

The Present Rulers of the Capitalist Countries Are but Temporary, the Real Master of the World Is the Proletariat

By GEORGI DIMITROFF

(Speech Delivered at the Close of the Seventh Congress of the
Communist International on August 20, 1935)

(Comrade Dimitroff's appearance on the platform is greeted by a storm of cheers. All delegates rise and applaud heartily. Shouts of "Red Front!" "Banzai!" "Hurrah!" "Long Live Comrade Dimitroff!" Orchestral flourish. The ovation continues for several minutes.)

COMRADES, the work of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, the Congress of the Communists of all countries, of all continents of the world, is coming to a close.

What are the results of this Congress, what is its significance for our movement, for the working class of the world, for the toilers of every land?

It has been the Congress of the *complete triumph of the unity between the proletariat of the country of victorious socialism, the Soviet Union, and the proletariat of the capitalist countries which is still fighting for its liberation.* The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union—a victory of world-historic significance—gives rise in all capitalist countries to a powerful movement toward socialism. This victory strengthens the cause of peace among peoples, enhancing as it does the international importance of the Soviet Union and its role as the mighty bulwark of the toilers in their struggle against capital, against reaction and fascism. It strengthens the Soviet Union as the base of the world proletarian revolution. It sets in motion throughout the whole world not only the workers, who are turning more

and more to Communism, but also millions of peasants and farmers, of the hard-working petty townsfolk, a considerable proportion of the intellectuals, the enslaved peoples of the colonies. It inspires them to struggle, increases their attachment for the great fatherland of all the toilers, strengthens their determination to support and defend the proletarian state against all its enemies.

This victory of socialism increases the confidence of the international proletariat in its own forces and in the tangible possibility of its own victory, a confidence which is itself becoming a tremendously effective force against the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The union of forces of the proletariat of the Soviet Union and of the militant proletariat and toiling masses in the capitalist countries holds out the great perspective of the oncoming collapse of capitalism and the guarantee of the victory of socialism throughout the whole world.

Our Congress has *laid down the foundations for so extensive a mobilization of the forces of all toilers against capitalism as never existed in the history of the working class struggle.*

Our Congress has set before the international proletariat, as its most important immediate task, that of consolidating its forces politically and organizationally, of putting an end to the isolation to which it had been reduced by the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, of rallying the toilers around the working class in a wide people's front against the offensive of capital and reaction, against fascism and the threat of war in each individual country and in the international arena.

We have not invented this task. It has been prompted by the experience of the world labor movement itself, above all, the experience of the proletariat of France. The great service which the French Communist Party performed consists in the fact that it grasped the need of the *hour*, that it paid no heed to the sectarians who tried to hold back the Party and hamper the realization of the united front of struggle against fascism, but acted boldly and in a Bolshevik fashion, and, by its pact with the Socialist Party providing for joint action, prepared the united front of the proletariat as the basis for the anti-fascist people's front now in the making. (*Applause.*) By this action, which accords with the vital interests of all the toilers, the French workers, both Communists and Socialists,

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have once more advanced the French labor movement to first place, to a *leading position* in capitalist Europe, and have shown that they are worthy successors of the Communards, worthy exponents of the glorious heritage of the Paris Commune. (*Storm of applause. All rise. Shouts of "Hurrah!" Comrade Dimitroff turns around to face the presidium and is joined by the entire audience in applauding Comrade Thorez and the other French comrades on the presidium.*)

It is the great service of the French Communist Party and the French proletariat that by their fighting against fascism in a united proletarian front they helped to prepare the decisions of our Congress, which are of such tremendous importance for the workers of all countries.

But what has been done in France constitutes only initial steps. Our Congress, in mapping out the tactical line for the years immediately ahead, could not confine itself to merely recording this experience. It went further. We, Communists, are a class party, a proletarian party. But as the vanguard of the proletariat we are ready to arrange joint actions between the proletariat and the other toiling classes, interested in the fight against fascism. We, Communists, are a revolutionary party; but we are ready to undertake joint action with other parties fighting against fascism.

