other side of the united front tactic is that in the course of united struggles the revolutionists have the best opportunity to work with the rank-and-file members of the reformist organizations or with unaffiliated radicals—the independents—and to demonstrate in action that the revolutionists are the best builders of the struggle. In the course of this experience the authority of the reformist leaders can be undermined and recruits made to revolutionary socialism.

Doesn't this policy involve concessions to the reformists in order to secure agreements with non- and even anti-revolutionary forces? Yes. Inevitably concessions must be made to preserve the alliance and Marxists must carefully weigh at each step how much can be given while still preserving the anticapitalist thrust of the agreed-on actions.

There is a very useful discussion of this question by Lenin in an article written in April of 1922 entitled "We Have Paid Too Much." The Comintern was seeking to establish a united front with the Second International. The Social Democrats, without promising any specific common actions, demanded a series of conditions for continuing the negotiations. The Bolshevik representatives to the negotiations reluctantly agreed. Lenin objected, not that the concessions as such were unprincipled but that nothing had been received in return.

"Imagine," Lenin wrote, "that a Communist has to enter premises in which agents of the bourgeoisie are carrying on their propaganda at a fairly large meeting of workers. Imagine also that the bourgeoisie demands from us a high price for admission to these premises. If the

price has not been agreed to beforehand we must bargain, of course, in order not to impose too heavy a burden upon our Party funds. If we pay too much for admission to these premises we shall undoubtedly commit an error. But it is better to pay a high price . . . than to reject an opportunity of speaking to workers who hitherto have been in the exclusive 'possession,' so to speak, of the reformists, i.e., of the most loyal friends of the bourgeoisie."

The key to the united front is that its axis be action against the ruling class and that the concessions made to hold it together not undercut its central purpose. By choosing single-issue demands such as "immediate withdrawal from Vietnam" or "Abolish the abortion laws" that directly oppose one or another aspect of bourgeois policy the revolutionary party through the united front is able to lead far larger masses in action on particular demands within the *party's* program than it could in any other way. The reformist organizations, subject to pressure from their own ranks, are forced to join in, but would not themselves initiate such actions on these kinds of demands.

Furthermore, in the process of successful and significant struggles a political climate is created that encourages the working class to further tests of strength with the bourgeoisie and is propitious for the further direct growth of the revolutionary party.

Is the united front limited to single-issue coalitions?

The single-issue united front is, of course, the easiest to maintain and has the greatest programmatic clarity. The ultimate aim of the united front, however, is to unite the whole of the working class against all sectors of the capitalist class. As long as its central anticapitalist direction is unequivocal there are circumstances where the united front tactic can be applied to electoral blocs or even to coalition governments of the left. The slogan "All power to the Soviets," for example, was first raised by the Bolsheviks when they still constituted a minority in the Russian Soviets (workers councils), which were dominated by the representatives of the reformist socialist parties. Even after the October revolution the Bolsheviks for a time participated in a united front government with the left wing of the Social Revolutionary party.

But a united front government is the last step before the overthrow of capitalism. A revolutionary party cannot join a government which merely administers the capitalist state.

What is the Popular Front?

The so-called People's Front preached and practiced by the pro-Moscow and pro-Peking Communist parties has nothing in common with the Leninist policy of the united front. The essence of the People's Front is a coalition between the left parties and the liberal bourgeoisie. It is based on the *program* of the liberal capitalists and is aimed only at extracting certain reforms from the "right wing" of the capitalist class. In this country the Communist Party loyally applies the People's Front policy through its work in the Democratic Party, where it gives its support to the candidates of this capitalist party on the basis of *their* program. It seeks to mobilize the working class not to break with capitalist politics but to sup-

port one capitalist politician against another in the hope of being paid off in minimal concessions after the "good" capitalist is elected.

A genuine workers' government would be clearly distinguished from all varieties of People's Front both by its program and its deeds. It would move rapidly to disfranchise the capitalist rulers, to nationalize industry, to dismantle the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state, and to create or to strengthen armed bodies of workers to administer the new workers' state.

It is our conviction, confirmed by the whole history of the revolutionary movement, that such a transition cannot be accomplished by electoral means alone but requires the revolutionary mobilization of the working class in its own self-governing organizations or councils and with its own armed power. A hallmark of the People's Front, even of the left-sounding variety, is its hostility to such independent organizations of the oppressed and its refusal to challenge the bulwarks of capitalist rule, the old police and the army.

That both a workers' government and a procapitalist people's front might contain many of the same parties is a fact that mystifies sectarians who want neat formulas and schemas to cover all contingencies. This was no puzzle at all to Lenin and Trotsky who urged the Communist parties of Europe to force the reformists into a united front coalition as the best way to prevent them from joining a coalition with the liberal capitalist parties. At that time the policy later to be put forward by Stalin under the name of the People's Front was defended by the reformists under the name of the "Left Bloc."

Trotsky in his report on the United Front cited above characterized this "Left Bloc" as "a bloc between the workers and a certain section of the bourgeoisie against another section of the bourgeoisie," that is, a coalition based on the defense of bourgeois property and the bourgeois state. Revolutionists, he said, must counterpose to this "a bloc between all the sections of the working class against the whole bourgeoisie."

The reformists, who have no principled opposition to capitalist rule and in fact help to promote it, can swing either way, depending on where the greatest pressure arises.

"It would be insanity," Trotsky said, "to count upon their helping the proletarian revolution. But we are ready, inside and outside the parliament, to enter into certain practical agreements with them, provided they agree, in those cases where one must choose between the known interests of the bourgeoisie and the definite demands of the proletariat, to support the latter in action. The Dissidents [that is, the reformists] can be capable of such actions only if they renounce their ties with the parties of the bourgeoisie, that is, the 'Left Bloc' and its bourgeois discipline."

