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The Communist Party of France

Manifesto

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY HARRY PO

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FOREWORD

by

HARRY POLLITT

THE collapse of France in June, 1940, was a severe blow to the people of France and to the cause of the United Nations. From all that has been said and written since then it is now universally recognised that France was betrayed from within, a victim of Nazi fifth column work through penetration into the highest circles of industry, finance, state institutions and the armed defence forces of the country.

On the collapse, a handful of traitors, men unworthy of the name of Frenchmen, set about adding insult to injury by seeking to bring about collaboration with the Nazi enemy. Stunned by the extent of the catastrophe that had overtaken the country a certain confusion existed for a time among the people of France. Very soon, however, they came to see that France was faced with the alternative—to fight or go down as a nation of slaves.

There were numerous obstacles to be overcome before a revival could take place. There were some of little faith who said: "Wait; wait till our Allies come!" This trend of thought was encouraged, unfortunately, by advice from outside France. How often have we listened to talks over the Radio saying: "Don't waste your forces; wait! You will be told when to strike." It is clear from all that has happened during the last three years that had such advice been seriously heeded, France would by now have been a nation of helots, completely under the heel of the Nazi jackboot.

Fortunately, another and a wiser advice was given. It is to the eternal honour of the Communist Party of France that its voice was the first to call for resistance inside France.

In the month of July, 1940, the Communist Party issued a call to action in which it said: "France will never become

a Colonial country; France, with such a glorious past will never kneel before a handful of lackeys. . . . The hopes of national and social liberation reside in the people."

Since then the movement of resistance has grown to such an extent that today the handful of traitors and collaborators are no longer even hopeful of winning the people of France to the Nazi social order.

Resistance in France, as emphasised over and over again by the French Communist Party, can only be truly effectual through National Unity, the Alliance of all French men and women, irrespective of party, creed or social origin, having the primary aim of chasing out the invader and winning back the independence and freedom of democratic France.

For our Communist comrades these are not idle words. . . . The Communist Party of France has already made great sacrifices for these aims, and paid a heavy price in precious blood. Ten thousand of its adherents have given their lives for France, including a number of its foremost leaders and deputies, men like Gabriel Péri, Pierre Semard, Jean Cathelas and a host of others—all true sons of France.

The Communist Party of France today is recognised by all sections of the resistance movement in the country as a powerful force. As such it is conscious of its responsibilities to the people of France and will not shirk them, as some have tried to make believe from certain happenings recently in Algiers. When the time comes to reveal the full story of what took place during the meetings of the National Liberation Committee in Algiers, and all speculations have been brushed aside, it will be seen that the French Communists took a stand in conformity with the highest interests of the resistance movement and the people of France. And not all the influences of reaction at work will deflect them from their patriotic course.

Today, the Communists in France are tracked, spied upon by Vichy collaborators and, when caught, given over to the bestialities of the Gestapo, but the Party grows in strength of numbers, influence and authority among the people. To drive out the invader and liberate the country from the Nazi barbarians and their criminal collaborators is the first task put before the people of France by the French Communist Party.

But while regarding as an expensive luxury, all "blue prints" as to the kind of France to be after the liberation, the Party has not lost sight of certain fundamental aims born out of the grim experience of the people of France.

Those who want to know the views of the French Communist Party as to what kind of democracy France should have, and what sort of conditions should emerge from the new France after the liberation will find the answers in the following pages. These pages contain a translation of a Manifesto prepared by the Party inside France under the very nose of the Gestapo, and a further explanation of the general situation by Waldeck Rochet, one of the French Communist Deputies. I trust they will be read and studied by thousands in all ranks and circles in the British Labour movement.

HARRY POLLITT.

The Communist Party of France

Manifesto

FRENCHMEN! FRENCHWOMEN!

The Communist Party of France, proud to be regarded as Enemy No. 1 by the invaders and oppressors of France and by their lackeys, the Vichy traitors, stands before you in order to refute the slanders zealously spread about it by the enemies of France and of civilisation. We are going to tell you what we have done, how we have fought for the liberation of the Motherland, what are our great ideals—which we intend to transform into living reality—and to call upon you to help us to accomplish this noble task.

The French Communist Party, founded in 1920, has always been strong in the defence of the interests of the common people, which correspond to the true interests of France. For this it has been persecuted by the great trusts and their agents, who sought to set up a fascist dictatorship in our country and who, since the occupation of France by the Hitlerites, have collaborated with the enemy and with the traitors to the Motherland.

The French Communist Party took the lead in the fight against Fascism during the attempted uprising of February 6, 1934, when Fascism tried to gain power from within. Thanks to its Marxist-Leninist analysis, it was able to uncover the real nature of Fascism, which is nothing but a bloody terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary and rapacious imperialist elements.

Knowing full well the peril in which the rise of Fascism placed France—not only the internal menace, but also the external menace which arose through Hitler's seizure of power in 1933—the French Communist Party saw that its task was to unite all the enemies of Fascism, all lovers of liberty; to bring together all Frenchmen worthy of the name into a front against the threat of Hitlerism.

