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## Why Communism? Plain talks on vital problems

Moissaye J. Olgin

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COMMUNISM  
?**

**Plain Talks on  
Vital Problems**

**BY M. J. OLGIN**

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Vital Problems*

*By*  
**M. J. OLGIN**

**WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS  
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UNION LABOR THROUGHOUT

## I

### The Malady

**Y**OU are a worker. You have had a job for a number of years. Your pay was not high, but you managed to get along. You were a faithful worker. You never shirked. Perhaps you saved up a few dollars against a rainy day. Perhaps you married and raised a family. You were decent, law-abiding.

One nice morning you are told your services are no longer needed. In plain words: you are fired. You are thrown out. There is a depression, they say. The employer has no more work for you. He cuts operations or he shuts his plant altogether. While you remain without a livelihood, he goes to his country estate or abroad to have a good time. He does not care to think what will happen to you. You plainly do not exist for the "company" any longer. It has no obligations towards its unemployed.

And yet, come to think of it, you are not a stranger to this factory or mill or shop. You and the like of you have built it. You and the like of you have created all the machinery, all the raw material and all the fuel which is necessary to run an industry. You and the like of you are the live power that puts motion into the dead matter of every industrial undertaking. It is your blood, your sweat, your muscle and your brain that is sunk into every piece of goods produced.

You have much at stake in this establishment—your whole life. If labor means anything, this place is yours, more than the owner's. It is part of your very self.

Suppose now, when you are told to go, you refuse to budge. Suppose many of you get together and say that you are going to stay where you belong and continue working because this is the only source of your livelihood. Suppose you say you are going to produce for the benefit of yourself and others. This thought may be strange to you. Yet consider what would happen.

The owner, who has never worked and who does not know how to work, would call the police. Most probably the riot squad would appear. Perhaps the militia would be called out. There would be clubs and riot guns and tear gas bombs galore. You would be clubbed and shot at and many of you imprisoned, tried and convicted—for the sole crime of wanting to continue working at the machines and with the materials you and the like of you have produced.

Has it ever occurred to you that such a state of affairs is wrong?

Take another example. You are a tenant. For ten or fifteen or twenty years you have been living in a house. You have paid your rent regularly. You have paid off your flat several times over. Your landlord smiled at you as long as you were a "good" tenant. But now you have lost your job. You have not paid your rent for several months. A sheriff comes. Your furniture is thrown out on the sidewalk. You are "evicted". Yet you know perfectly well that it isn't the landlord who built the house. It is you and others like you who have produced all the building material and who have actually constructed the house. Besides, you made the landlord rich by your payment of rents.

Suppose now, you refuse to quit the house. Suppose you band together with your fellow tenants and declare you are not going to permit anybody to drive you out into the street. You are a proud American; you will not allow any man to turn you into a beggar. Again, you would be confronted with police clubs, courts and jail.

It looks strange. But this madness is the every-day practice of our great and wealthy country.

Now there are some notions that have to be made clear before we proceed. We said that the owner "has never worked". You may disagree with this statement. Doesn't a factory owner spend days and days in his office? Doesn't a banker keep office hours? Doesn't he go to the country club and golf links to rest after his strenuous labors? The papers and the preachers and the professors tell you that the business man is "doing his share" in production. They even say that he is an indispensable part of the industrial organism. This is one of those incorrect notions that are being inculcated in the minds of our people from childhood on. In fact, the small business man may still do some work by himself: the grocer works behind the counter, the cobbler works together with his few men. But the bigger the business, the less work remains for the actual owner. What does Morgan know about the operation of railroads and mines and restaurants he controls? What does Rockefeller know about work in a coal mine or an oil refining plant? Remove Ford from the top of his pyramid and nobody will notice the loss. Ford may have been instrumental in working up his business long ago with the aid of numerous engineers and workers—but he no more "runs" his business than the man in the moon.

Big business, large scale production of the modern type is conducted by all kinds of specialists with the aid and cooperation of workers. Engineers, technicians, draftsmen, machinists, chemists, all kinds of experts are managing the big industrial giants of today, and these are hired people, while the board of directors and the other "big shots" of the corporation only decide upon policies which reduce themselves mainly to manipulating stocks. These people

never produce. They could be removed without any loss to actual operations.