Trotsky, who at the time was speaking for the whole leadership of the Communist International, made absolutely clear that a parliamentary bloc with bourgeois parties was completely incompatible with membership in the Comintern:

"Unconditional and merciless expulsion in disgrace of those who come out in favor of the idea of the 'Left Bloc' is a self-understood duty of the Communist Party." [Ibid, page 105.]

It is here that the question of single-issue and multi-issue takes on another dimension. A governmental bloc or common agreement to support certain candidates in

an election obviously implies support to a multi-issue program, to the whole program on which the candidates stand. If one or another capitalist politician chooses for whatever reason to declare support for a single-issue united front action, such as an antiwar demonstration, they objectively serve to build the united front because no concession is made to them whatever on their procapitalist program. Membership in the antiwar movement is not conditional on anything except opposition to the imperialist war in Vietnam, a demand that is contrary to the interests of the capitalist class as a whole.

Trotsky was quite clear on this question in his discussion of the People's Front policy of the Stalinists in France, in his article "'Committees of Action'—Not a 'People's Front'" written in 1935. "The proletariat," Trotsky wrote, "does not deny anyone the right to struggle side by side with it against fascism, the Bonapartist government of Laval, the war plot of the imperialists, and all other forms of oppression and violence. The sole demand that class-conscious workers put to their actual or potential allies is that they struggle *in action*." [emphasis in original].

At the same time he made it plain that he did not expect much from those few bourgeois forces that might agree to support concrete workers' actions: "When struggle is in question," he declared, "every worker is worth ten bourgeois, even those adhering to the united front."

In relation to the petty-bourgeoisie, however, Trotsky took a different attitude, posing the necessity of winning them in large numbers to the Committees of Action.

"To be sure," Trotsky wrote, "in the election of Committees not only workers will be able to participate but also civil service employees, functionaries, war veterans, artisans, small merchants, and small peasants. Thus the Committees of Action are in closest harmony with the tasks of the struggle of the proletariat for influence over the petty bourgeoisie."

Such committees or coalitions organized around concrete demands of struggle can thus unite broad forces. Just as plainly, there must be far greater agreement to begin to consider a more far-ranging coalition. A political party or an electoral bloc stands on a social program for administering the state power. The first question that must be posed here is whether this program is for or against the continuation of the capitalist system and state apparatus. Thus the very same people who can agree with us that the U.S. should get out of Vietnam may be prepared to vote in an election for liberal Democratic Party politicians or to participate in a coalition, such as the Peace and Freedom Party, that in no way programmatically or in deeds opposes capitalism as such, but only seeks this or that peripheral reform.

What is the Popular Front?

In the second talk of this series I would like to give some concrete examples of the Popular Front in practice. Here I am going to discuss it as a theory and how it was propounded by the Stalinists.

As you know, between 1929 and 1934 the Comintern under Stalin's leadership went on an ultraleft binge, closely resembling the politics of Progressive Labor today with the exception that these were mass parties united in a worldwide organization. During this so-called Third Period of the Comintern the united front was rejected on the spurious grounds that the seizure of power was on the

order of the day. Instead of proposing unity with the Social Democrats in Germany against the threat of nazism, the Communist Party at Stalin's instigation denounced the reformists a "social fascists" and even declared them, not Hitler, to be the main enemy. The Stalinists claimed that it was more revolutionary to appeal directly to the workers and to the rank-and-file members of the Social Democratic party than to conclude a common agreement with the reformist leaderships. This policy of the "united front from below" was not a united front at all but an appeal to the mass of followers of the Social Democrats to abandon their party and accept the program and leadership of the Communist Party, which they were not willing to do.

If the Communist Party had proposed a genuine united front to the Social Democrats, there is no doubt that the masses of Social Democratic workers would have welcomed this proposal with open arms and exerted great pressure on their leadership to accept. If a united front had come into being, it could have taken serious and successful measures to prevent the Nazis from coming to power. And even if the Social Democratic leaders had refused the proposals for common action, the Communist Party would have been in the strongest possible position to appeal over their heads to the masses of Social Democratic workers.

But the ultra-leftism of the Communist Party guaranteed that the working class would be left divided in the face of the common fascist enemy. That experience showed how ultraleftism, as well as reformism, can open the door to the victory of fascism.

We see a whole raft of ultraleft sects today who follow this same approach in all their dealings with others. We have had enough experience with what this leads to in a real period of social crisis to utterly reject that course. The Stalinists, however, did not learn from the German defeat and return to the Leninist practice of the united front.

After Hitler had consolidated his rule in a bloodless takeover in 1933, the Kremlin bureaucracy reacted by a sharp swing to the right, searching for bourgeois allies to protect it from the menace of German fascism. The turn was made at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935. The doctrine of "collective security" was adopted there, calling for military alliances between the Soviet Union and the Western bourgeois democracies against Hitler.

Now, there is no objection to a workers state concluding military alliances with one or another capitalist state. That is a tactical question to be decided on its merits—its efficacy in defending the workers state and furthering the world revolution. But such state-to-state alliances do not change the nature of the particular capitalist state in question. The capitalist state does not suddenly change into a peace-loving entity. The revolutionary struggle in such a state remains as pressing as ever. This was not Moscow's attitude, however.