The French Communist Party, throwing everything into the job of uniting Frenchmen against the fascist peril, sought first of all to bring about unity of action with the Socialist Party. This it achieved, despite the vicious hostility of certain politicians like Paul Faure, Spinasse, Desphilippon, etc., who have since become full-blown collaborators with the Boches. At the same time, the members of the French Communist Party, led by Benoit Frachon, strove in their Trade Unions to bring about Trade Union unity, and this too, was achieved, in spite of the animosity of such men as Belin, Dumoulin and Company, who have now become the servants of the Hitlerites.

Then the French Communist Party sought to bring into being a Popular Front—that is, the unification of all forces capable of putting up a front-line defence against the threatening forces of Fascism. But, knowing that many Frenchmen who were opposed to the Popular Front for ideological reasons were yet deeply hostile to Hitlerism on patriotic grounds, the Communist Party of France launched the idea of the "French Front."

This bold and courageous lead was branded by some as a trap and by others as hypocrisy, for politicians were not used to seeing a great party sweep away petty considerations and sectional interests for the greater benefit of the Motherland, threatened by the most bestial forces the world has ever known.

The French Communist Party, although its philosophy is completely divorced from all religious beliefs, had, through its general Secretary, Maurice Thorez, extended the hand of friendship to the Catholics; and the idea of unity of all Frenchmen, despite all barriers, was gathering strength in the hearts of all our countrymen. But Hitler, and his Fifth Column in France, were watching and waiting, engineering violent anti-Communist campaigns, whose real object was to isolate France and lead her to her doom.

1. What were France's Internal Interests?

After the General Election of 1936, in which the Popular Front triumphed, it was a matter of urgency to put a stop to the crying social injustices perpetuated by the trusts (starvation wages, long working hours, no holidays with pay, no security of employment, violation of Trade Union rights, and so on). The peasants had to be assured of a sale for their produce at economic prices, and the small business man and artisan had to be defended against the rapacity of the big trusts.

Realisation of such social reforms would give the mass of the people solid moral and material reasons to love their country, and to be ready to make any sacrifice in its defence. It was, in fact, a matter of bringing back into the service of their country—of a human and generous Motherland—the mass of the forgotten men whom Big Business had robbed of their place in the community of the nation.

But Hitler and his Fifth Column were watching and waiting. Had they allowed these plans to become a reality, France would quickly have become very strong; manufacture of armaments would have developed at staggering speed, and the conquest of Europe by German imperialism would have been very much more difficult. Their main need, therefore, was to break the unity of all Frenchmen and disrupt the development of their productive effort; and so we saw the most cynical sabotage of the new social policy on the part of the great trusts.

The mineowners of the Nord and the Pas-de-Calais, who nowadays are exploiting the richest seams for the benefit of the Boches, deliberately set out to work unproductive seams in order to reduce the output of coal. In the armament shops, work was purposely unorganised, workers were left with nothing to do, employers closed down factories when complying with the "holidays with pay" order instead of giving their workers holidays according to a roster. One of the leaders of the Metal Workers' Union in the Paris region, the young Communist worker Jourdain, at this time published a bitter indictment of the sabotaging tactics of Big Business. Today these saboteurs collaborate with the Boches, while Jourdain has been handed over to the Gestapo by the Vichy police, and one can only

guess what has become of him at the hands of the Nazi criminals.

The Communist Party of France denounced all these acts of sabotage, it denounced the scandal of the failure to carry through a scheme of aircraft production on the pretext that there was no aluminium supply at a time when bauxite was being sold on credit to Germany, and the Nazis were using it in their huge warplane construction programme. But the governments of the day were lacking in energy; they fell for anti-Communist manoeuvres, and thus played into the hands of Hitler, whose Fifth Column, with such gentry as de Brinon, Laval, Déat, Doriot and Bergery, could act without the slightest let or hindrance.

The French Communist Party had thrown all its energies into the task of uniting all Frenchmen against the menace of Hitlerism, as the true interests of France demanded, but the enemies of our country had been able, in banking on the Communist bogey, to divide France, to weaken her internally at the same time as they had isolated her from other freedom-loving peoples.

2. What were France's External Interests?

Hitler's advent to power should have been a serious warning to all Frenchmen. Hitler had actually expressed his policy with regard to France in his book "Mein Kampf"—and the relevant passages had been brought to the attention of the French people by the Communist Party of France. In his book, Hitler wrote: "It is necessary to recognise clearly that the mortal enemy, the relentless enemy, of the German people is and remains France." And Hitler, who had unequivocally expressed his desire to isolate our country in order to annihilate her, set to work to put his plan into action without coming up against any serious resistance.

In 1935, Hitler reintroduced compulsory military service in Germany, and in 1936 he re-occupied the demilitarised Rhine zone, without calling forth any reaction. In 1936, in company with Mussolini, he intervened militarily in Spain—and the only opposition encountered was that of the "non-intervention" policy which left him with both hands free to tighten his

stranglehold on the Spanish Republic. In March, 1938, Hitler annexed Austria; and Chautemps resigned, leaving France without a Government while this was going on. In September, 1938, the Munich agreement handed over a part of Czechoslovakia to Hitler, and at the same time formed a wide gulf between France and the U.S.S.R.