And yet, it is they who decide to cut down production or to close the plant altogether, depriving both the staffs of specialists and the skilled and unskilled workers of their sole means of making a living. Those who do not produce decide for those who produce.

As to bankers and brokers, real estate operators and promoters—they do not produce anything essential to human life either, although they have the lion's share of control over production. As a matter of fact, they produce nothing. They transfer "paper" from hand to hand. That paper—call it checks or deeds or drafts or shares—is a claim to the fruits of somebody else's labor.

Another question is that of "bad luck". You have been taught to think that when you are out of work it is just your misfortune. "Business is bad", "there is a depression", they say. "Nobody is to blame". You are given to understand that economic powers are beyond human control. You are told that a depression is something like an earthquake, like a thunderstorm, like an avalanche. And yet, human ingenuity has learned how to control some of the most formidable forces of nature. The human mind has harnessed electricity, which produces the lightning. Human knowledge is accomplishing things which look miraculous. The tropics and the poles, the air and the bowels of the earth are all coming under control of man. Why should he not be able to control the production and distribution of goods that are vital for his life? Isn't the Soviet Union a living example that this can be achieved? Why should there be a situation like the one we suffer under in the U.S.A. at present where millions of able-bodied workers, capable and willing to work, are being consumed by idleness and hunger, while excellent machines and mountains of raw material are lying around unused? Is it so difficult after all for human genius to organize a constant flow of goods which would satisfy everybody's needs with nobody compelled to go without food, clothing and shelter? Humanity has learned to master the forces of nature. The progress of science is tremendous. New and ever newer inventions are made to aid human labor. At the "Century of Progress Exhibition" at Chicago, they showed cotton-picking machines, each of which does the work of 16 to 48 men. There are excavators and ditch diggers that do the work of 20 or 30 men. Between 1919 and 1929 the productivity of American labor increased 43 per cent. Why should the terrible crash in 1929 have had to come? Why should we have had to suffer those long weary years of the most terrible crisis in the history of this country?

We cannot blame this plight of millions on "natural forces". There is nothing *natural* in such a situation. It is not natural that men should go hungry while the means to produce food are close



at hand. It is not natural that a government should order the destruction of three and a half million bales of cotton by plowing under the year's harvest on ten million acres of land in the South the way it was done by the government of the U. S. A. in 1933, while so many are badly dressed. It is not natural that there should be poverty in the midst of plenty. It is not natural that milk should be dumped into rivers while babies are starving. It is not natural that the most ingenious means of production and transportation should be rusting away while those who produce them and can operate them are being wasted away by starvation and disease. All this is most unnatural. It is insane.

One word about the law. You have been taught to respect the law which appears in the shape of the policeman or the judge. You were taught that this is "justice". Yet where is the justice of your being thrown out into the street for non-payment of rent? Where is the justice of your being dismissed from the mines after many years of work? When the owner ejects you forcibly from his premises, this is not called force; when you resist, they say you are using force and violence. When the sheriff puts your belongings on the sidewalks, that's law. When you break the padlock and replace your furniture in its old place, that's unlawful. Why is it that violence against the workers is law and resistance to violence is unlawful? Why is it that robbing you of your only source of life is justice and protesting against this bloody justice is injustice? Something is wrong here, too. Apparently, all these notions about law and order, about justice and injustice, about crime and punishment, are made in the interests, not of you and the like of you, but in the interests of those who use them against you.

One more instance. The workers declare a strike. They have been told many times by many fine gentlemen that there is a partnership between the owners and the workers, that they must cooperate for the benefit of the industry. When partners disagree on a certain issue they fight out their dispute. Suppose you decide to fight it out by refusing to work. You are entitled to do so under the law. You organize a picket line. You say you are partners to this plant and you want to fight it out with your own employers. The employers try to bring in scabs. You refuse to admit the scabs into the plant. Immediately police arrive. The law protects the scabs and attacks the strikers. If you insist on your right to keep the plant shut, you are fired at, and the history of strikes in America is one long trail of bloody murders perpetrated by the police, by the "law" protecting the scabs.

There must be something wrong in a "law" that professes equality of employer and employee but at the same time uses all its power to oppress the latter in favor of the former. There must be a monstrous lie in the statement that employer and employee are

partners to the business and equal before the State. The capitalist State itself apparently is something vicious and cruel and not the nice and lovely "institution of liberty" it is reputed to be.