We, Communists, have other ultimate aims than these parties, but in struggling for our aims we are ready to fight jointly for any immediate tasks which when realized will weaken the position of fascism and strengthen the position of the proletariat.

We, Communists, employ methods of struggle which differ from those of the other parties; but while using our own methods in combating fascism, we, Communists, will also support the methods of struggle used by other parties, however inadequate they may seem to them, if these methods are really directed against fascism.

We are ready to do all this because, in countries of bourgeois-democracy, we want to block the road in the way of reaction and the offensive of capital and fascism, prevent the abrogation of bourgeois-democratic liberties, forestall fascism's terrorist vengeance upon the proletariat, the revolutionary section of the peasantry and the intellectuals, save the young generation from physical and spiritual degeneracy.

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We are ready to do all this because in the fascist countries we want to prepare and hasten the overthrow of fascist dictatorship.

We are ready to do all this *because we want to save the world from fascist barbarity and the horrors of imperialist war.*

(Here Comrade Weber, a delegate of the German Communist Party, mounts the platform and presents to Comrade Dimitroff an album in the following words: "Comrade Dimitroff, in the name of the German Communist Party delegation I deliver this book into your hands, a book of the heroic exploits of the revolutionary fighters of Germany. It was you who by your conduct at the Leipzig trial and your entire subsequent activity served as an example for the German Communist Party, for the German anti-fascists, in their struggle. Accept this book, this song of the heroism of the proletarian fighters of Germany, to whom you have furnished an example to follow, who give up their freedom, their health, their lives in the cause of the revolution!" Comrade Dimitroff accepts the album and warmly embraces Comrade Weber. Loud applause, shouts of "Hurrah!" cheering.)

Ours is a Congress of struggle for the preservation of peace, against the threat of imperialist war.

We are now raising the issue of this struggle in a new way. Our Congress is decidedly opposed to the fatalistic outlook on the question of imperialist war emanating from old Social-Democratic notions.

It is true that imperialist wars are the product of capitalism, that only the overthrow of capitalism will put an end to all war; but it is likewise true that the toiling masses can obstruct imperialist war by their militant action.

Today the world is not what it was in 1914.

Today on one-sixth of the globe there exists a powerful proletarian state that relies on the material strength of victorious socialism. Guided by Stalin's wise peace policy, the Soviet Union has already more than once brought to naught the aggressive plans of the instigators of war. (Applause.)

Today the world proletariat, in its struggle against war, has at its disposal not only its weapon of mass action, as it did in 1914. Today the mass struggle of the international working class against

war is coupled with the influence of the Soviet Union as a state, of its powerful Red Army, the most important guardian of the peace, (*Loud applause.*)

Today the working class is not under the exclusive influence of Social-Democracy participating in a *bloc* with the bourgeoisie, as was the case in 1914. Today there is the World Communist Party, the Communist International. (*Applause.*) Today the bulk of the Social-Democratic workers are turning to the Soviet Union, to its policy of peace, to a united front with the Communists. Today the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries do not regard their liberation as a hopeless cause. On the contrary, they are passing on more and more to determined struggle against the imperialist enslavers. The best evidence of this is the *Soviet revolution in China* and the heroic exploits of the *Red Army of the Chinese people*. (*Stormy applause. All delegates rise. Loud cheering.*)

The popular hatred of war is constantly gaining in depth and intensity. In pushing the toilers into the abyss of imperialist wars the bourgeoisie is staking its head. Today not only the working class, the peasantry and other toilers champion the cause of the preservation of peace, but also the oppressed nations and weak peoples whose independence is threatened by new wars. Even some of the big capitalist states, afraid of losing out in a new redivision of the world, are interested *at the present stage* in the avoidance of war.

This gives rise to the possibility of forming a most extensive front of the working class, of all the toilers, and of entire nations against the threat of imperialist war. Relying on the peace policy of the Soviet Union and the will of millions upon millions of toilers to have peace, our Congress has opened up the perspective of unfolding a wide anti-war front not only for the Communist vanguard but for the working class of the whole world, for the peoples of every land. The extent to which this world-wide front is realized and put into action will determine whether the fascist and other imperialist war incendiaries will be able in the near future to kindle a new imperialist war, or whether their fiendish hands will be hacked off by the ax of a powerful anti-war front.