The interests of France demanded the realisation of a *bloc* of all nations menaced by Hitlerite Germany, comprising in the first place France, Britain and the Soviet Union. A pact of mutual assistance between France and the Soviet Union had been signed by Laval, who proceeded to sabotage it, and his successors allowed it to fall into abeyance while Hitler's Fifth Column in France devoted itself to unfounded slanders against the U.S.S.R.—saying that the Red Army was worthless as a fighting force, and so on; (subsequent events have proved just how unfounded these calumnies were).

In March, 1939, cynically violating the Munich agreement, Hitler annexed Czechoslovakia, showing once again that for him treaties were so many "scraps of paper." It was in the interests of France that the anti-Hitler powers should immediately unite, but the sabotage of France's true interests continued, and the reactionary Polish Government played an infamous role in ensuring that the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations should come to nothing; after which the U.S.S.R. was obviously right in having no more confidence in the people who had already engineered the Munich agreement (which was clearly directed against the Soviet Union), and who now seemed to want to "do another Munich."

In exactly the same way as anti-Communism had served the enemies of France internally in their efforts to weaken the country, so too, externally, anti-Soviet propaganda was the main weapon of these same enemies in their plan to isolate her.

Then came the period of the "phoney war," with the persecution of Communists whilst the agents of Hitler spied in the ante-rooms of the Ministries—de Brinon in the Senate; Laval in the Chamber; Déat, Bergery, etc., in the General Staff, in the armament plants and elsewhere. It was said at that time that the "real war" would not be against Hitler, but against the U.S.S.R.; and all this time Hitler was preparing his

Blitzkrieg, which was to lead our country to the most terrible debacle in its history, and which was to make Pétain, Laval, de Brinon and Co., the beneficiaries of defeat, the assassins of the Republic and executioners acting on orders from the Boches.

3. How the French Communist Party Resisted the Enemy

After the fall of France, the various political parties disappeared and showed no further sign of life; but, right from the beginning of July, 1940, the French Communist Party, dogged by the Vichy police and the Gestapo, launched an appeal to the people of France within France itself.

Part of this appeal read as follows:

"France, though still bleeding, wants to live free and independent; a great people like ours will never become a nation of slaves. France will never become a sort of Colonial country; France, with her glorious past will never kneel before a gang of lickspittles ready for any dirty work. It is with the people that the great hopes of national and social liberation lie. And it is around the working class, keen and self-sacrificing, full of confidence and courage that there can be built the front of liberty and independence that the weapons of the new France can be forged. . . ."

Thus, at the same time as General de Gaulle was launching his appeal for resistance, the Communist Party, which had been persecuted by the capitulators and traitors, was rallying its members against the invaders and their lackeys, who joined forces in a man-hunt of the militant Communists.

Ever since the month of July, 1940, the Gestapo and the Vichy Police had been arresting large numbers of militant Communists, among them Timbaut, Poulmarch, Granet, Perroault and others who were later shot as hostages at Chateaubriant at the behest of the sinister Pucheu.

Hundreds, thousands of the best Communists died a heroic death in the cause of national liberation; some shot by the Nazis or guillotined by the Vichy traitors, others killed under arms, fighting with detachments of Francs-tireurs or Partisans against the accursed invader and his traitor henchmen. Among them were Pierre Semard, Councillor of the Seine Department and member of the Party's Political Bureau; Gabriel Péri, a deputy,

and member of the Central Committee; Félix Cadras, municipal councillor of Calais, and Central Committee member; Jean Cathelas, deputy member of the Central Committee; Michels, deputy; Auffret, Le Gall, Frot, Grandel, Gardette, all Seine councillors; young Guy Mocquet and many others. They died crying "Vive la France!" and singing in the face of their executioners the great lines of the "Marseillaise"—battle-cries of the vengeance to come.

It was through these martyrs that the enemy strove to strike at the Communist Party of France; at its great newspaper *l'Humanité* (whose former general secretary, Lucien Sampaix, was also shot); and at the militant Trade Unionist members of the Party, who, with the *Vie Ouvrière* (Workers' Life) led, and are still leading, the implacable fight for workers' rights and for Trade Union unity.

The Communist Party of France, which was the first to raise the standard of resistance on the soil of the Motherland, calling upon all Frenchmen to unite, launched an appeal in May, 1941, for the formation of a National Front of struggle for the independence of France, and it set to work to bring about the unification of all groups in the resistance movement.

It was because of its intense desire to unite all the forces of the real France that the French Communist Party sent Fernand Grenier as delegate to the French National Committee; took its place on the National Council of Resistance; warmly welcomed the creation of the French National Committee of Liberation, and is calling for the formation in every locality of committees of "Fighting France," whose task is to lead and organise the patriotic action against the invader and to act as a centre of support inside France for the French National Committee of Liberation organised by de Gaulle and Giraud—which is the *de facto* government of France.

And so the Communist Party can be proud of having written glorious pages in the history of the resistance of the people of France, and the blood of its martyrs has been and is being shed without stint for the salvation of the country. Communists know how to suffer stoically and to die bravely because they have the spirit so magnificently manifested by Gabriel Peri before he fell to the Nazi firing-squad:

... Let my friends know that I have remained faithful to the ideal I have held all my life. Let my countrymen know that I die so that France may live.

I have examined my conscience for the last time. I have no regrets. This is what I should like to tell everyone: if I had my life over again I would follow the same road.

