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No. 2

*International Front and
National Front*

The Labour Movement

*Propaganda: Aims and
Methods*

THE COMMUNIST PARTY ITS THEORY AND PRACTICE

**A SERIES OF OUTLINES
FOR USE IN CLASSES**

3^d

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**A SERIES OF OUTLINES
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IN using these outlines for classes, tutors are recommended to open the discussion with a very brief statement, which should not exceed ten minutes and should serve merely to turn the students' attention to the subject. This is followed by questions which the tutor asks the students to answer in their own way and from their own experience as far as possible.

The questions given in each outline should be only the starting point; when a student answers, the answer should be the basis for a question to another student, which should lead to the development, or, if necessary, correction, of the first answer. Thus each contribution should make the point clearer; and then the tutor should briefly sum up, bringing out the essential points, before passing on to the next main question.

To get the best value out of the class, the tutor must *control* the discussion, keeping it to the themes in the outline. If the students wish to raise other points, they should be noted and discussed separately at the end of the class.

Students should have copies of the outline, and should read it before the class, and, if possible, also the "essential reading"—which, in any case, should be read as soon as possible after the class. Suggestions for further reading will be found at the end.

No. 1 in this series covered the following subjects: Dialectics as an Aid to Political Work; The Party of a New Type; Problems of Factory Group Organisation.

Further Outlines in this series are in preparation.

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International Front and National Front

Essential Reading: Stalin Speaks (speeches July 3, November 6 and 7, 1941); *The Way to Win*, especially pages 27-37.

Opening of Discussion

WHEN the German monopoly capitalists put Hitler in power in 1933, the aim was not only to destroy the progressive movement in Germany, but to organise war for German imperialist domination of the world. It was in the interest of the British people, as well as the Soviet and all the other peoples, to combine against this menace, which meant the complete destruction of democracy and the national independence of the peoples.

But powerful sections of the ruling class in Britain, France, etc., fearing the people, encouraged fascism as a bulwark against every popular movement, and particularly against the Soviet Union.

The movement in Britain for working-class unity and the people's front was hindered by the reactionary outlook of the Labour leadership; it was therefore unable to defeat Chamberlain's Munich policy, or to establish the British-French-Soviet alliance against Nazi aggression, which could have prevented the war.

Ever since Soviet power was established in Russia, and the armies of intervention defeated, the Bolshevik leaders knew that further imperialist attacks were inevitable. Their policy was, therefore, while always striving for peace, to build up Soviet armed power, to postpone the attack, and to prevent it being made by a united imperialist world.

Under Stalin's leadership, this policy has succeeded. The attempts made by reactionary sections in Britain, France and the U.S.A. to combine with fascism against the Soviet Union were defeated; and Hitler Germany's attack on the Soviet Union

came at a time when the Anglo-American imperialist group saw alliance with Socialist Russia as essential to prevent German imperialist domination of the world.

At the same time, Nazi conquest of France and smaller capitalist countries of Europe brought about a wide national unity in those countries, which also saw alliance with Socialist Russia as essential for national liberation. This outlook is shared in other capitalist and colonial countries whose independence is threatened by Axis imperialism.

So here has come into being an **international front** of capitalist States and peoples, along with the Socialist State and people, against the German imperialists who attacked the Soviet Union.

This is a completely new stage in history, involving new conditions for the working class in each capitalist country. The necessary firmness of the International Front can only be based on a National Front within each country. The victory of the International Front against Hitler Germany is essential for any advance of the working class; the National Front within each country is essential for that victory.

Questions for Discussion

1. What makes it possible for classes and parties, with different class interests and outlook, to unite? (The fact that they have a common immediate aim). Ask for some examples of unity in other countries; which classes were united; what was their common aim? (Spain:—Unity of workers, peasants, Republican and National capitalists against the royalist-landlords—big monopolists, who allied themselves with German and Italian fascists; China:—Workers, peasants, capitalists, even some landlords, against Japanese imperialists and their Quislings.)

