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ERCIAL APPEAL, MEMPHIS,

'Communist Party Line'— Reds Adroit At Use Of Even Their Foes

Last of three articles from a report prepared for the Senate Internal Security Committee on "The Communist Party Line."

By J. EDGAR HOOVER

Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

In its never-ending struggle for power, the Communist Party, U.S.A., uses a wide variety of tactics, all designed, in one way or another, to strengthen the party's influence and, at the same time, to divide, weaken, and confuse the anti-communist opposition.

A favorite—and frequently effective—Communist tactic is the policy of "partial" or "immediate" demands. These are the short-term or temporary demands which the Communists advance in order to create favorable conditions for future revolutionary action. The pages of the Worker, Political Affairs, Mainstream, and other Communist publications are filled with these demands. The public speeches and statements of party leaders are largely based on them. Indeed, these demands play a vital role in the Communist Party line at any given time.

The immediate demands which the Communists advance vary greatly in scope and objective. They may be local, regional, national, or international in range. They may be of interest to a large majority of the population or only to a limited minority group. They may involve economic, social, political, or cultural issues, and they may vary in significance from a proposal relating to world peace to a demand for improved low-cost housing in a specific slum area. There is probably no significant section of the American public regardless of age, race, social standing, occupation, or political orientation—whose interests have not coincided, on occasion, with one or more of the Communists' immediate demands.

In itself, each of the immediate demands proposed by the party may be entirely legitimate, or even popular, in nature, representing the desire for a limited and specific reform within the framework of our present system of government. Very frequently, these demands do not originate with the Communists at all but in wholly non-communist segments of the population.

It goes without saying, of course, that the immediate demands put forward by the party at any given time must be in close accord with the fundamental strategy of the world Communist movement during that particular period. . . .

The Communists derive a number of advantages from their immediate-demands tactic. Urging specific reforms in which many non-communists are legitimately interested helps the Communists to identify themselves with the "masses" and to foster the image that the party is a progressive, enlightened, humanitarian organization which is acting in the best interests of the American people. . . .

The immediate-demands tactic also serves as a convenient disguise behind which the party can carry on its ceaseless agitation against our free economy. More important still, the immediate-demands tactic enables the party to subtly instill a feeling of "class-consciousness" among employees, to promote a general feeling of unrest and discontent among large sections of the population—in the words of the Communists themselves, to "radicalize" and to "politicalize" the masses. . . .

For this reason, the party's strenuous campaign for immediate demands is never allowed to subside. As soon as one set of demands is met, the Communists immediately propose new and stronger demands calculated to provoke a new controversy and to act as a new source of social friction and unrest. . . .

In addition, the immediate-demands tactic provides party members with frequent opportunities to work among the "masses" and to gain valuable experience in agitating, organizing social discontent, and guiding large numbers of people in the "class struggle." The fight for specific reforms enables the party to test its leadership, discipline, and organizational ability in practical situations. In effect, the struggle for immediate demands serves as a small-scale model of, and a dress rehearsal for, future revolutionary action, thereby affording the Communist "vanguard" invaluable experience.

The cumulative aim of the party's immediate-demands tactic, therefore, is to condition the entire social climate for eventual revolutionary action. If these tactics are successful, the Communists will have been accepted as the leaders of the "masses" who, in turn, will be led to believe that there is a need for a drastic transformation of the entire social system; and non-communist opposition will have been weakened and divided to the point of hopeless confusion. In short, the party will have successfully laid the groundwork for launching the actual revolution.

This is the real meaning of the Communist Party line, which promises all things to all men. It is skillfully designed to appeal to people from every walk of life, and, at the same time, to confuse the public by blending proposals ostensibly sponsored by the Communists with those of legitimate organizations.

The uninformed citizen is thus doubly misled. He may accept the party line at its face value, without realizing that it is just another Communist tactic, and erroneously conclude that the party is a legitimate political group which is sincerely interested in promoting these issues. Or, he may make the equally dangerous assumption that anyone who advocates proposals similar to those which make up the party line is automatically a Communist.

Because communism thrives on turmoil, the party is continuously attempting to exploit all grievances—real or imagined—for its own tactical purposes. It is, therefore, almost inevitable that, on many issues, the party line will coincide with the position of many non-Communists. The danger of indiscriminately alleging that someone is a Communist merely because his views on a particular issue happen to parallel the official position is obvious. The confusion which is thereby created helps the Communists by diffusing the forces of their opponents.

Unfortunately, there are those who make the very mistake the Communists are so careful to avoid. These individuals concentrate on the negative rather than on the positive. They are merely against communism without being for any positive measures to eliminate the social, political, and economic frictions which the Communists are so adroit at exploiting.

These persons would do well to recall a recent lesson from history. Both Hitler and Mussolini were against communism. However, it was by what they stood for, not against, that history has judged them.