Tonight I firmly believe that my dear Paul Vaillant-Couturier was right when he said that Communism was the regeneration of the world and that it would prepare the way for the radiant dawn. I am about to make my contribution to the coming of the radiant dawn. Without doubt it is because Marcel Cachin was my good teacher that I face death with fortitude.

Adieu! And long live France!

And the credit which is due to the Communist Party has been recognised by General de Gaulle in a letter addressed to members of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party on February 10, 1943.

These are his main points:

"The arrival of Fernand Grenier and the support of the Communist Party for the National Committee which he brought me in your name, the putting at my disposal, as Commander-in-Chief of the French forces, of the valiant Franks-tireurs whose bands you have formed and inspired—these are all signs of the unity of France, and a renewed proof of your will to contribute to the liberation and greatness of our country. I am convinced that your decision constitutes an important contribution to the national interest, and I thank you sincerely for it.

"Great efforts, great sacrifices will be demanded of you, after all those already made in the service of France by members of your Party. You know, as I do, that effective co-ordination of the resistance organisations is an indispensable foundation of our common aim—the liberation of France, at the earliest possible moment, with the active and effective participation of all Frenchmen. I am certain that the representatives whom I have chosen will find in the responsible delegates of the Communist Party of France a willingness to co-operate which will stop at no sacrifice, and the same loyal discipline which already exists in your own organisations.

"The hour of our greatest efforts is approaching. At the moment when, under the blows of the valiant Russian armies, German military might is reeling, it is important that French patriots should play their part side by side with our Russian and Anglo-American Allies, in the liberation of their national territory. I know that Fighting France can count upon the Communist Party of France."

4. What is the Communist Party of France?

The unwavering discipline of the Communist International was the school in which the Communist Party of France was reared; it is a Party in which there is no room for ambitious

politicians and unscrupulous careerists. One does not join this Party *to make use of it*, but *to be of use*. It is a school of courage and self-sacrifice, a body of men and women adhering to the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, to the teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, whose strength lies in the fact that *it is true*.

Communists have a scientific conception of the world, *dialectical materialism*, which is linked with the *philosophical materialism* of the French Encyclopaedists of the 18th century. And because they know the laws of the development of society, Communists know that today the conditions exist in which it is possible for Communism, oldest and grandest dream of mankind, to become a complete reality.

Communists are painted by their enemies as gross materialists, vulgar self-seekers. But the truth is that Communists, whose philosophy is dialectical materialism, show that they know how to make any sacrifice for the noble ideal of the emancipation of humanity and in the search for the happiness of mankind.

The Communist Party of France is the Party of the people, of the disinherited, of the oppressed; it is the Party of all progressive Frenchmen—that is, of the great mass of the nation.

It is the Party which, guided by Marxism-Leninism, and by the teachings of Stalin, has been able to show clearly how the Nation represents a factor in human liberation and for the closer co-operation of the peoples under conditions of equal rights.

It is the Party which knows, at each stage, how to distinguish the possible from the unrealisable; the Party which knows how to judge each situation in a realistic way, and which never shirks responsibilities.

It is the Party of builders, of constructors. Its members have proved this at the head of municipalities which they have administered; and in the Soviet Union, Communists have shown their capabilities in building up a country which once was backward and a prey to ignorance into one of the strongest industrial countries of the world—a country of the most up-to-date agriculture, of socialist construction, education for all; the country of modern humanism where man himself is the most precious capital of all.

It is a Party in which discipline is the same for all its members, where the democratic control exercised in normal times by the

mass of its members over the activity of its leaders in each of the various Party formations is replaced by a quasi-military discipline for the present period of relentless struggle for the salvation of the country. No indulgence is shown to anyone, whatever his position, when he fails to carry out the tasks assigned to him.

It is a Party which opens its ranks to all citizens, men and women, even if they do not fully agree with its philosophy, on condition that they respect the discipline of Party, scrupulously carrying out its decisions, and do not attempt to propagandise inside the Party in favour of philosophical conceptions other than those of the Party.

And the Communist Party of France, which is the Party of the people, workers and peasants; the Party of small men, of those who work with their hands, is also the Party of the intellectuals, professors, artists, who find in it new horizons. By shooting the professor, Politzer and the young scientist Jacques Solomon, the Nazis have shown how dangerous for them is the great attraction of the Communist Party of France for the intellectual leaders of France.

5. What are the Aims of the Communist Party of France?

The aims of the Communist Party of France are, first of all:

- (a) To free the soil of France from the invader.
- (b) To punish all traitors.

(c) To assure to the people of France the right to choose their own government. This free choice of the sovereign nation will be so much the easier if Committees of Fighting France are formed in all localities, bringing together all patriots and organising the fight for liberation, as proposed by the Communist Party to the various resistance groups.

These are the first objectives to be gained, and everything must be put into operation to realise these primary conditions of national revival. For this reason the Communist Party places the *fight with all weapons* for the liberation of the Motherland before *everything else* at the present moment. It never ceases to point out the evil done to the cause of national deliverance

by the passive "creators of systems," who talk glibly of the future, but do nothing to prepare for it. For there is no other way of assuring the future of France than by conducting *now* the fight against the Germans and against the traitors in the most implacable manner possible.