2. What makes it possible for imperialist Britain and U.S.A. to unite with the Socialist Soviet Union? (The common aim of defeating Hitlerite Germany, which threatens all). Is this present unity complete and firm? (The main section of capitalists in the imperialist countries sees the need for unity with Russia to destroy Hitlerism; but another section does not want to destroy Hitlerism, which it regards as a bulwark against Socialism and

the advance of the people everywhere. This section therefore tries to undermine the Alliance with Russia, to prevent its full operation in practice, and to delay effective action, in the hope of being able to make a deal with German imperialism. The activities of this section are a constant danger to international unity against fascism, and must be countered by the widest anti-fascist unity).

3. In this struggle, which section is in fact getting stronger? (The section that stands for unity with the Soviet Union, shown in actual strengthening of relations with the Soviet Union—ask questions to bring out stages: Churchill's declaration of June 22nd, 1941; supplies begin to go; the Beaverbrook mission to Moscow, and agreement on regular and increasing supplies; joint convoys; Molotov's mission to London, May, 1942, Twenty Years Treaty and Second Front Agreement; Churchill's visit to Moscow, August, 1942. In summing up, quote Stalin (November 6th, 1941): "The coalition of the U.S.A., Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. is a real thing which is growing and will continue to grow").

4. What has helped this process forward? (National unity, which adds the political strength of other sections—workers, middle classes and small capitalists—to the political strength of the monopoly-capitalist section that wants unity with Russia to defeat Hitler). What would hinder the growing firmness of the Alliance with Russia? (Any action that weakens national unity—that is, any action that divides the workers and middle classes from the monopoly-capitalist section that wants unity with Russia). What examples are there of such action? (Siding with Munichites in votes against Churchill's government—supporting by-election candidates against the Government candidate—raising issues such as "Socialism Now").

5. What must we do to strengthen national unity? (Every form of joint activity between all classes and sections in the war effort—joint production committees in the factories—joint propaganda campaign—active fight against Munichites and splitters). Which class should be most concerned with national unity? (The working class, as the most consistent enemies of fascism). What is the difference between "class collaboration"

and national unity? (*Class collaboration* is the alliance of Labour leaders with the capitalists for aims that are contrary to the interests of the mass of the workers—the MacDonald-Baldwin coalition of autumn, 1931, a clear example: its aim was to cut unemployed pay and wages of workers and men in the forces. *National unity* is the alliance of the working class with other sections, including capitalists, for aims that are in their common interests: the defeat of fascism).

6. Does national unity require the working class to accept the present personnel and policy of the Government? (No, it must strive to clear out those who are not for the defeat of fascism; and it must press the Government to adopt a more vigorous policy to win the war). Does such pressure weaken national unity? (On the contrary, it checks and, if it develops sufficient strength, defeats the Munichites and others who really undermine national and international unity). What are the chief points on which we should press the Government now? (To develop the offensive to a Second Front in Europe; a National Government for India; a real drive for production, overcoming the vested interests). Give examples of successful pressure? (Clearing out of Moore-Brabazon and Margesson; withdrawal of ban on *Daily Worker*). What would be the guarantee of successful pressure on every point? (A really active Labour movement, influencing all other anti-fascist sections of the people). How can this be secured? (By action in the Trade Unions, Co-operative and Labour Party organisations, to press for the Second Front in Europe, etc., and to establish unity in action with the Communist Party).

The Labour Movement

Essential Reading: Lenin's "*Left Wing*" Communism, Chapters IV and VI; *The Way To Win*, pp. 30-37, 55-57.

Opening of Discussion

THE Labour movement—Trade Union (with about 6 million members), Labour and Communist Parties, and Co-operatives (8 million families)—is the greatest organised section of the people. But numbers alone do not give strength, which depends on activity and policy that guides the activity. The Labour Movement is not pulling its weight in influencing national policy, because it is not united on a clear policy to win the war, and actively working to press that policy on the Government. In order to achieve victory, it is essential to increase the influence of the Labour Movement within the National Front; this can be done only through *unity in action* for the policy of the Second Front, a National Government for India, maximum production.

We have therefore the threefold job (1) to win all sections of the Labour Movement to see that this policy is correct and in the interests of the working class; (2) to stimulate all sections into action for this policy; (3) to get united action.

The experience of the *Daily Worker* campaign shows that it is possible to carry out this job, and also that once this is done the demands put forward by the movement are irresistible.