We think it is urgent for the workers to look more deeply into these matters. Moreover, it is our deep conviction that workers who do not concern themselves with these vital problems are doing grave harm to themselves and their class. Only when you understand the malady can you find the proper cure.

## II

### The Diagnosis

**T**WO professors of Columbia University, Adolf A. Berle, Jr., and Gardiner C. Means, recently published a book called *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*. In it they tried to sum up the concentration of wealth in the U. S. A. These very conservative economists came to the conclusion that out of a total of 367 billion dollars that formed the national wealth of the U. S. A. in 1929, 200 big companies held assets amounting to 81 billion or, roughly, 22 per cent. How many persons controlled those 200 companies? Possibly no more than 2,000. An insignificant handful of people controlling over one-fifth of the wealth of a country with a population of over 120 million. The professors call it "concentration of economic power" and they point out that that concentration is proceeding at a very rapid pace.

"The actual extent to which the concentration of power has progressed is striking enough", they say. "More striking still, however, is the pace at which it is proceeding. In 1909, the assets of the 200 then largest non-banking corporations amounted to only 26 billion dollars. By 1919 the assets of the 200 largest corporations had reached 43.7 billion dollars, an increase of 68 per cent in ten years. In the next ten years from 1919 to 1929 they increased to 81.1 billion dollars, an increase of 85 per cent" (p. 33).

According to the *Report on National Wealth and Income* published in 1926 by the Federal Trade Commission, the richest 1 per cent of the population in the U. S. A. owned at least 59 per cent of the wealth; the small capitalists, 12 per cent of the population, owned at least 31 per cent of the national wealth; the workers and working farmers and small shopkeepers, 87 per cent of the population, owned barely 10 per cent of the national wealth.

This is capitalism in its modern form.

Capitalism is a system of society where all means of production, factories, mines, railroads, are in the hands of private owners called capitalists, while labor power is a commodity which has to be sold

to the owners of wealth for use in production in order that the worker may make a living. This *class division* into capitalists holding or controlling all the wealth, and workers owning nothing but their labor power which they are compelled to sell for a livelihood, is to be found in every phase of capitalist society; modern capitalism, however, is characterized, not only by this division, but by a staggering concentration of wealth. It is the *corporation* that now owns and operates industries in the U. S. A. The small owner, the individual manufacturer, is the exception, and even he is controlled by the big corporation. The rule is the large corporation. Eighty-three per cent of the total capital investment in the U. S. A. in 1928 was in the hands of the utility, manufacturing and finance corporations. From 1922 to 1928 inclusive, the stockholders in American corporations received over 36.5 billions in cash dividends and over 7.3 billions in stock dividends. This is sufficient proof that your employer is no more a free individual acting on his own accord; he is a member of a group, a corporation. This corporation is in actual control of the business of the U. S. A.

What is the result?

You are working for a boss. You are his "hands". He uses you to make profit. How is this profit possible at all? Because he makes you work more than is necessary to defray your wages. In other words, when you work you are not only reproducing the value of your own upkeep but you are also producing *surplus value* which goes to the employer who owns the means of production. The longer the working day, the more surplus value you produce working with the same speed. The quicker the pace of your work, the more surplus value you produce within a given time.

The capitalist will sell the produced commodity in the market. He will sell it at the price fixed, not by himself individually, but by the corporation of which he is a part. If he can produce more cheaply than his neighbor, his profits will be larger. This is why he drives you on to work faster and faster. This is why he introduces labor saving machinery which results in what they call "technological unemployment", which is another name for throwing out workers displaced by a machine. This is why he uses efficiency engineers and experts of every kind. He calls it industrial progress, but he doesn't think of progress at all. He thinks of profits. Every other manufacturer thinks of profits. Every other manufacturer speeds his workers ever faster and introduces newer and better machines. The result is that ever greater numbers of workers are being displaced, while the production capacity of the manufacturing establishments is enormously increased.