But its understanding of the immediate tasks confronting all Frenchmen does not prevent the Communist Party from having views on the future. It is aware that it would be foolish to dream of a simple continuation of the pre-war order in the future. It believes, as General de Gaulle said in his speech in Tunis, that new measures will be required tomorrow to raise up France and to guide her on the path of progress.

The French people will have to solve the great problems set by the political organisation of the country. It is not enough to regain liberty. In order not to lose it afresh, it is necessary to organise it on a solid, specific basis. On this point the views of the French Communist Party are very precise. The vices of democracy, as we knew it, can only be corrected by a broader and more genuine democracy. The weakness of the Third Republic did not lie in the control the nation could exercise over its governments, but in that it could not exercise a sufficient degree of control.

In the absence of effective and efficient control on the part of the nation, the powers of money were able to warp the structure of democracy, corrupt politicians, thwart the will of the electorate and provoke a veritable degeneration of the Republic. The remedy lies, not in the abolition of democracy, but in its perfection, in its enlargement. This presumes freedom of conscience for all, believers and non-believers, freedom of the press, freedom of association and of public meetings, the inviolability of the home, and the secrecy of correspondence, as well as respect for the person of the individual, and absolute equality of all citizens before the law.

Democracy would not, however, be complete if certain essential social rights were not added to these political rights; the right to work and to leisure, the right of all workers to benefit from social insurance at state cost, covering all risks of accident and illness, affording an adequate pension to aged workers, and the right of all to education.

All French men and women should enjoy these political and social liberties. The only exception should be—the enemies of the nation. Those who are guilty of collaboration with the enemy have excluded themselves from the French community. They should not be permitted to enjoy those liberties of which they, with the aid of the barbarous enemy, have wished to deprive the French people for ever, and their estates should revert to the nation which they have betrayed.

The resurrection of France cannot be seriously envisaged without the adoption of certain energetic measures, such as the definite suppression of trusts, the return of the great means of production to the nation, the abolition of exploitation of man by man. Thus and thus only will it be possible to undertake the methodical organisation of prosperity.

After the trusts have been definitely suppressed, and the great means of production returned to the nation, national economy will be directed by the nation itself, through the intermediary of its competent organs. Then it will be possible to organise the production and distribution of products according to a plan.

The aim of the plan is the expansion of the nation's wealth. The increase of the nation's well-being requires the continuous augmentation of the share of every citizen of the products of national labour. In order that this share may increase, it is necessary that national labour should always be producing more. For this reason, the plan conceives continuous increase in production.

Increased production is attained, under the reign of trusts, by increased exploitation of the workers. In a France freed from trusts it will be obtained solely by the development of industry and agriculture, by technical improvement, and by an organisation of labour which will increase the yield whilst husbanding the forces of the labourer.

In an economy that is under the direction of trusts, this increase in production is not accompanied by the growth of the nation's prosperity. The greater part of the national revenue is devoured by the trusts. That is why the growth of poverty runs parallel to the increase in production. In such an economy there can be no continuous increase in production. Economic crises occur periodically, arresting production and causing the destruc-

tion of immense quantities of wealth, whilst millions of human beings are in a state of utter destitution.

In an economy freed from trusts, the growth of production determines the growth of prosperity. The growth of national prosperity will depend on the increase in production.

In an economy under the direction of trusts, the aim of production is profit, and above all monopoly profit. In an economy definitely freed from trusts, the aim of production will be the satisfaction of human needs. For the first time French production will have as its object the satisfaction of the needs of the French.

Thus the foundations of a new France, in which there will be no more exploitation of man by man, has often been represented as the abolition of private property, which is not the case. The private property of the mass of the citizens will, on the contrary, be able to be developed, to be multiplied, and be assured with the disappearance of the exploitation of man by man.

The definite suppression of trusts, the liquidation of the exploitation of man by man, will have as their result the establishment of French unity. In such a France there will be no more class struggles. All citizens will be producers and no Frenchman will exploit other Frenchmen.

Such are the problems which France will have to solve tomorrow to maintain the unity of its sons, forged in the midst of suffering, and to maintain a strict unity with the Allies that will guarantee the future.

And this reborn France, with a young People's Republic, will have an army freed from all class spirit, an army with young, energetic, tried commanders, ardently devoted to the Motherland, as were the military leaders of the French revolution. It will be an army joining hands with the people, in a common love of the Motherland and a common respect of the sovereign rights of the nation. We already have the embryo of this army in the detachments of francs-tireurs and partisans, soldiers without uniform, whose fight on the soil of the Motherland is the continuation of the battle of the French soldiers of Bir Hakim, of Fezzan and of Tunisia.

6. Frenchmen, Frenchwomen !

Now you know what the French Communist Party is, and what are its aims—this Party which has no other goal but the liberation and rebirth of France, this Party which has been saying for years that it is in France itself that we must seek and find the solution to national problems and bring about the salvation of the country.

The enemies of the Communist Party of France (and the history of recent years shows that they are also the enemies of France) have launched venomous attacks against our Party. They have tried to turn honest Frenchmen away from it by slandering it and by slandering the Communist International which had, among its other merits, that of having seen and shown to all the world that Fascism is the mortal enemy of humanity, and of having worked for the unity of all men of good will in combating this terrible peril.