A really united Labour Movement could change the whole course of events. To achieve this we must ourselves:

- Understand the nature and importance of the organisations;
- Have close connections with and work as part of them;
- Be able to win them for our policy;
- Put forward positive proposals for action.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the Labour Movement? Is the Communist Party a part of it? What is the purpose for which the other organisations were built up? (Trade Unions—to protect and advance wages and working conditions; Co-operatives—to protect the interests of workers as consumers; Labour Party—

to get working-class representatives into Parliament and local authorities and secure legislation in working-class interests).

2. What actual organisations of the Labour Movement exist in your Borough? (To bring out: Trade Union Branches, sometimes T.U. Women's Guilds; Shop Stewards; Trades Council; Labour Party, Local, Divisional or Borough, group on Local Council, Women's Section, Ward organisation; Co-operative Society, Party, and Guilds; Communist Party; Workmen's Clubs; perhaps others). What connections has the Communist Party with the other organisations? (Members in them; friends and workmates of members in them; delegates from our Trade Union Branch or Co-operative Guild in them. Bring out the point by concrete examples that there is no organisation with which there is no possibility of contact). What is the work of each of these organisations? (To bring out the point that each has an important part to play in the working-class struggle, and the Communist Party is therefore concerned to see all strong and active).

3. What is our responsibility to other organisations in the Labour Movement? (To bring out the points (1) to strengthen the organisation and its activity in the war effort; (2) to win it for the policy of the Second Front, and to take action—political pressure, production activity, etc.—in support of the Second Front; (3) to win it for association with other working-class bodies—Trade Union branches and Co-operative organisations to affiliate to Trades Council and Labour Party, also joint activities of all organisations). What is the best way of strengthening the organisation, its policy and its activity? (To give it a clear Marxist understanding of the struggle for Socialism, as against both the reformist outlook and "Leftist" tendencies; and to win the most politically developed and active members of it for the Communist Party).

4. What are the chief obstacles, in the outlook of our own members, that hinder us from fulfilling our responsibility to the other organisations? (Try to get concrete cases illustrating: our own reluctance to tackle the job seriously, owing to failure to understand the potential importance of these organisations, however weak they may now seem, or seeing only a few officials and not the mass of the membership; or, failing to realise that events have changed the outlook of many former "reaction-

aries"; or, a false "Communist pride" which regards politically undeveloped people as useless; or absorption in too many inner-Party meetings, etc., without direct effect on the masses).

What are the chief obstacles we have to overcome in the organisation itself? (Reactionary outlook of leading members of some organisations, which often can be overcome only by pressure from the membership; or, the hesitation of even good militants to act on lines not favoured by their E.C. or Transport House, which again can only be overcome by backing from the membership; or, sectional interests and outlook which hinder officers and members from seeing the CLASS interest in doing everything for the defeat of Hitler; or, "passivity," which can only be overcome by political agitation among the members, combined with very concrete and simple proposals for action.)

5. What can a Trade Union Branch do in the campaign for the Second Front? (To bring out: its own work as a Branch—passing resolutions and sending them to the Trades Council, its District Committee, its National Executive, the Government, the press, deputations to local M.P.s, etc.; also joint activity with other organisations—sending joint deputations, sending speakers to joint meetings, etc.).

What can other organisations do? (Try to get concrete examples of what has been done, and what more could be done.)

What proposals has your Party branch put forward to the Labour Party, Trades Council or other Labour organisation for activity in support of the Second Front and the war effort? How did it put them forward? What response has there been? How is it being followed up?

On what local issues is the Labour Party, Trades Council or other Labour organisation active? What can the Party Branch do to help (directly, and through other organisations)?

6. Is it necessary for the Party to carry on an independent campaign, in addition to trying to stimulate activity by other organisations in the Labour Movement? (Yes, because (1) it is the most important way of stimulating activity by other organisations, since it rouses the interest of their members; (2) it shows the other organisations what can be done; (3) it shows the Communist Party as the most active organisation in the working-class fight against fascism, and wins members for the Party, thus making it stronger to help the other organisations).

Propaganda : Aims and Methods

Opening of Discussion

THE Party Congress, and leading committees of the Party, adopt policies to advance the interests of the working class and the whole people, in relation to the situation at particular times. If the policy is to be made effective, it must be made known and explained to the people, and support won for it. Every member of the Party has to take part in this work. But special propaganda departments are necessary, to plan and organise systematic propaganda in addition to the individual work of the members, and to provide materials (pamphlets, leaflets, speakers and notes, etc.), which can be used by the members in order to spread knowledge of the policy, and win support for it.