The Stalinist premise for such alliances of necessity was that there are some imperialist nations interested in war and other imperialist nations interested in peace. Which was which was left to the imagination of the beholder inasmuch as between 1935 and 1942 Stalin was to sign "nonaggression" pacts with the Allied powers against the Axis; then with Hitler against the Allies; and finally with the Allies again against Hitler. At each turn

the Communist parties of each country involved were expected to give political support to the government that was presently Stalin's ally or to work to bring to power some section of the bourgeoisie that would agree to such an alliance. This was the real origin of the People's Front, a re-creation of the "Left Bloc" of the twenties in which this time the Communist Party initiated coalitions with liberal bourgeois parties in the hopes of forming governments committed to peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union. It had nothing in common with organizing the working-class against the whole of the bourgeoisie or with making a socialist revolution.

Stalin bluntly told the Communist parties in the countries where he was seeking governmental allies to avoid embarrassing the liberal regimes and to refrain from socialist propaganda in the armed forces. Thus on May 15, 1935, Stalin signed a joint communique with French Foreign minister Laval which declared: "M. Stalin understands and fully approves the national defense policy of France in keeping her armed forces at a level required for security." This was the first time that the security of an imperialist government had become the concern of the workers' state in the Soviet Union.

On the party level this policy was spelled out by Dimitrov in his report to the Seventh Comintern Congress:

"If we Communists are asked," he said, "whether we advocate the united front only in the struggle for partial demands, or whether we are prepared to share the responsibility even when it will be a question of forming a government on the basis of the united front, then we say with a full sense of our responsibility: yes, we recognize that a situation may arise in which the formation of a government of the proletarian united front, or of the *anti-Fascist People's Front*, will become not only possible but necessary in the interest of the proletariat. And in that case we shall declare for the formation of such a government without the slightest hesitation." [Emphasis added.]

Here we see smuggled in in a sub-clause the very "Left Bloc" which the united front tactic was devised in large part to prevent. This so-called anti-Fascist People's Front was nothing but a coalition of the Stalinists, the reformists, and the liberal bourgeois parties programmatically committed to the preservation of capitalism and absolutely opposed to socialist revolution under any circumstances.

The American CP applied this policy by agitating in the CIO against the creation of an independent labor party and for political support to the Roosevelt government. With the exception of the brief interlude of the Stalin-Hitler pact, from 1939 to 1941, during which time Roosevelt suddenly became a fascist in the CP press, the CP has followed this same class collaborationist course down to the present day. Its only departure from the Democratic Party fold had been in a few abortive experiments in creating a third, more liberal capitalist party, notably in the Progressive Party effort in 1948. After mobilizing its supporters to vote for the "progressive" Henry Wallace, who had been Roosevelt's vice-president, the whole thing ended in a debacle when Wallace came out in support of Truman's counterrevolutionary invasion of Korea in 1950.

In recent years the CP has tried to put a left face on its People's Front program, but the essence remains the same. Now they talk of work "inside and outside" the Democratic Party which is supposed to result in a regroupment of the liberal wing of the Democrats along

with the CP and, they hope, the radical youth, in what they call a "People's Party." Such a party would naturally have a full social program and if it is to include the Democratic Party liberals it must be a program acceptable to them, not on one or another issue of social protest but on the fundamental question of defense of the whole system of capitalism and imperialism.

But we do not have to go back to the 1930s to hear from the CP an unabashed defense of its Popular Front perspective for the Democratic Party. In the 1964 elections the CP openly campaigned for Lyndon Johnson under the slogan "defeat Goldwater at all costs." In its postmortem analysis of Johnson's landslide victory the Stalinists spelled out exactly how the coalition had worked.

The November 8, 1964, issue of *The Worker*, the predecessor of the *Daily World*, ran a front-page headline: "Victory Spurs Fight for the People's Goals."

"The American people," the *Worker* declared, "last Tuesday gave Goldwaterism and the Republican party a smashing defeat and have handed Democratic Party candidates, from President Johnson and his running mate, Sen. Hubert Humphrey, down to the legislatures of many states, a far-reaching mandate for peace, equality and economic security in the nation."

Would Johnson, the chief representative of American imperialism, carry out this supposed mandate? The CP thought so. In an article entitled "Realignment Brings a Better Congress" that appeared in the same issue of the *Worker*, George Morris wrote:

"The impact of the crushing defeat of Barry Goldwater has brought both an arithmetical and qualitative advantage in Congress for the coalition that elected Lyndon Johnson. For the first time, judging by the composition of the next Congress, the administration in Washington will not have to appease ultra-Rightist and racist nominal Democrats in the South to get compromise legislation. The Democratic majority in Congress of both northern and genuine supporters in the South plus some liberal Republicans, should be enough to assure the carrying out of the mandate voted Tuesday."

The whole thesis is here: the good liberal Democrats, you see, are really for the mandate for "peace, equality and economic security." The problem is that they have had to "appease" the Southern racist bosses of the Democratic Party, who Morris transforms through sleight-of-hand into mere "nominal" Democrats, not to be confused with the "genuine" variety who support all the good things in the People's mandate.

And who constituted the coalition that made possible this "qualitative advantage in Congress"? In an editorial entitled "What the Vote Means," the *Worker* declared that the "backbone" of "the great coalition was and is the working people, Negro and white, and the struggle of the great Negro people for equality has spark-plugged the struggle of all people for democracy, for greater security. The political initiative and maturity of the Negro people has contributed enormously to forging the alliance of labor and the Negro people and to the victorious anti-Goldwater coalition."

The function of this class-collaborationist coalition was not to organize Blacks and workers in action for their own demands but to declare their unqualified political support for the ruling party of American imperialism in the person of its chief executive. While Johnson was receiving his mandate for peace he and his advisers were

already secretly plotting the bombing of North Vietnam and the dispatch of 500,000 American GIs to Indochina. Instead of defeating Goldwaterism, the CP helped to elect it to office.