Now, after having fulfilled its historic mission in constituting Communist Parties which everywhere are in the front line of the peoples' struggle against the plans of the Nazi Imperialists, the Communist International has dissolved itself; and nothing now exists to serve as a barrier to prevent the many patriots who know what the Communists have done and are daily doing from joining the French Communist Party.

Every Frenchman who wants to fight today to free the Motherland, to assure its liberty, independence and greatness tomorrow, should take his place in the Communist Party of France.

To join the Communist Party of France means that a Frenchman pledges himself to work for the unity of all Frenchmen for the struggle, and for victory; he pledges himself to combat the tendency to "wait and see," to combat lack of faith in the destiny of our people, to work to raise the morale of the French people to the level which is needed in these times; he pledges himself never to shrink from any sacrifice necessary to carry forward the fight for liberation to final victory, in the spirit of the famous saying of Saint-Just, "Circumstances are only difficult for those who fear the grave."

7. Join the Communist Party of France

The Communist Party of France asks all Frenchmen and Frenchwomen who want to work for the unity of the French people, to liberate and rebuild their country, to join the Party, applying to those members of the Party whom they know. And the Frenchman who knows no one to whom he can signify his intention of joining the Party need only look for two neighbours, friends, or workmates, with whom he can constitute a *Party Group of three*, a group which will carry on propaganda for developing the ideas contained in this manifesto, a group which will organise the formulation of demands in factories and other places of work, and will recruit new fighters for the detachments of Francs-tireurs and Partisans.

These Party Groups of three, born of popular initiative, and formed either by old members of the Party who are isolated, or by new adherents, will, by their activity as Communists speedily attract the attention of the regional organs of the Party or of the nearest sections and liaison should be quickly established.

In the dark days in which we are living, the Communist Party of France has confidence in the initiative of the masses of the people to constitute *new Party Groups of three*, new cells comprising a maximum of *three groups of three*, plus a leading body of three comrades, and new sections branching out into one or more fresh localities, which will come later to take their place in the regional organ of the Party and reinforce the fighting potential of our great Party, for the greater good of France.

In constituting Party groups of three, new members must take good care to keep these groups under cover in order to guarantee their safety. We must know how to avoid attracting the attention of the enemy, we must mistrust all gossip, never brag, never say anything about having joined the Communist Party; never forget that the Boches and the Vichy police in their service are treacherous and astute, and that in the interests of the country it is necessary to be more artful than they are.

Frenchmen! Frenchwomen! Join the Communist Party of France! Come and swell our ranks! Come and do your job as Communist patriots, in publishing and distributing the

propaganda material of the Party, recruiting new fighters for Francs-tireurs and Partisan detachments, organising all forms of activity against the enemy. And do this patriotic work without laying yourself open to the blows of the enemy by any imprudent acts. Never forget that arrests in many cases are the consequence of foolhardiness and that the duty of Communists is to be among the best and most devoted fighters for national liberation, for whom the supreme law is "*Do the greatest possible harm to the enemy in order to hasten the day of his collapse.*"

Joining the Communist Party of France means taking your place in the steeled ranks of the most ardent, clear-sighted and courageous; it means strengthening the Party which fights for the unity of all Frenchmen; it means taking up arms in the fight for freedom, to bring back to France her lost liberty, independence and greatness.

Frenchmen, Frenchwomen, join the Communist Party of France, the Party of Maurice Thorez, Jacques Duclos, André Marty, Benoit Frachon, Marcel Cachin, Arthur Ramette, Gaston Monmousseau, Lucien Midol, Francois Billoux, Charles Tillon and other far-seeing and firm leaders whose acts have always conformed with their words.

Join the Communist Party of France with the watchword: "For the Liberation of France."

Take your place in our ranks, to fight, side by side with our Anglo-Soviet-American allies, the great fight for freedom, which will bring about the final destruction of barbarous Fascism and thus, by our efforts and sacrifices, there shall arise tomorrow

**FRANCE, FREE, STRONG AND HAPPY
VIVE LA FRANCE!**

The Work of the Communist Party of France

By WALDECK ROCHET

IN NORTH AFRICA, as in France, the work of our Party, whose influence amongst all sections of the working people is continually growing, is directed towards a single end: the mobilisation of all our energies in order to hasten the liberation of France and the destruction of Fascism. It is this fundamental concern that has guided the representatives of our Party at Algiers during their negotiations with de Gaulle with regard to Communist participation in the National Committee of Liberation.

Our Central Committee in France has agreed to participate in the Committee on the basis of the following five conditions:

1. Full and immediate preparation for war. The greatest possible increase in the strength of the French National Army, and the arming of the soldiers without uniform who are fighting in metropolitan France.
2. Punishment of the traitors who are already in the hands of the French authorities.
3. A bold democratic and social policy which will stimulate the greatest popular support for the war.
4. A policy of unity between the people of France and those of the French Empire, in order to carry out the legitimate demands of the native peoples.
5. Strengthening of France's role in the United Nations on the basis of respect for French independence.

When General de Gaulle asked if the Communists were ready to take part in the Government, the delegates from our Central Committee declared that we were ready to assume the fullest responsibility for helping to carry out the war programme described above. So far, however, the question of Communist participation in the Committee of Liberation has not been satisfactorily solved. This is not the fault of our comrades in Algiers, who have strictly carried out the mandate which they

received from France. The fact of the matter is that our Party has not been given the opportunity of participating in the work of the Committee on conditions which would ensure our representatives real responsibility and at the same time, the possibility of acting effectively.