But passive support for a policy has no direct influence on events. Therefore "agitation" is necessary—to win workers for some form of political activity which will help, for example, to bring pressure on the Government to open the Second Front in Europe. Propaganda for our policy should always be accompanied by agitation, that is, putting forward definite suggestions for action by those who agree with our policy. These suggestions should take into account the general political development of the workers concerned, in such a way that workers who are new to political activity are asked to do very simple things (such as signing a petition), while active trade unionists can be asked to move resolutions in their Branch, send deputations, etc.

Before they can carry out even personal propaganda effectively, Party members must know and be able to explain the policy of the Party, and to show that it is in the people's interests. This involves study of the Party press, the current pamphlets and other material issued by the Party on that issue, as well as discussions in Branches and Groups.

But to get a really thorough understanding, it is necessary not only to read and study the immediate policy, but to make a study of the general theory of Communism—to get "political

education"—by attending classes and reading about the experiences of the working class in order to learn the lessons of past experience and **be able to apply them to the present.**

(Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, Ch. III: "Theory is the experience of the working-class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect. Of course, theory becomes aimless if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory").

We also try to interest non-Party people in Marxist theory, so that they become supporters not only of our policy on particular points, but of Communism in general, and therefore join the Party and help us in our work.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the aim of all Communist Party propaganda? (To make people realise what policy is in their immediate and future interests, and to get them into political activity for this policy). How does the Communist Party know what is in the interests of working people? (Because it sees things from the standpoint of the theory of the working-class struggle). Who decides the policy of the Communist Party? (General lines of policy: the Party Congress; between Congresses, the Central Committee). Does Communist policy change? (If the situation changes, the policy must change, or it will not only be "out-of-date," but *wrong*, contrary to the interests of the people). Is it enough to have a general line of policy? (No; the policy has to be applied to the actual conditions of each industry, area, group of workers, etc. Ask for one or two examples). Who is responsible for applying the general policy to particular cases? (The Party group concerned, but always in consultation with the leading Party Committee; examples—coal policy: committee of Party members who are miners, in consultation with Central Committee, or District Committee if it is a District question, or the leadership of a pit group in consultation with the Party Branch Committee, if it is a pit question).

2. In order to be able to win the workers for the policy which has been put forward, what must every Party member do? (Know exactly what is the policy, and the reasons for it). What

therefore is the first job of the Propaganda Department—Centre, District, Branch or Group? (To see that as far as possible every member of the Party knows the general policy and understands the reasons for it; and that the Party members concerned with special applications of this policy—for example, miners for mining policy—similarly know and understand that special aspect of the policy). How does the Propaganda Department carry out this job? (By preparing material, or distributing material already prepared, which states the policy and the reasons for it; by providing fuller material to comrades who will explain the policy at Branch or Group meetings; by getting in reports of questions asked or doubts expressed, and providing special material to answer these).

3. Apart from the personal propaganda by individual Party members, what are the main ways in which the Party carries its policy to the people? (**Meetings:** ask questions to bring out different kinds and their special uses—indoor and outdoor public meetings; factory gate; special invitation; open Branch or Group; joint meetings, arranged by the Party and other organisations; meetings of other organisations addressed by Party speakers; question and answer meetings. **Literature:** pamphlets and periodicals and books. Ask questions to bring out the best use of different pamphlets, taking actual examples, showing to *whom* we try to sell them in order to get the maximum political results. Also further questions to bring out the point that we try to *develop* the political outlook of readers—current or specialised pamphlet at first, regular periodical, pamphlet explaining Party's general aim, Marxist theory, and so on—from which draw conclusion that the literature seller who stays at one level with his orders is not really doing his job). What is the special use of **posters**? What is the special use of **leaflets**? How should we try to get our policy stated in the **non-Party press**—trade union, co-operative, local? (Try to get actual experiences, and develop to show how each form of propaganda *breaks new ground*. If there are local experiences, also bring in **films, plays, music**—not in detail, but to give comrades *the widest possible idea of propaganda*).