And here we have arrived at the source of the madness called capitalism. The numbers of actually employed workers grow smaller. The production capacity of the factories and plants grows

bigger. The wages of the workers are being cut in order that the employers may get bigger profits, but together with this the purchasing power of the population decreases. Mass production goes on at breakneck speed, while the market shrinks. It seems inconceivable that anything like this should be carried on by reasonable human beings, yet this is actually what was happening between 1922 and 1929. Even at the very height of industrial "prosperity" this vicious discrepancy was noticed by sober observers. There was over-expansion of plant with no corresponding expansion of the home market due to the greater exploitation and impoverishment of large masses of workers and farmers. American automobile companies had a capacity of 7.7 millions per year; production was only 4.5 millions. The steel industry had a capacity of 65 million tons of ingots and castings; it produced only 56.4 million tons in 1929. Oil refineries were running at about three-fourths of their productive capacity. The bituminous coal mines had a capacity of 750 million tons but they produced in 1929 only 535 million tons. Cotton textiles used only about three-fourths of their mill capacity; the woolen and worsted industry ran about 60 per cent of capacity.

But even that section or that percentage of the plants that was in operation produced vastly more than the market could absorb. America was producing goods it could not sell either at home or abroad; competition among the producing units therefore increased. Every unit was trying to produce cheaper than the other, which meant on the one hand greater exploitation of the workers, and on the other hand introduction of more and better machinery with a greater capacity to produce. Wall Street at the same time was doing its bit. Wall Street is the popular name for the greatest combination of financial manipulators, and it was boosting stock prices sky high. The price of stocks is based upon the expected earning capacity of the unit that issues the stocks. This earning capacity was declared by the advocates of Wall Street to be unlimited. Prosperity was to go up and up in an unending spiral. Stocks were rising all along the line, with very few exceptions. New companies were formed and their stock unloaded on the public at high prices. Old companies were issuing new stock in ever greater numbers, cashing in on profit-hungry and credulous people. The big sharks of the stock exchange were making billions. The volume of trading on the New York Stock Exchange rose from 173,000,000 shares in 1921 to 1,125,000,000 shares in 1929. The average price of leading industrial stocks rose from \$79 in 1921 to \$366 a share in 1929. The fat boys of Wall Street were having the time of their lives. Everybody praised the glory of mass production under the modern industrial system.

The structure was built on sand. The crash came. It was inevitable. Stocks tumbled down. Capitalist propagandists asserted

that it was only a violent "downward readjustment". It was more than that. It was a disaster. Production, which lagged even before the crash, began to decrease more rapidly. By 1932 the steel industry was working at 15 per cent capacity, the automobile industry decreased over 50 per cent, coal production decreased 55 per cent, freight car loadings were down 50 per cent; the index of business activity was around 50. Factory employment decreased 40 per cent, and the total earnings of the workers decreased about 60 per cent. The loss in wages in 1932 amounted to over 20 billion dollars.

We are still in the grip of the economic crisis and all the stunts and displays of President Roosevelt with his National Industrial Recovery Act are of little avail.

Let us now cast a critical glance at the whole situation. They call it depression and they wish to make you believe it is sheer accident. But it isn't. It is "a depression of a special type". It is rooted in the very nature of capitalism in its present stage, which is the stage of a general crisis. Think of this: while you were speeding your life out of yourself in a Ford plant or a Rockefeller mine, the big heads of the business corporations were garnering the profits. When 17 million workers had been dismissed to face the hazards and miseries of unemployment, the big heads of corporations were still reaping profits. True, they complained of hard times. But these hard times have not made a single chairman of the board of directors of the large corporations go begging in the streets for a nickel to buy a cup of coffee. The "captains of industry and finance", as they call themselves, are well off, depression or no depression, whereas the wages of the employed workers were cut mercilessly and the unemployed were left to shift for themselves with the beggarly Home Relief hardly sufficient to keep body and soul together. Big business is still prosperous while the working class is suffering the greatest hardships. Must that be?

And it is not the workers alone who suffer, either. The small and poorest farmers, millions of them, are not much better off. They, too, feel the crushing hand of the big industrialists and bankers. As producers of agricultural goods they have to sell; as consumers of manufactured goods they have to buy. When they sell, they are confronted with the food trusts, milk trusts and tobacco trusts which pay them a small fraction of what they charge to the ultimate consumer. When they buy, they are confronted with the agricultural machinery trusts, the automobile trusts, the fertilizer trust and all other big corporations which charge high prices for their goods. When they need money they are at the mercy of the banks; when they transport their goods, they are at the mercy of the railroad magnates. In either case, they suffer.