The French people have done—once and for all—with Fascism, and the domination of the monopolists. We French Communists are extremely optimistic about the future. We are convinced that our Party, which is the strongest political party in the Resistance Movement, will play a more and more important part in the political life of France tomorrow. There may be some people who dream of rebuilding France without, or against, the Communists. But if so, they are only running their heads against a brick wall. The France of tomorrow will not be rebuilt without us or against us, for we Communists have already proved our loyalty to the cause of our people.

Whatever may happen, and in spite of all political manoeuvring, at the present time our Party, which puts the struggle against the invader before everything else, will pursue a policy of unity—the policy which our representatives have already proclaimed in the Consultative Assembly at Algiers. Whether or not we are represented on the National Committee of Liberation, we shall support it in so far as it carries on the war, side by side with the Allies, against the invader and the Vichy traitors, and offers to the French people the opportunity to decide their own future when Victory has been won. We shall support it by opposing all who seek to divide it or sabotage its work, and by bringing it the mass support of the people to achieve the tasks which confront France at war. These tasks are as follows:

In the first place, a powerful French army must be reorganised on a new basis. The results so far achieved in this field are by no means negligible, but they are not yet sufficient. The new army of Africa has at its disposal only a few divisions fully equipped for battle. If a large scale recruiting campaign were launched, however, it would be possible very quickly to raise 1,000,000 men, a real national army determined to fight against Hitlerism. But when creating such an army, it will be necessary to exclude all those officers who are still attached to the Vichy

regime. Not only have they no right to command the French Army of today but, moreover, they have lost the confidence of the soldiers.

Secondly, the French patriots who are fighting on the soil of France must be armed. The heroic struggle of the Francs-tireurs and Partisans as well as the experience in Corsica, when the people succeeded in freeing four-fifths of the Island before the first French troops had landed, prove what a tremendous part these armed patriots will be able to play in the liberation of our country. An Allied landing in France, without the support of the people, might prove to be a difficult operation, but if the Army can count on the support of the whole people the Fascist invader will quickly be exterminated. That is why the Committee of Liberation, as well as the Allies, must supply arms and munitions to the French guerillas. Unfortunately, the help they have so far received has been insignificant. The usual explanation of this is the physical difficulties on the one hand, and, on the other, reluctance on the part of the Allies. True, there are difficulties, but there is also, we believe, something else; fear of the people. This fear must be overcome, for it hinders and delays the liberation of all those peoples who today are suffering under the tyranny of Hitler.

Thirdly, all economic difficulties which are preventing the full mobilisation of the resources of the French Empire, necessary for the war effort, must be overcome. In North Africa, there are big capitalist farmers, supporters of Vichy, who are sabotaging production. We demand that the property of these agents of the Fifth Column shall be confiscated and handed over to the Nation.

Fourthly, the guilty must be punished and a thorough purge carried out. The French authorities in North Africa have in their hands a number of highly placed, one-time Vichy collaborators: for instance, Flandin and Peyrouton, ex-Vichy Ministers; criminals like Pucheu, who have given orders for the execution of many French patriots; and traitors like Admiral Derrien, who handed over his ships to the Germans at Tunis. The people of France are still waiting for these traitors to be punished.

Fifthly, we demand the complete re-establishment of

democratic liberties in the liberated territories, including the liberty of the Press, as it is in Great Britain.

Sixthly, in order to win the support of the native peoples for the war effort and to unite them with the people of France, the Committee of Liberation must carry out a new policy with regard to the Mohammedans. The native peoples of North Africa are discontented because, not only have they no rights, but they are tired of promises which are never kept. Their legitimate claims must be met, and on their behalf we demand the following: Equal pay for equal work; equality in soldiers' pay and dependants' allowances; an equal distribution of all food supplies to all sections of the people; the application to all workers, including the Mohammedans, of all social legislation; equality with regard to education, and the right to use the Arab language in schools; a realistic policy for Housing, Health and Public Assistance; complete freedom of Trade Union organisation for the native people in North Africa, and the granting of real political rights. Until recently we were more or less the only people who were putting forward these demands, but for some time past we have been aware of a growing sympathy for them amongst wider circles of the French people. This is the reason why the Congress of all sections of Fighting France, which took place in Algiers on November 27 and 28 last, included the above demands in its programme. Moreover, General de Gaulle has announced at Constantine that the Committee of Liberation has decided to grant French citizenship to several tens of thousands of Algerian Mohammedans. In our opinion, this constitutes an important first step towards equal rights for all the inhabitants of Algeria, irrespective of race or religion.

Lastly, with regard to foreign policy, the task of the Committee of Liberation is to make sure that France shall be more and more closely associated with all negotiations relating to the war and to the peace; and that, as soon as possible, she shall assume once more the position which she used to hold amongst the Great Powers.