Ours is the Congress of the *unity of the working class*, the Congress of struggle for a united proletarian front.

We entertain no illusions on the subject of the difficulties which

the reactionary portion of the Social-Democratic leaders will place in the path of realizing a united proletarian front. But we do not fear these difficulties. For we reflect the will of millions of workers; for we serve the interests of the proletariat best by fighting for a united front; for the united front is the surest road to the overthrow of fascism and the capitalist order of society, to the prevention of imperialist war.

At this Congress we have raised aloft the banner of *trade union unity*. Communists do not insist on the independent existence of the Red trade unions at all costs. We, Communists, want trade union unity. But this unity must be based on actual class struggle and on putting an end, once and for all, to a situation in which the most consistent and determined advocates of trade union unity and of the class struggle are expelled from the trade unions of the Amsterdam International. (*Applause.*)

We know that not all those working in the trade unions affiliated with the Red International of Labor Unions have understood and assimilated this line of the Congress. Among these workers there are still remnants of sectarian self-satisfaction which must be overcome if the line of the Congress is to be carried out firmly. But we shall carry out this line whatever the cost, and shall find a common language with our class brothers, our comrades in the struggle, the workers now affiliated with the Amsterdam International.

At this Congress we have taken the course of forming *a single mass political party of the working class*, to end the political split in the ranks of the proletariat, a split caused by the class collaboration policy of the Social-Democratic Parties. To us the political unity of the working class is *not a maneuver* but a question of the future fate of the entire labor movement. Should there be any people in our midst who approach the question of the political unity of the working class as a maneuver, we shall fight them as people bringing harm to the working class. Precisely because our attitude on this question is one of absolute seriousness and sincerity, dictated by the interests of the proletariat, we lay down definite fundamental conditions to serve as the basis for such unity. We have not invented these fundamental conditions. They are the result of the experience gained from the sufferings of the proletariat in the course of its struggle; they are also in accordance with the will of millions of Social-Democratic

workers, a will engendered by the lessons of the defeats suffered. These fundamental conditions have been tested by the experience of the entire revolutionary labor movement. (*Applause.*)

Since proletarian unity has been the keynote of our Congress, it has been not only a Congress of the Communist vanguard, but a Congress of the entire international working class thirsting for militant trade union and political unity. (*Applause.*)

Though our Congress was not attended by delegates of the Social-Democratic workers nor by non-party delegates, though the workers herded into fascist organizations were not represented, the Congress has spoken not only for the Communists but also for these millions of workers. It has expressed the thoughts and feelings of the overwhelming majority of the working class. (*Applause.*) If the labor organizations of various trends were to hold a really free discussion of our decisions among the workers of the whole world, there is no doubt in our minds but that they would support the decisions for which you, comrades, have voted with such unanimity.

So much the greater our duty as Communists to render the decisions of our Congress in actual fact the property of the entire working class. To have voted for these decisions is not enough. Nor is it enough to popularize them among the members of the Communist Parties. We want the workers affiliated with the parties of the Second International and the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions as well as the workers affiliated with organizations of other political trends to discuss these decisions jointly with us, bring in their amendments and make practical proposals; we want them to deliberate jointly with us how decisions can best be carried into life, how they can best realize them in practice jointly with us, hand in hand.

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

Standing firmly on the impregnable position of Marxism-Leninism, which has been confirmed by the entire experience of the international labor movement, and primarily by the victories of the great October Revolution, our Congress, acting in the spirit and guided by the method of *living Marxism-Leninism*, has reshaped the tactical lines of the Communist International to meet the changed world situation.