The rich farmer, himself an exploiter, can stand his ground. The small and poor farmers succumb. During the crisis, millions of

farmers have sunk to the level of actual poverty and near-starvation. Sturdy workers of the soil, often equipped with the best machinery and tools, living on fertile land that is capable of feeding multitudes of men—unable to feed themselves! Must that be?

Under the New Deal, the prices of agricultural products have been raised, but the farmer has to pay higher prices for manufactured goods. The farmers' mortgages were guaranteed by the government, but the farmers' debts have not decreased. The richest farmers may be benefited by some of the provisions of the Roosevelt administration; the small and poorest farmers, millions of them, are on the verge of ruin.

Nor is this all. We mentioned above the engineers, the draftsmen, the chemists, and all those scientifically trained men and women who actually manage a modern industrial establishment. They did splendid work in helping to build up American industry. When the crisis came many of them were dismissed without much ado. Those who did not know how to manage industries dismissed those who knew. Engineers who designed the Eighth Avenue subway in New York are known to be selling shoe-laces for a living. Architects with years of experience sleep in parks. The capitalists did not need them any longer. They were "dismissed", thrown out like old rags. Dismissals became general throughout the entire educational and cultural field. Writers and artists, professors and research men, inventors and teachers—all had to go. The plight of hundreds of thousands of intellectuals is aggravated by the fact that for years they were wont to think of themselves as part of the ruling class. They were "fired" by the ruling class because they were no more needed—for the owners of wealth.

Is this an accident? It is not. It is the outcome of an insane system where wealth is owned, not by those who produce it, but by those who do not produce anything, who have amassed it out of the work of others under the protection of the law; a system where production is directed, not towards satisfying human wants, but towards making profits for the owners of wealth; a system where productive capacity increases vastly while the purchasing power of the people is being slashed through cuts in wages and through the exploitation of the working farmers by the large corporations; a system where the primary purpose of labor—to satisfy the basic needs of humanity—is completely lost sight of in the scramble for bigger fortunes, for fatter stock exchange slices and more ruthless "cleaning out" of the small fellow. Where there exist all these *contradictions of capitalism*, a situation like the present is inevitable.

One outstanding feature of this situation is war. Economic rivalries are extended from the home market to the world market. Economic rivalries on an international scale lead to economic wars, and economic wars lead to a clash of arms. This is a truth that

cannot be denied. Even Professor Raymond Moley, Roosevelt's former chief adviser, had to admit this. But not many realize that this is no accident. It is a basic law of capitalism. The war of 1914-1918 was nothing but the clash of two coalitions of big powers, one led by Germany and the other by Great Britain, for the economic domination of the world. Great Britain was an old capitalist power with colonies all over the world. Germany was a powerful newcomer in the world of big industry and its colonial possessions were small. On the eve of 1914, capitalism was being strangled within its own frontiers by the contradictions between mass production and insufficient purchasing power, as pointed out above. World expansion had become imperative for the capitalism of every country. Since there were no more free territories left on the globe for the big industrial states to take possession of, the clash came. It was a clash for the re-division of the earth.

This clash is now vastly more imminent than it was before 1914. Capitalism is literally choking within the borders of each state. Capitalism is seeking to dominate the markets of the world. This cannot be done by peaceful means. The London Economic Conference of 1933, which was supposed to facilitate a peaceful cooperation of the capitalists on an international scale, failed. The result is a sharpening of the economic warfare. In this warfare the front line is occupied by the duel between the pound and the dollar. But other rivalries are not eliminated, like the growing intensity of struggle between the U. S. A. and Japan for the domination of the Pacific, like the frantic efforts of Germany to get "a better place under the sun", which means a greater territory in Europe and colonies on the other continents, or like the Japanese encroachments upon the independence of China and the Japanese brand-new theory of an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine, which in substance means that Japan bids all other capitalist powers to keep hands off Eastern Asia and the Pacific in order that Japanese capitalists may be free to garner profits to their heart's content.

