

# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LABOUR

representing

The Trades Union Congress, The Labour Party, The Parliamentary Labour Party,  
and the Co-operative Movement

Cwo 49

---

## “The People’s Convention”

---

On many occasions during the last fifteen or twenty years the National Council of Labour, or one or other of the responsible National Committees—the General Council of the Trades Union Congress on the Industrial side, or the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party on the Political side of the Movement—have found it necessary to enlighten their constituent bodies and members upon the various campaigns and organisations instituted by the Communist Party for the purpose of distracting our mass membership, disrupting our nation-wide organisation, and deluding the general public with their reiterated claim to represent the British Working Class.

The titles of these ephemeral organisations have varied, their ostensible objects being of industrial, political, national, and international concern. All of them, however, have been created in accordance with the well-known methods laid down by the Communist International and pursued wherever Democratic Trade Union, Labour, and Socialist Movements and Parties are available for attack.

### ANOTHER “INNOCENTS’ CLUB”

A one-time trusted Communist leader (Willi Muenzenberg) gave all these miscellaneous organisations the general classification of “Innocents’ Clubs.” Over and over again, in this and other countries, good-intentioned Socialists, Trade Unionists, and Labour supporters have been inveigled on one passing pretext or another to forsake or slacken in their normal work in their respective Unions or Parties and lend their names to and exercise their influence in these varying phases of Communist activity.

As is well known, all these “Innocents’ Clubs” have been formed in order to pursue the common tactic of the “United Front.”

On occasion Communist leaders are brutally frank as to their intention.

Manuilsky, the principal representative of the Russian Communist Party on the Executive of the Communist International, gave point to the issue when he said:—

“Only downright scoundrels can assert that in fighting for the unity of the Working Class the Communist International is obscuring the fundamental differences that divide the Communists from the Social Democrats. . . . It would be sheer madness to obscure these disagreements. . . . Only hopeless idiots can think that by helping the Social Democratic workers to come over to the position of the class struggle by means of the “United Front” tactics we are facilitating the capitulation of Communism to Social Democracy.”

### THE COMMUNIST POLICY OF “NON-INTERVENTION”

In more recent years the Communists have sought to persuade their followers and sympathisers that their main line of attack was against the Fascism of Mussolini and the Nazism of Hitler. During the Spanish Civil War the policy of “Non-Intervention” was assailed by British Communists, while the French Communists refused to oppose it in the French Chamber. Now that Mussolini and Hitler are being fought vigorously by land and sea and air; now that the Polish, Danish, Norwegian, Dutch, Belgian, and French nations, like the Italians, the Germans, the Austrians, and the Czechs, are all subject to the iron law of the Dictators; now that such Democrats, Socialists, and Trade Unionists as are not yet interned in Nazi or Fascist concentration camps are lined up in the struggle for a liberated Europe and a free world, the hated policy of “Non-Intervention” has been promoted by the Communists as the “correct line” for the Working Class to follow.

This violent change in the Communist attitude to the War and the Fascist menace that has over-run Northern and Western Europe and now threatens our own country and people has obviously prejudiced the Communist appeal to British Workers under whatever guise it may now masquerade.

The newest diversion has been the summoning of " A People's Convention " intended to evoke a demand for what is termed " A People's Government."

The initiative was supposed to be taken by the Hammersmith Trades Council and Labour Party (after its expulsion from the Labour Party) together with Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C., M.P., late Labour Party Member for North Hammersmith (whose expulsion from the Party was approved by an overwhelming vote at the Bournemouth Party Conference in 1940), and the acknowledged leaders of the Communist Party in this country (Mr. Palme Dutt, Mr. R. Page Arnot, Mr. Harry Pollitt, and Mr. William Gallacher, M.P., among others). " The Daily Worker," prior to its suppression, was the daily mouthpiece of this propaganda for " revolutionary defeatism," the consistent War tactic of the Communist International which all Communists are bound to follow under pain of expulsion. Mr. Harry Pollitt's rapid repudiation of his original and avowed support of the War at the stern command of the Comintern was plain evidence for plain-minded British workers to appreciate and reject.

## DEFEATISM, REVOLUTION, CIVIL WAR

The Communist object is to convert the present international struggle into a civil war : the Communist contention being that it is the duty of the Working Class in each country to work for the military defeat of its own Government by the rival Governments, in the hope and expectation that in the general demoralisation associated with defeat the Communists could seize power and dictate peace.

The Working Class Movements on the Northern and Western mainland of Europe are now under the oppression of their Nazi conquerors. The liberation of the peoples, now suffering under the German invasion, depends upon the success of Britain and our Allies and the unstinted assistance of the United States in the struggle.

The Democratic British Working Class Movements—Trade Unionist, Socialist, and Co-operative—are undivided in their purpose to defeat the Fascist and Nazi menace and to work for a World Peace based upon the restoration of free and democratic institutions.

All affiliated organisations and members are advised that support for the so-called " People's Convention " (or any other body having similar objects) is inconsistent with loyalty to our organised Labour Movement.

Other attempts will no doubt be made to promote disruption and defeatism, and organisations are strongly urged not to participate in any movement about whose activities there may be the slightest suspicion. Secretaries should communicate with the Head Offices of the Trades Union Congress or the Labour Party at Transport House, when advice and guidance will be available as to the standing of any such organisations.

The National Council of Labour appeals to all members of our Movement to combat all Communist attempts to divide their ranks in this supreme moment in our history.

AS WORKERS : STRENGTHEN THE TRADE UNIONS !

AS CITIZENS : STRENGTHEN THE LABOUR PARTIES !

AS CONSUMERS : STRENGTHEN THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES !

With all the energy you can command :—

# WORK for the VICTORY of DEMOCRACY !

*For the National Council of Labour—*

GEORGE GIBSON

JAMES WALKER

} *Chairmen.*

WALTER CITRINE

J. S. MIDDLETON

H. SCOTT LINDSAY

} *Secretaries.*

Transport House,  
London, S.W.1.

*February, 1941.*