As for the qualitative change in Congress, this was the very Congress that upheld, virtually without dissent, Johnson's massive escalation of the Vietnam war.

Johnson, of course, did not find it necessary to reward his allies in the miniscule Communist Party by offering them positions in his government. But there was no lack of willingness on the Stalinists' part to "share the responsibility" for that government anyway, in keeping with Dimitrov's doctrine of building "the anti-Fascist People's Front." Nor was there a revolutionary situation in the United States in 1964 in which the CP could show to what lengths it was willing to go to preserve its coalition built on Johnson's program.

But there have been numerous situations in other countries where the Stalinists have participated in bourgeois governments that were faced with socialist revolution and they proved themselves ready to go all the way in joining the capitalist army and police in battle against the working class. In the next talk I would like to take up some concrete examples of the People's Front in practice where the question of revolution was actually posed.

II. The Record of the People's Front

The Spanish Civil War

The Stalinists like to remember the Spanish Civil War as a simple struggle between democracy and fascism, between the Popular Front Republican government and the fascist insurrection led by General Francisco Franco. They neglect to mention the near-socialist revolution that took place on the Republican side and how it was strangled by the procapitalist Popular Front regime with the help of the Communist Party, Stalin, and the International Brigades.

Spain was the crucible in which the Comintern's new policy of Popular Frontism was tested. Following Dimitrov's instructions, the Spanish CP proposed and succeeded in realizing the formation of a multiclass "anti-Fascist People's Front." Five parties joined the Popular Front: Two working-class parties, the Socialists and the Communists; and three bourgeois parties, the Republican Left of Manuel Azana, the Republican Union, and the Esquerra, the last representing the Catalan separatist movement. The Popular Front carried a plurality in the February 1936 elections and set up a government with Azana as president of the republic.

Within the Spanish Cortes, or parliament, the bourgeois wing of the Popular Front was clearly dominant, with 162 seats to the combined total of 116 for the Socialist and Communist parties. The rest of the left was completely disoriented by the Popular Front campaign. The largest workers' organization, the Anarchist-led CNT (General Confederation of Labor) opposed supporting the coalition, but at the last minute urged its supporters to cast their votes for the Popular Front. The Trotskyist movement, which had been quite large in Spain, had recently united with a left-centrist formation to create a new party, the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista—the Proletarian Party of Marxist Unity). The unification was opposed by Trotsky because of unprincipled programmatic concessions made by the Spanish Trotskyists to secure it. The POUM broke with the world Trotskyist movement

and gave critical support to the Popular Front in the 1936 elections.

The fascist forces, grouped around Generals Franco and Mola, began immediate preparations for a coup that would have as its aim not merely the seizure of governmental power but the complete destruction of the left parties and the trade unions in the pattern of Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany. Franco's plot was no secret. Army officers loyal to the Republic reported the details to Azana long in advance. But the bourgeois politicians who headed the Republican government belonged to the same class as Franco. For them the greatest danger lay in a socialist revolution, not in a fascist takeover. Hence the whole policy of the Popular Front government in the six months before Franco made his move was to temporize, to try to convince the fascists that their revolt was unnecessary because the Popular Front could contain the workers' movement. The last thing Azana and his Stalinist allies wanted was to mobilize the working class against Franco.

The Popular Front government even imposed press censorship on the left-wing press and deleted warnings against the imminent civil war so as not to "provoke" the fascists.

The fascist revolt began in Spanish Morocco on July 17, 1936. Franco's troops occupied the public buildings and arrested all known leaders and members of the working-class and Republican parties. All those who actively opposed the coup were executed without trial. The great majority of the army garrisons in Spain and virtually the whole of the old ruling class declared for Franco.

Even when it became clear that the army was everywhere rising against the Republic, which had no means of defending itself except by arming the trade unions, Azana's Prime Minister Casares Quiroga was so terrified of the working class that he announced "that anyone who gave arms to the workers . . . would be shot." [Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, page 135.]

Hugh Thomas, in his detailed study, *The Spanish Civil War*, gave this account of the Popular Front's reaction to the insurrection:

"Nearly everywhere on July 18 the Civil Governors in the large towns followed the example of the Government of Madrid, and refused to co-operate fully with the working-class organizations who were clamoring for arms. In most cases, this brought the success of the risings and signed the death warrants of the Civil Governors themselves, along with the local working-class leaders . . . Had the liberal Government of Casares Quiroga distributed arms, and ordered the Civil Governors to do so too, thus using the working class to defend the Republic at the earliest opportunity, it is possible that the rising would have been crushed." [p. 135.]

Azana still hoped to come to an agreement with Franco without fighting. On July 18 a new, even more conservative prime minister was appointed. It was only when a mass demonstration of 100,000 workers stormed through the streets of Madrid shouting "Treason!" and demanding arms that the government finally reluctantly agreed to arm the masses.

In Catalonia, the stronghold of the Anarchists and the POUM, a genuine revolutionary struggle began. The working-class parties and trade unions formed militias that defeated the fascist forces on a broad front in Aragon. Workers spontaneously seized the factories and began

producing arms; workers' patrols were organized to replace the police; peasants took over the land that had been deserted by Franco's wealthy backers. A social revolution on a gigantic scale was taking place.

On July 21 the revolutionary groups organized the "Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias of Catalonia," which immediately became the only real power in the area. This was wholly controlled by the workers organizations. Dual power was posed not just for Catalonia but for all of Republican Spain: The Azana regime opposed all of these revolutionary measures and openly stood for the return of the land and factories to their capitalist owners and the disbanding of the de facto workers' government.