In their mad hunger for new territories and markets the capitalists of the world never for a moment lose sight of the Soviet Union. Here is a country with great natural resources and a tremendous amount of wealth. How happy the capitalists would be to swallow it up! What profits they could squeeze out of those millions of workers and peasants if they became colonials of the great imperialist powers! Added to economic appetites is the ever-present desire to crush the dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of Socialism in the Soviet Union which they hate so much. Hence all the plots against the very existence of the Soviet Union. Hence the open declarations by Germany and Japan that they aim to increase their territory at the expense of the Soviets. Hence the connivance of other great powers in the machinations against the Soviets.

International rivalries and the lust for expansion make the capitalist world one great armed camp. (The Soviet Union, because it is not a capitalist country, does not need expansion and does not fight for foreign markets. It has proved its peacefulness through many years of international relations and would wish nothing better than to be allowed freely to build up its new Socialist life. But due to the continuous threat of attack, it was forced to build up its Red Army, which is not only manned but officered by workers and peasants and is therefore a real army of the people.) There is a race for armaments among the great capitalist countries. Each one is building more battleships, more bombing planes, more cannon, greater armies; each one is producing more and deadlier poison gases, disease germs and other means of destruction. America is leading in this respect.

Capitalism breeds war. Capitalism cannot solve its contradictions without war. But this solution is the solution of ruin. War is devastation. It destroys not only precious human lives, but large amounts of goods. It is an orgy of destruction. The brunt of a capitalist war, however, is borne by those who work.

Where capitalism is organized in big corporations to control the markets, we have *monopoly capitalism*. The States that are dominating oppressed nations and are driving towards war to control foreign markets, are *imperialist powers*. The wars of the capitalist countries that are waged for the purpose of dominating other countries to be used as markets, sources of raw materials and investment grounds, are *imperialist wars*.

This is capitalism in its modern form. This is capitalist civilization. A palace built on crushed human bones. Glittering glory for a few at the price of oceans of blood and tears of the many. Progress running amuck at every step. Prosperity devouring itself and devouring untold human lives. Expansion made possible by killing and maiming huge masses of innocent people. Scientific advance made to serve the purpose of destruction. Security for the non-producers; starvation for the producers. The drones in great esteem; the workers downtrodden and despised. Must that be?

The Communists say it must not. The Communists say this huge waste of human energy and human resources, this colossal amount of human suffering, this humiliation of starving in the midst of plenty, this living on the dumping grounds of big cities at a time when humanity knows already how to build Empire State towers, this debacle which is worse than war and pestilence, can be avoided. Life can be made livable. Life can be made a continuous and uninterrupted stream of work, satisfaction of the basic human needs of everybody, and cultural growth. This can be achieved only by the working class arising to take over and organize society on a new basis. This basis is to be Communism.



### III

#### The Cure

WE propose, in brief, that all resources, all land and buildings, all manufacturing establishments, mines, railroads and other means of transportation and communication, should be, not private property, but the common property of all those who work. We propose that production be made to serve the needs of those who work, rather than to serve the enrichment of a few parasites. We propose that parasitism should be abolished altogether and that society should consist only of those who work, which means that all members of society should be socially useful human beings. We hold with science that production and distribution of goods can be *planned* to avoid anything resembling the crisis in capitalist society. Planned economy on the basis of common ownership without any class division is called Communism.

#### PLANNING UNDER CAPITALISM IMPOSSIBLE \*

Before we proceed we must say a word or two about the idea of having planned economy under capitalism.

If planning means anything, it means organizing human activities in a certain direction to achieve a definite and clear-cut aim. Planning a garden means undertaking a number of steps—like preparing the ground, the seeds, the fences, putting the seeds into the ground, etc.—which will ultimately result in a garden. You cannot say you are planning a garden when your aim is rabbit-shooting. You do not plan a garden when you think of digging into the ground for gold. This is so obvious that it does not need any proof. The aim is what determines the plan. The aim of planned economy should be to satisfy the needs of the population by setting into motion all the production forces of a country, or even of the whole world. To secure a decent living for everybody—that is the aim. To organize all economic activities accordingly—that is the plan.

But the aim of capitalism is not to secure a decent living for all. The aim of capitalism is to secure—as they say—“reasonable profits” on investments. Profits come first. The people come last. A “reasonable profit” is a profit that looks reasonable to the owners of wealth—and that means all the traffic will bear. The needs of the population are mentioned in speeches—but they do not determine the actions of those who rule.