4. What section of the people is it most important to convince that the policy we put forward is in their interests, and

that action in support of it is necessary? (The workers already organised in the Labour Movement, and their organisations, which influence not only their own members but also very many unorganised workers). How do we set about convincing them? (To bring out actual experiences in winning support from Labour Party, Trade Union and Co-operative organisations and individuals. This will have been partly covered in the preceding section, from the standpoint of using the different forms of propaganda; here the point is to show how each organisation is tackled with *all forms* of propaganda *continuously* and *in a developing way*, so that the members are not only convinced on particular issues, but they become more class-conscious and more active, *more Communist* in their outlook). How do we set about winning support for our policy from the workers at their place of work? (Treat in the same way—from outside, from inside the factory—use of all forms of propaganda in a continuous way, so that we win whole factories, pits and depots for our policy). Is it important to win support for our policy from other sections of the people? (To bring out who these sections are—special attention to housewives, young workers, professional and technical workers and other “middle class” people—make the same point of *continuous* and *developing* propaganda).

5. How is a propaganda campaign organised? (To bring out actual experiences of Branches, Factory Groups and Area Groups in carrying out a campaign, say for the Second Front; get discussion on what else could have been done, or how better results could have been obtained, drawing on the experience of other members of the class, or on reports of what was done elsewhere). On the basis of this discussion, what are the chief points to consider when planning a campaign? (Exactly what the campaign is for, and what practical results are aimed at; to whom exactly the campaign is directed, in terms of actual organisations, actual factories, etc.; what printed material is available, and the best use of it; what material the Branch or Group itself should get out; various forms of meetings; what non-Party organisations or individuals can be asked to help in the campaign; what exactly we ask those who have been won for our policy to do—pass resolutions, send telegrams, appoint deputations, etc.). In summing-up, point out the need to check

up on the plan as it progresses, using successes to encourage similar action elsewhere, and giving special help where there is failure or weakness.

6. What is the purpose of the Party's political education? (To give members a better understanding of working-class experience—theory—so that they will be able to apply it to the actual conditions with which they are faced). What can each member do to get this better understanding? (To bring out the points: read current pamphlets and periodicals; read the writings of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and of British Marxist writers; discuss with other Party members any points that are not clear; try to apply the lessons learnt to current problems, and when faced with problems, try to find how similar problems were dealt with in the past). What are the main forms of organised political education? (All forms of classes, collective discussions, lectures; advice on what to read; and what correspondence courses or other individual study to carry out). Why are classes or discussions particularly valuable? (Because they help to clear up many points which may not be clear in reading; because it is easy, by concrete examples, to show how the theory fits into current problems, and how it helps to guide action; because it helps comrades not only to understand, but to be able to explain the points to others).

In summing up the whole discussion, bring out the point that all forms of propaganda should be combined, each supplementing the other; so that comrades organising meetings, literature sales, education, press work, etc, should be linked together in a Propaganda Department, with a Propaganda Organiser to lead and control all sides of the work.

SOME other pamphlets and books which will be of special interest to those who have been through this syllabus are:—

INTERNATIONAL FRONT AND NATIONAL FRONT

The speeches of Ercoli and Dimitrov at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, 1935 (now out of print; but many comrades have the text as pamphlets or reports in International Press Correspondence).

From People's Front to National Front, by Ernst Fischer, 2d.

Britain in the World Front, by R. Palme Dutt (Lawrence & Wishart, 5s.), especially chapters i. and ii.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Lenin on Britain (Lawrence & Wishart, 3s. 6d.). Chapters covering the British Labour Movement.

It Can Be Done (Report of 1937 Congress, Communist Party of Great Britain), pages 52 to 75; *For Peace and Plenty* (Report of 1938 Congress C.P.G.B.), pages 45 to 64.

Britain in the World Front, by R. Palme Dutt, chapter xii.

Labour's Way Forward, by Emile Burns, 2d.

PROPAGANDA AND EDUCATION

What Is To Be Done? Lenin (Little Lenin Library. Lawrence & Wishart, 2s.), chapter iii.

Stalin's *Leninism*: pages 515 to 527 (Lawrence & Wishart, 7s. 6d.).

Pamphlets with practical suggestions for organising propaganda: *How to Organise Public Meetings*; *How to Sell Literature*. (1d. each).