The real relationship of forces overwhelmingly favored the revolutionary forces. Two factors allowed the bourgeois Popular Front to crush the workers' movement and prepare the way for the triumph of fascism: One factor was wavering and indecision of the leaders of the Anarchists and the POUM. Instead of moving directly to unite the workers' militias and councils on a nationwide scale to set up a socialist government, they waited until the liberals and Stalinists had regained the initiative and then capitulated to the Popular Front.

The second, and decisive factor leading to the defeat, was the role of the Stalinists. Before the outbreak of the Civil War, the CP had been relatively weak, the smallest of the working-class parties. They were under direct orders from Moscow to limit the revolution to purely bourgeois demands. Jesus Hernandez, editor of the CP's newspaper *El Mundo Obrero*, wrote in the August 6, 1936, issue: "It cannot be said we have a social motive for our participation in the war. We communists are the first to repudiate this supposition. We are motivated exclusively by a desire to defend the democratic republic." [Cited in Felix Morrow's *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Spain*, p. 34.]

Stalin himself intervened in a letter dated September 21, 1936, to then-Prime Minister Largo Caballero in which he advised this representative of the capitalist Republican government to "attract the middle and lower bourgeoisie . . . [by] protecting them against confiscations," to promise the bourgeois parties the continuation of Azana as president, and to respect the property "rights" and "legitimate" interests of foreigners "who are citizens of nations not supporting the rebels." (i.e., France and Britain). [Photostat of first and last pages of a four page original published in the June 4, 1939 *New York Times*.]

A drive was begun to dissolve the militias into the newly created "Popular Army" on the grounds of centralizing the conduct of the war. This was largely a spurious issue: the Anarchists and the POUM were equally in favor of centralizing military operations; the question was *to whom were the military forces going to be responsible*. The intention of Caballero's move was to cut off the working-class parties from political influence in the armed forces. On October 9, 1936, the Generalidad in Barcelona dissolved the Central Committee of the Anti-Fascist Militias.

Militarily Franco had every advantage over the Republic: he commanded a trained army, a superior air force, and an unlimited supply of arms, equipment, and troops from his allies, Hitler and Mussolini. The capitalist democracies, whom Stalin's policy of moderation was supposed to impress and win over, declared for "nonintervention" and refused to even *sell* arms to the legal Spanish government. The Popular Front govern-

ment in France headed by Leon Blum went along with this "neutrality" on the side of Franco. Only the Soviet Union and Mexico sent arms, and in the case of the Kremlin these were doled out in just sufficient amounts to keep the Republic alive but not enough to counter the aid Franco was receiving. Furthermore, the Communist Party and the CP-controlled International Brigades were in charge of distributing the Soviet military aid which they systematically withheld from sections of the Loyalist front that were under workers' control such as Catalonia.

The Popular Front government steadfastly refused to take the only measures that could have mobilized the forces necessary to defeat Franco. They worked to destroy, not build the workers' councils and militias.

Franco's main base of operations lay in Spanish Morocco, a colony subjugated by Spain only after many years of bloody desert warfare. Large numbers of Moroccan troops were used as mercenaries against the Republic. Abd-el-Krim, the most outstanding military leader of the Moroccan independence fighters against Spanish rule, appealed to Largo Caballero to renounce Spain's imperialist claim to Morocco and to use his influence to help el-Krim return there from exile to lead an insurrection against Franco. Caballero refused for fear it might displease England and France.

Along with Soviet aid and the International Brigades came large numbers of agents of the Soviet secret political police, the GPU, who took charge of the suppression of the left in Spain. In May of 1937 the Stalinists decided to move against the Anarchists and the POUM. The leaders of these organizations had already joined the Caballero government and assumed political responsibility for the betrayal that was taking place, but hundreds of thousands of their members and sympathizers were becoming more and more restive as they watched everything they had fought for being taken away by their "allies" in the Popular Front.

A deliberate provocation was staged by the Stalinists. On May 7 the police were sent to seize control of the Telephone Building in Barcelona. This telephone exchange had been operated by the Anarchist workers of the CNT since they had captured it from the fascists at the cost of many lives in July of 1936. The bourgeois government could not feel itself secure as long as this key communication center remained in the hands of the workers. Sharp fighting broke out between the telephone workers and the police. Barricades went up in the streets. This was the last possible moment that the workers could have rallied and overturned the Stalinist-liberal coalition. Instead, at the height of the fighting the leaders of the CNT and of the POUM decided to compromise and appealed to the workers to go home and to make their peace with the government.

The Stalinists then moved in for the kill. Troops were brought in from Valencia *after the fighting was over* and began to arrest Anarchists, POUM members, and militia fighters by the hundreds. The Communists introduced a bill in the Central Government, now in Valencia, demanding that the POUM be outlawed, charging that they were paid agents of Franco!

Hugh Thomas provides a graphic description of the suppression of the POUM in June 1937:

"In Barcelona . . . on the orders of Antonov-Ovseenko, the Russian Consul General, the POUM headquarters at

the Hotel Falcon was closed. It was immediately, and conveniently, turned into a prison. The POUM itself was declared illegal, and 40 members of its central committee arrested. . . . All members or associates of the POUM went in fear of arrest. . . . The Communist newspapers daily screamed accusations against those whom their party had arrested but did not bring to trial. . . . a rumor spread that Andres Nin [the foremost of the POUM leaders] had been murdered in prison. . . . In fact he was . . . undergoing the customary Soviet interrogation of suspected deviationists. His resistance to these methods was apparently amazing. He refused to sign any documents admitting his guilt or that of his friends. . . . So, one dark night, ten German members of the International Brigade assaulted the house in Alcala where Nin was held. Ostentatiously, they spoke German during the pretended attack, and left behind some German train tickets. Nin was taken away in a closed van and murdered." [pg. 453-55.]