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\* PUBLISHER'S NOTE: While this pamphlet was in the process of production, the Supreme Court of the U. S. A. declared the “Codes” of the N. R. A. to be unconstitutional. This, however, does not invalidate the basic correctness of the analysis herein contained. On the contrary, it only lends strength to the argument that planning under capitalism is impossible.

This is what happened under the New Deal.

Nobody could say more beautiful words than Roosevelt did about the New Deal. Why, the man was going to make everybody happy. The New Deal was going to increase the purchasing power of the country so that the manufacturers would be able to sell more goods. When the manufacturers increase their sales they naturally have to increase production. Increased production means more jobs. More jobs mean greater earnings for the workers. Greater earnings mean greater purchasing power, greater markets. The farmers were not to be left in the red either. Prices on farm products were to be raised. Higher prices mean greater purchasing power in the hands of the farmers. Greater purchasing power in the hands of the farmers means a greater market for manufactured goods. The workers, with their increased purchasing power, were to buy more agricultural products. Prosperity in the cities, prosperity on the farms. Set the whole thing in motion—and it will go on and on. A spiral rising ever higher with every new coil.

All this was to be *planned*. To prevent "unfair competition" the manufacturers were given codes. To secure decent wages the workers were promised a minimum wage and were given Section 7a. To raise farm prices, agricultural production was to be controlled. To secure a general price rise, the gold content of the dollar was cut. Everything was to click. Everybody was to cooperate with everybody else. The government was to guide all concerned, like a benign old father, towards the goal—the "new social order".

What was wrong in this elaborate scheme? It was based on a pretense. It pretended to overlook the basic laws of capitalism. It wished you to believe that the manufacturers would raise wages without raising the prices of goods produced. It pretended to assume that, having raised the workers' wages, the manufacturers would not increase the speed-up. It appealed to big business not to fix unreasonably high prices on manufactured goods, while it gave the united businessmen the power to do so—through their "codes". It declared that the big trusts are interested, not in gouging the poor farmer, but in making it easier for him. It peddled a fable about the identity of interests of the capitalists and the workers, the capitalists and the farmers. It put your hopes in the cheaper dollar, concealing the fact that for the same nominal wage you could buy fewer goods—in other words: that your *real* wages were cut. At the same time the New Dealers told you that the purchasing power of the workers would rise.

What was the result? The "plan" produced greater profits for a few, greater misery for the masses.

Listen to the report of the Bureau of Internal Revenue of the U.S.A. It deals with the change in the number of large tax-payers from 1932 to 1933. In 1932 there were 20 rich men whose taxable

income was one million dollars or more. (The *property* of each one of those "big shots" ran into the billions.) In 1933 there were 46 such men. The number of the very richest increased in the first year of the New Deal way above 100 per cent. The net income of this group increased from 35 million in 1932 to 81 million in 1933. For the same time the number of individuals with an income of \$5,000 or less *decreased* about three per cent. The total income reported for the year increased only 2.5 per cent, which means that prosperity for the country as a whole did not arrive. During the same time, however, manufacturers' profits increased from 656 million to 1,200 million; trade profits increased from 218 to 392 million dollars. This only shows that the income of the country became concentrated in fewer hands. Roosevelt sang about the "wider distribution of the national income". In reality the rich became richer; the poor became poorer.

During 1934 the process continued with greater speed. According to the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor (which is very friendly to the N.R.A. and the New Deal), the net profits of 418 leading corporations increased in 1934 compared with 1933 from 605 million to 911 million—an increase of over 50 per cent. The same corporations in 1932 had an income of only 49 million. Truly, big business was aided by the New Deal. In this respect Roosevelt's plan worked. Big business squeezed the small businessmen ruthlessly and drove large numbers of them out of business. Big trustified capital did well, indeed.

But how about the workers and the farmers who, together, form the bulk of the population? According to the A. F. of L., there were 11,459,000 unemployed in November, 1934, or 429,000 more than in November, 1933. But then the A. F. of L. does not count the semi-employed (those who work one or two days a week) and those who never have been employed—the millions of youths that have reached working age during these years. Basing itself on governmental figures, the Labor Research Association estimates the number of unemployed as equal to 17 million. Counting five dependents to every two unemployed persons (which is the general average), we arrive at the stupendous figure of 42.5 million men, women, and children who have no means of making a living under the New Deal. This is fully one third of the total population.