The Congress has taken a firm decision that the united front tactics must be applied *in a new way*. The Congress is emphatic in its demands that Communists do not content themselves with the mere propaganda of general slogans about proletarian dictatorship and Soviet Power, but that they pursue a definite, active, Bolshevik policy with regard to all internal and foreign political questions arising in their country, with regard to all urgent problems that affect the vital interests of the working class, of their own people and of the international labor movement. The Congress insists most emphatically that all tactical steps taken by the Communist Parties be based on a sober analysis of actual conditions, on a consideration of the relation of class forces, and of the political level of the broadest masses. The Congress demands the complete eradication of every vestige of *sectarianism* from the practice of the Communist movement, as this represents at present the greatest obstacle in the way of the Communist Parties carrying out a really mass, really Bolshevik policy.

While imbued with the determination to carry out this tactical line and filled with the conviction that this road will lead our Parties to major successes, the Congress has at the same time taken into account the possibility that the carrying out of this Bolshevik line may not always be smooth sailing, may not always proceed without mistakes, without deviations here and there to the Right or to the "Left"—deviations in the direction of *adaptation of trailing behind events and the movement*, or in the direction of *sectarian self-isolation*. Which of these constitutes, "speaking generally", the main danger is a dispute in which only scholastics can engage. The greater and worse danger is that which at any given moment and in any given country represents the greater obstacle to the carrying out of the line of our Congress, to the development of the correct mass policy of the Communist Parties. (*Applause.*)

The cause of Communism demands, not abstract, but *concrete struggle against deviations*; the prompt and determined rebuff of all harmful tendencies, as they arise, and the timely rectification of mistakes. To replace the necessary concrete struggle against deviations by a peculiar *sport*—hunting imaginary deviations or deviators—is an intolerably harmful twist. In our Party practice every encouragement must be given to develop initiative in formulating new questions. We

must assist in having the questions concerning the activity of the Party discussed from every angle, and not hastily set down as a deviation or other every doubt or critical remark made by a Party member with reference to practical problems of the movement. A comrade who committed an error must be given an opportunity to correct it in practice, and *only those who stubbornly persist in their mistakes and those who disorganize the Party are to be flayed without mercy.*

Championing, as we do, working class unity, we shall with so much the more energy and irreconcilability fight for *unity within our Parties.* There can be no room in our Parties for factions, or for attempts at factionalism. Whoever will try to break up the iron unity of our ranks by any kind of factionalism will get to feel what is meant by the Bolshevik discipline that Lenin and Stalin have always taught us. (*Applause.*) Let this be a warning to those few elements in individual Parties who think that they can take advantage of the difficulties of their Party, the wounds of defeat or the blows of the raging enemy, to carry out their factional plans, to further their own group interests. (*Applause.*) *The Party is above every thing else!* (*Loud applause.*) *To guard the Bolshevik unity of the Party as the apple of one's eye is the first and highest law of Bolshevism!*

Ours is a Congress of *Bolshevik self-criticism and of the strengthening of the leadership of the Communist International and its Sections.*

We are not afraid of pointing out openly the mistakes, weaknesses and shortcomings in our ranks, for we are a revolutionary Party which knows that it can develop, grow and accomplish its tasks only if it discards everything impeding its development as a revolutionary Party.

And the work which the Congress has accomplished by its merciless criticism of self-satisfied sectarianism, of the use of cut-and-dried schemes and stereotyped practices, phlegmatic thinking, substitution of the methods of leading a Party for the methods of leading masses—all this work must be continued in an appropriate manner in all Parties, locally, in all links of our movement, as this is one of the most essential preconditions for correctly carrying into life the decisions of the Congress. (*Applause.*)

In its resolution on the report of the Executive Committee, the

Congress resolved to concentrate the *day-to-day leadership* of our movement in the Sections themselves. This makes it our duty to intensify in every way the work of forming and training cadres and of reinforcing the Communist Parties with genuine Bolshevik leaders, so that at abrupt turns of events the Parties might quickly and independently find correct solutions for the political and tactical problems of the Communist movement, on the basis of the decisions of the Congresses of the Communist International and the Plenums of its Executive Committee. The Congress, when electing the leading bodies of the Communist International, strove to constitute its leadership of such people as accept the new lines and decisions of the Congress and are ready and able firmly to carry them into life, not from a sense of discipline, but out of profound conviction. (*Applause.*)