From this point on the fortunes of the Republic began a steady decline, although the war of attrition was to drag on for twenty-one months.

The end of the war is a bitter chronicle of betrayal by "loyal" officers of the bourgeois army the Popular Front had relied on for its defense. Bilbao and Santander, strongholds of the then-conservative Basque nationalists, fell to Franco's forces with little or no resistance. Anarchist and revolutionary-socialist troops who tried to burn the cities to prevent them from falling into fascist hands were shot by their Republican allies.

The fascists drove to the Mediterranean coast at Castellon in July of '38, cutting Republican Spain in two. Stalin, now looking toward the alliance with Hitler that was to be consummated the next year in the Hitler-Stalin Pact, ordered the withdrawal of the International Brigades from Spain. Barcelona, once the flower of the Spanish revolution, was now deserted, its working-class leaders dead or in Stalinist prisons. It fell in January 1939 without a shot being fired. Hundreds of thousands of refugees fled across the frontier into exile in France. In March 1939 Madrid and Valencia surrendered to Franco and the civil war was over.

* * *

In Germany in the early 1930s we saw the Stalinists through their sectarian rejection of the united front pave the way for the rise of nazism. It was the German defeat that led Trotsky to pronounce the Comintern dead as a revolutionary organization and to issue the call for the formation of the Fourth International. But even in Germany, although the Communist Party's course led to a defeat of such great proportions as to forfeit its revolutionary credentials, it was not a matter of premeditated betrayal. In Spain, however, the CP and the host of imported Soviet officials acted calculatingly as the main instruments of bourgeois rule, as conscious agents of the counterrevolution. This marked a new stage in the Kremlin's policy in which it cold-bloodedly used the Communist parties and workers' organizations it controlled to promote at all costs the narrow diplomatic interests of the Soviet bureaucracy in open opposition to the interests of the working class. This policy remains a central aim of Stalinist intervention in the workers' movement in all countries to this day.

At the close of World War II we saw another example of Stalin's application of the People's Front tactic. The power of the capitalist class had been shattered in the former Axis powers and in France as well. In the latter case there existed an armed Resistance movement dominated by the Communist Party numbering some 500,000 persons. The colonies of French imperialism were in upsurge. But in keeping with the Kremlin's design of peaceful coexistence with Britain and the United States, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt had carved the world into spheres of influence and Moscow agreed to respect the Western imperialisms' claims to the corpse of capitalist France. Instead of adopting a strategy designed to overthrow French capitalism and set up a workers' government in Paris, the pro-Moscow French Communist Party supported the de Gaulle government. The Stalinists helped disarm the Resistance, opposed strikes, helped stabilize the political situation, and opposed independence for the French colonies, including Indochina. The de Gaulle government could not have lasted for a minute without the active support of the French Communist Party. To top it off, the French CP even joined de Gaulle's cabinet, taking direct responsibility for the stabilization of capitalist rule. De Gaulle was perfectly aware of his and French capitalism's debt to the Communist Party and was magnanimous enough to offer his public thanks to CP Chairman Maurice Thorez on more than one occasion. In 1964 at the time of Thorez's death de Gaulle sent a letter to his family expressing his "sincere condolences." "For my part," de Gaulle wrote, "I have not forgotten that at a decisive time for France, President Maurice Thorez—whatever may have been his actions before and after that—in response to my appeal and as a member of my government contributed to maintaining national unity."

The Indonesian catastrophe

Along with the German events, the Spanish Civil War, and the betrayal at the end of World War II, there is one other experience that must be counted among the heaviest defeats for the working-class movement of this century: that is the Indonesian catastrophe of 1965. Once again, here the working class was dominated by a mass Communist Party committed to the practice of Popular Frontism. In this case, however, the CP owed its allegiance not to Moscow but to Peking, and the architect of the defeat was not Stalin but Mao Tse-tung.

The Partai Komunis Indonesia, the Indonesian Communist Party known as the PKI, was not merely a mass party, it was the largest Communist party in the capitalist world. In a total population of 100 million, 3 million were actual members of the PKI and another 10- to 20-million organized in PKI-controlled unions, student groups, and women's and peasants organizations. And this, remember, was in a colonial country with no large middle class and with a very tiny and weak national bourgeoisie. Even a good section of the officer corps of the army, the only serious pillar of bourgeois rule, was organized into PKI cells. A socialist victory should have been a foregone conclusion even for a mediocre leadership.

Yet this entire imposing structure crumbled in face of

a military coup in October 1965 and the generals initiated a vast bloodbath against the ranks of the Indonesian working-class movement in which as many as 1,000,000 persons were murdered. Even to this day the death toll in Indonesia is comparable if not higher than the sum of all the victims of American imperialism in Vietnam over the last decade. The difference was that the Indonesian PKI never succeeded in mounting any significant resistance to the slaughter.

Maoism poses as a more revolutionary doctrine than the Moscow variety of Stalinism. In reality it merely combines elements of the antirevolutionary sectarianism of Third Period Stalinism with a class-collaborationist policy indistinguishable from latter-day Brezhnevism. In the advanced capitalist countries Maoists reject the united front and concentrate their fire on revolutionists who try to initiate genuine mass anticapitalist actions. Meanwhile on the governmental level Peking seeks peaceful coexistence with both the imperialist powers and with the neocolonialist regimes of the underdeveloped world. In the colonial countries the Maoist groups and parties are thoroughly committed to a classical popular front strategy that goes by the name of the "bloc of four classes."