We do not, like General Smuts, consider that France is finished. Certainly it is important for the French people to learn from the terrible defeat of 1940. We are convinced that

they will do so. The countless martyrs, the heroic struggle which the finest sons of France are at this moment carrying on against the enemy, guarantee that this will be so. No! The role of France is not finished. Tomorrow she will take her place once again amongst the great progressive nations, in the vanguard of which stands the Soviet Union, whose heroic armies have saved the world from fascist barbarism.

In conclusion, one or two words about France. The essential task which faces our people at this time is to prepare for the national uprising which, in conjunction with the Allied offensive and the Second Front, for which the French people are waiting impatiently, will sweep away the Nazis and the traitors. Naturally, in the preparation for the National uprising, the Communists, acting in closest co-operation with the various groups of the Resistance Movement, are in the vanguard, because they, more than anyone else, understand clearly the conditions for such an uprising and are, besides, the most determined.

It is our Party which, through its illegal press, warns the broad mass of the people of the dangers of inaction and the falseness of the idea, all too prevalent, that action must be delayed until the day of the Allied landing, in order that our forces may not be exhausted.

Our Party, which knows that national insurrection demands intensive training for the struggle, is doing its utmost to stimulate mass action. Resistance to deportation, the organisation of the Francs-tireurs and guerillas, demonstrations and strikes for wage increases and bigger rations, the struggle of the peasants against forced payments in kind, sabotage of enemy production and transport—all these constitute the real struggle of the vanguard, and we Communists are therefore doing everything in our power to extend and develop them in preparation for the final assault.

At the same time our Party is issuing precise slogans for the national uprising, and is preparing the working class now for a general insurrectional strike. By means of illegally printed leaflets it is pointing out to the workers that this is no question of an ordinary strike, of a mere cessation of work; its aim is to paralyse the whole economic life in the rear of the enemy and

to disorganise his transport and supplies. Such a strike demands:

1. *Refusal to obey the Nazi and Vichy authorities.*
2. *General stoppage of work and occupation of the factories.*
3. *Election in every factory of broad strike committees*
4. *The setting up in every factory of a patriotic working-class militia, which will defend the factories against the enemy and will assist the armed detachments of Resistance.*

For the railwaymen the directives are quite clear; stop all enemy transport; seize all deliveries of arms and munitions and distribute them to the patriots; occupy the stations and important railway junctions. Similarly for the Postal and Telegraph workers, they must occupy the post offices and telephone exchanges, in order to cut enemy communications and assist those of the patriots. Similar directives have been issued to all working-class organisations and professional enterprises.

Such are the lines of action proposed by the Communists in France in order to ensure the success of the national uprising which will free the country.

The liberation of our country is, according to us, the first objective to be achieved. For the only way of ensuring the future of France is to carry on *now, at the present time*, the most unrelenting struggle against the Nazis and traitors.

There are, however, some people who turn away from immediate action in order to devote themselves to post-war problems and dreams of future "systems." We have to listen to their incessant chatter of "socialising" industry, and such-like apparently "advanced" measures. But today the problem is not whether the French people agree about such or such measures of socialisation; the problem is to reach agreement about fighting the enemy and driving him from the soil of the Motherland. That is why, in our determination to avoid all splits in the movement and, above all, to unite all Frenchmen in the fight, we reject the chatterings of those who spend their

time in inventing plans and flourishing formulas, which, in any case, they have no intention of carrying out in practice.

Apparently less radical, but in fact much more practical, our Party squarely poses the question of confiscating for the good of the nation the property of all those who have betrayed France and assisted the enemy.

Does this mean that the Communist Party's insistence upon immediate tasks prevents them from facing up to the problems of the future? Not in the least. That is why it has just published a million copies of a Manifesto in which the problems of the New France are frankly faced.

Realising that there can be no question of a simple return to yesterday, and that tomorrow new steps will have to be taken to raise France once again and set her on the road of progress, our Party's Manifesto indicates what the new French democracy must be like.

Starting from the realisation that, in the past, the power of wealth could negate democracy, corrupt its politicians, reject the will of the people as expressed through the universal franchise and, indeed, bring about a real degeneration of the Republic, our Party insists that the remedy lies not in abolishing democracy, but in perfecting and broadening it, through the complete abolition of the trusts, the restoration to the people of the principal means of production, and the ending of man's exploitation of man. Suppression of the trusts will make possible the planning of production and distribution in such a way as to ensure the increased well-being of the nation and a growing share for every citizen in the products of national industry.

The ending of exploitation by abolishing classes, and at the same time the class struggle, is the only means of assuring, once and for all, the final unity of the French people.

Such, in our opinion, must be the foundations of the New France. But once again it must be stressed that these are problems which France will have to solve tomorrow. *Today our first and main objective is the struggle against the invader and the traitors.* By carrying out such a policy we are, we are convinced, serving the best interests of the people. For we know

that it is only through struggle that we shall be able to efface the defeat of June, 1940, the defeat desired and worked for by the traitors of the Fifth Column.

We know, as our General Secretary, Maurice Thorez has said, that it is only in struggle that we shall win for France the inalienable right to the restoration of her liberty, her independence, and her greatness.

What to Read

- The Communist Manifesto**, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels - - - - - 4d.
Unity and Victory, Report of the 16th Congress of the Communist Party, 1943 - - - - 9d.
The Final Offensive by William Wainwright - 2d.
Jobs, Homes and Security by Emile Burns - 3d.

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