It is likewise necessary in each country to ensure the correct application of the decisions adopted by the Congress. This will depend primarily on appropriately testing, distributing and directing the cadres. We know that this is not an easy task. It must be borne in mind that some of our cadres did not go through the experience of Bolshevik mass policy, but were brought up largely along the lines of general propaganda. We must do everything to help our cadres reorganize, to be retrained in a new spirit, in the spirit of the decisions of this Congress. But where the *old bottles* prove unsuited for the *new wine*, the necessary conclusions must be drawn—not to spill the *new wine* or spoil it by pouring it into the *old bottles*, but to replace the *old bottles* by *new ones*. (*Loud applause.*)

We intentionally expunged from the reports as well as from the decisions of the Congress *high-sounding phrases* on the revolutionary perspective. We did this not because we have any ground for appraising the tempo of revolutionary development less optimistically than before, but because we want to rid our Parties of an inclination to replace Bolshevik activity by revolutionary phrase-mongering or futile disputes about the appraisal of the perspective. Waging a decisive struggle against any reliance on spontaneity, we take account of the process of development of the revolution, not as passive observers, but as active participants in this process. By proceeding as the party of revolutionary action—fulfilling at every stage of the movement the tasks that are in the interest of the revolution, the tasks that correspond to the specific conditions of the given stage, and soberly taking into consideration the political level of the wide toiling

masses—we accelerate, more than in any other way, the creation of the subjective preconditions necessary for the *victory of the proletarian revolution.* (Applause.)

“*We must take things as we find them,*” said Marx. “*We must utilize revolutionary sentiments in a manner corresponding to the changed circumstances. . . .*”*

This is the gist of the matter. This we must never forget.

Comrades: *the decisions of the World Congress must be brought home to the masses, must be explained to the masses, must be applied as a guide for the action of the masses, in a word, must be made the flesh and blood of millions of toilers!*

It is necessary to encourage everywhere as much as possible *the initiative of the workers in their respective localities*, the initiative displayed by the lower organizations of the Communist Parties and the labor movement in carrying out these decisions.

When leaving here, the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat must bring to their respective countries the firm conviction that we, Communists, bear the responsibility for the fate of the working class, of the labor movement, the responsibility for the fate of our own nation, for the fate of all toiling humanity.

To us, the workers, and not to the social parasites and idlers, belongs the world—a world built by the hands of the workers. The present rulers of the capitalist world are but *temporary* rulers.

The proletariat is the *real master, tomorrow’s master of the world.* (Loud applause.) And it must enter upon its historical rights, take into its hands the reins of government in every country, all over the world. (Applause.)

We are disciples of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin. We should be worthy of our great teachers. (Applause.)

With Stalin at their head the millions of our political army overcoming all difficulties and courageously breaking through all barriers must and will level to the ground the fortress of capitalism and achieve the victory of socialism throughout the whole world! (Storm of applause.)

Long live the unity of the working class!

Long live the Seventh Congress of the Communist International!

* Marx, *Letters to Kugelmann*, p. 38, International Publishers, New York.

(Loud applause, passing into an ovation. The orchestra plays the "Internationale" in which all delegates joint. Cheers from the various delegations: "Long Live Stalin!" "Long Live Dimitroff!" "Hurrah!" "A triple 'Red Front'!" The French delegation sings the "Carmagnole"; the Czech delegation, "The Scarlet Banner"; the Chinese delegation, "The March of the Chinese Red Army"; the Italian delegation, "Bandiera Rossa"; the German delegation, "Red Wedding". Shouts from the delegations: "Long live the helmsman of the Communist International, Comrade Dimitroff!" "Hurrah!" Applause. Thorez: "Hurrah for the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Comrade Stalin!" "Hurrah for the Communist International and its helmsman, Comrade Dimitroff!" Renewed shouts of "Hurrah". The orchestra plays the "Internationale.")