Under this doctrine the working-class parties are to seek alliances with the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie in what they term a struggle against imperialism and feudalism. Although Mao sometimes talks about an "uninterrupted revolution" that is to result in socialism, this is spelled out as a variant of Stalin's theory of the revolution by stages, in which the first stage is to be a bourgeois-democratic revolution and the struggle for socialism is postponed to some vague future date. Mao also says that this four-class bloc is supposed to be under the leadership of the Communist party, but the practice has been very different. To keep the national bourgeoisie in the coalition it has been given uncritical and unquestioning support, from Sukarno in Indonesia to Yahya Khan in Pakistan to Bandaranaike in Ceylon, even when these regimes have turned to open repression of revolution.

The Indonesian PKI, with Mao's approval, made two fundamental revisions of Marxism in its theory in order to justify its long-standing alliance with Sukarno before 1965. First, it announced that the transition to socialism could be achieved without a revolution, through peaceful parliamentary means. Second, it abandoned the Marxist conception of the state as an instrument of class rule, declaring that Sukarno's government was a "people's state" that did not represent the bourgeois ruling class. Thus in 1965 PKI Chairman D.N. Aidit was able to write:

"At present, the state power in the Republic of Indonesia includes two antagonistic sides, one representing the interests of the people . . . and the other the interests of the enemy of the people. . . . The side supporting the people is becoming stronger day by day, the government of the Republic of Indonesia has even adopted revolutionary anti-imperialist measures." [*The Indonesian Revolution and the Immediate Tasks of the Indonesian Communist Party*, Foreign Languages Edition, Peking 1965, French edition, page 137-138.]

On the basis of this false theory the PKI took responsibility for Sukarno's government even as Sukarno was systematically restricting the mass organizations and building up the army and police that were ultimately used to destroy the PKI.

In 1959 Sukarno dissolved the democratically elected Constituent Assembly and proclaimed a return to the 1945 constitution which permitted him to rule by decree. This move was supported by the PKI, and D.N. Aidit himself put the motion for dissolution before the Assembly.

In January of 1960 Sukarno issued a law entitled "Conditions and Simplifications of the Party System" which imposed humiliating conditions that the PKI accepted without protest. The law demanded that the party affirm its belief in "the One and Only God Almighty," that it defend the 1945 constitution, and that it publicly recognize the right of the president to "dissolve any party whose program is aimed at undermining the principles and objectives of state policy. . . ."

Later that year the PKI obligingly complied with a government demand to turn over a complete list of names and addresses of its members! It accepted government censorship of its press, and did not break with Sukarno when he outlawed all strikes. Meanwhile both the PKI and the official publications of the Maoist government in Peking continued to publish speeches by Sukarno, describing them as contributions to Marxist-Leninist thought!

Aidit specifically urged the masses not to confront the government in struggle on any question whatsoever. "In the present situation," he wrote in 1964, "if conflicts arise between the government and the people, the only correct way to solve them is to reach agreement through consultation." [*The Indonesian Revolution, Its Historical Background and Its Future*. Djakarta, 1964, p. 73.]

Is it any wonder that the members of the PKI were taken by surprise by the army coup and that they were totally incapable of any serious struggle even in defense of their own lives?

After the counterrevolutionary butchery was already well underway the main concern of the PKI leaders was still to reassure the government of their unwavering loyalty and patriotism. On October 19, 1965, PKI second secretary Njoto told a Japanese correspondent of the *Asahi Shimbun*: "The PKI recognizes only one head of state, one supreme commander, one great leader of the revolution—President Sukarno," and that all party members should "fully support the directives of President Sukarno and pledge themselves to implement these without reserve."

The betrayal in Ceylon

In the last two years there has been a certain revival of Popular Frontism in the colonial world marked by the establishment of multiclass regimes in Ceylon and Chile. In Latin America in particular this is symptomatic of the weakness of the organized revolutionary forces and the degree to which they have been infected with ultra-leftism of the *guerilla-ista* variety. The series of defeats of efforts to initiate guerrilla campaigns since 1965, notably in Peru and Bolivia, and the resulting isolation of the revolutionists from the masses has given Stalinist and Social Democratic reformism a new lease on life.

I will deal only briefly with the events in Ceylon, with which you are all familiar. What distinguishes both Ceylon and Chile from the Popular Front coalitions we have already discussed is their more radical-sounding social program. In both cases the governments claim to have as their objective the construction of a socialist society. Here the rhetoric must be very carefully separated from the concrete policies of these regimes and the stated policies must be compared with the actual practice.

In Ceylon, the majority of the Trotskyist movement, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, capitulated to Popular Frontism in 1964 by joining the government of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party headed by Sirimavo Bandaranaike. The LSSP was immediately expelled from the Fourth International for this betrayal of the Ceylonese working-class. Our movement has written extensively on the reasons for this capitulation by the LSSP leaders which are beyond the scope of this talk. I can refer you to the record on this question in back volumes of *Intercontinental Press* and to articles in *The Militant* and the *International Socialist Review* during 1971. There is a long article by Ernest Germain, called "From Wavering to Capitulation—People's Frontism in Ceylon" which appears in the Fall, 1964 *ISR*.

The rationale given by N.M. Perera and the others who broke with Trotskyism was that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party was a petty-bourgeois rather than a bourgeois formation and that the LSSP would in any case soon win hegemony in the coalition government. This abstract class distinction is not a useful one in discussing parties that hold governmental power in the colonial world, where the indigenous bourgeoisie is very small and undeveloped. The criterion to be applied is the fact that the SLFP administered a capitalist state on the basis of a bourgeois program that did not challenge either foreign imperialism or native capital. No one, Perera included, ever contended that the SLFP was a working-class party of any kind.

As for the LSSP's hoped-for dominance in the coalition, it was from the beginning a small minority of the bloc, both in parliament and in the cabinet. Discipline in the bloc was exerted by Bandaranaike, not by the LSSP. By taking responsibility for the bourgeois state the LSSP became an appendage of the SLFP, not the other way around.

It was only a matter of time before the class struggle impelled the masses into a confrontation with the capitalist government and then to side with the government meant openly becoming an instrument of counterrevolution. This is the meaning of the military suppression of the youth revolt that swept Ceylon in April and May 1971. The whole gamut of powers committed to the preservation of the status quo came to the aid of the Ceylonese government in its fight against revolution. Without even a show of embarrassment Moscow and Peking joined American and British imperialism in sending military and financial aid to the Bandaranaike regime.

The Unidad Popular of Chile

The victory of the Unidad Popular coalition in the September 4, 1970, elections brought a Popular Front government to power in Chile under the leadership of Socialist Party head Salvador Allende Gossens.

Although broad sectors of the left in Latin America, including the Cuban leaders, have hailed this as a victory for socialism, it is in reality no different in any essential from previous Popular Front governments. Allende himself was minister of health in the 1938 Popular Front government in that country which administered the capitalist state for a time and then peacefully handed it back to more direct representatives of the ruling class.

The Unidad Popular is composed of six parties, the most important of which are the Socialist and Communist parties, and the bourgeois Radical Party, which has largely dominated Chilean parliamentary political life for

the last thirty years. There was no mass mobilization in action involved in Allende's victory. In fact even from the electoral viewpoint, Allende ultimately took office on the basis of a vote of confidence by the bourgeois parties and not by the masses. In the September election he won only a plurality, and the election was thrown into the Chilean Congress, where, on October 24, he received the endorsement of the outgoing Christian Democratic party leadership. Even Jorge Alessandri Rodriguez, the candidate of the right-wing National Party, withdrew from the congressional runoff in favor of Allende.

The bourgeois parties did not make this move out of fear of insulting the plurality that had given their votes to Allende in September. They did it because they were confident that Allende would not initiate any decisive challenge to capitalist rule. It was only after Allende agreed to a series of constitutional amendments sharply restricting presidential power in the key areas of control over the police and armed forces that the Christian Democrats approved his presidency. He has consistently said that, although he personally is a socialist, he has no intention of challenging basic capitalist property relations in the foreseeable future.

There have been genuine and far-reaching reforms carried out by the Allende government in its first year in office. The minimum wage was raised by 50 percent, while the rest of the working class received increases of as much as 30 percent. A freeze was put on consumer prices.

An important sector of foreign imperialist holdings in copper has been nationalized.

But, radical as these measures were, they do not in and of themselves threaten the basis of capitalism and were in fact all promised in the election platform of the Christian Democrats, a bourgeois party, in 1964. No move has been made to challenge private ownership of industry by the Chilean bourgeoisie. As for relations with imperialism, the actual flow of foreign capital in recent years has been away from mining and into light industry, so that only a particular sector of imperialist investment has come under attack. Even there, substantial compensation was promised.

To carry through a transformation to socialism would require the massive organization of block committees, workers councils, peasant leagues, committees of action. These would have to be prepared to face the army and police in an armed confrontation over the question of who should rule. The illusion Allende tries to create is that this confrontation has already taken place—at the ballot box—and that the outcome has already been decided in favor of socialism. "Social forces" he has been quoted as saying, "must express themselves through elections and the parliament."

The bourgeoisie thus far has been content to sit back and let things take their course as long as popular sympathy is running with the Unidad Popular and as long as their privileges and real power are not threatened. But unless the masses are organized for struggle only two alternatives are possible: If Allende's reforms prove ephemeral, as they must without really breaking with imperialism and putting the economy on an entirely different and more productive basis, disillusion will undoubtedly set in and the bourgeois parties can win back formal power in another election. Alternately, if the bourgeoisie at some point fears that popular expectations may push the radical measures further than they are prepared to go, there is always the army and a military coup.

The answer to this dilemma on the part of the Unidad Popular is neither to take decisive measures against the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state nor to prepare the masses to defend themselves but to try to take over the capitalist state more thoroughly by appointing more and more state functionaries who are members of the Communist and Socialist parties. Even at the time of the Paris Commune in 1871 Marx drew the central lesson that the old state apparatus, constructed for the sole purpose of sustaining the ruling class, could not be adapted to serve the needs of the socialist revolution but must be entirely smashed and replaced with newly created organs of workers self-government. In Indonesia, too, the PKI had infiltrated thousands of its members into the civil service bureaucracy and the army command structure. The ruling class had no difficulty distinguishing its supporters from its opponents inside its own state machinery and when the counterrevolution struck, the "Communist" state functionaries were the first to go, after the party leadership.

By its nature a Popular Front government provides certain opportunities for revolutionists if its true nature is thoroughly understood. The very fact that such a government can be elected is symptomatic of a deep-going radicalization that has prompted the bourgeoisie to invite the reformists to join the government in an attempt to keep the masses under control. The concessions that such a government generally is prepared to make in its initial stage can whet the appetite of the masses for further struggle. But this can only happen if the revolutionists take no responsibility whatsoever for the procapitalist Popular Front regime and convince the masses in time that this regime is not socialist but its antithesis. At every stage the revolutionary party must build the independent mobilization of the masses in opposition to the popular front, counterposing to it the united front of struggle in action against all capitalist governments.