As to the workers' wages, the New Deal promised higher wages. But the New Deal created greater profits. The profits came from the greater toil and the lower pay of the workers. The N.R.A. promised to raise the wages of the lower-paid workers and to shorten the hours for all. But, first, the manufacturers increased the speed-up of the work, that is to say—they squeezed more work in fewer hours out of their wage-slaves; secondly, they cut the wages of the higher-paid workers more than they increased the lower wage levels.

In other words, under the guise of helping the workers they sharpened exploitation. The net result as reported by the President of the A. F. of L. is that "comparing 1934 with 1933 . . . the workers' yearly wage has increased 6.7 per cent . . . while the price of food rose 11.3 per cent and prices of clothing and house furnishings rose 15.3 per cent. *Clearly, the average employed workers' standard of living was lower in 1934 than in 1933.*"

What is true of the workers is true also of the professionals, the technicians, the teachers. Last December a report issued by the Methodist Federation of Social Service had the following to say about the fall in cultural standards:

"Some 9,000,000 families live in homes that conservative investigation calls substandard. The people's cultural standards lag. Hundreds of rural schools have been closed; tens of thousands have been reduced to only two and three months in a year; 5,000,000 unemployed youths have been trained for a type and standard of living that is not available to them."

There are 250,000 unemployed teachers in the U.S.A.

The situation of the farmers has also become worse. The New Deal attempted crop control. The government paid the farmers for land not cultivated or plowed under. People's money was wasted on the "plan" to have less cotton, less wheat and less meat produced for the people. The rich farmer benefited from higher farm prices. The poor farmer, the tenant farmer, the share-cropper became poorer because they had to pay increased prices for manufactured goods while they were forced to sell their own products to the food trust at low prices.

This is the net result of "planning" under the capitalist system. Has it done away with the contradictions of capitalism? It has sharpened them. It has created no markets either at home or abroad. It has, on the contrary, decreased the purchasing power of the masses, *i.e.*, the home market. It has made wider the gulf between the owners of wealth and those forced to sell their labor power. It has intensified the class antagonisms.

One more feature to complete the picture. While thousands of mills were standing idle, the manufacturers introduced ever better labor-saving machinery in those mills that worked at least part of the time. In 1933, the productivity of labor was 27 per cent higher than it was in 1929. Today it is still higher. If the country were to produce today as much as it produced in 1919 one third less workers would be needed. What is to become of those that are "not needed"? And with earnings cut over 40 per cent, who can buy the goods produced with the better technical equipment?

The N.R.A. was looked upon as our example for the rest of the capitalist world to follow. That the N.R.A. has failed is now admitted even by many of its former sponsors.

## ECONOMIC PLANNING THAT IS REAL

When we Communists speak of planned economy we do not mean a plan similar to that of the N.R.A., which leaves all the wastefulness, all the inefficiency and all the criminal parasitism of capitalism untouched, only increasing the power of the big industrialists and bankers. We do not mean a system where the big industrialists swallow up the small and middle industrialists and where the big banker gobbles up everybody and everything.

When we Communists speak of a society organized on the basis of planned production and distribution we mean something entirely different. What we have in mind is very simple. It is clear-cut. Take over from the private owners all natural resources, all mines, factories, plants, railroads, ships. Turn all this into national property administered by the workers under a Soviet State. Do away with production for profit. Make a survey of all available resources, plant and man power. Figure out how much of the products of each industry can be produced, say, in a year. Fix the annual consumption of the population at this rate. When you do so you are sure that nobody will go hungry or without a roof over his head. But this is not sufficient. Make it your purpose to *increase* production. Employ the best services of scientists to improve your machinery and your methods of work. Encourage scientific research to advance science for the purpose of improving life. Extend this improvement not only to industry and agriculture but to all realms of life. The output of industry is sure to increase. Distribute the fruits of increased production among all the members of society. Improve their well being. Increase production still more by further improving machinery and methods according to the latest data of science. Distribute the benefits of the increased production again among the population without exception, always heightening the technique of production to enrich the economic and cultural life of all the members of society and to ease their labor. Continue this process indefinitely. When you do so there will be no crises, no unemployment, no exploitation, no wars, no fear of the future.

Is this impossible?

We do not even have to refer you to the experiences of the Soviet Union where this is actually being accomplished. We refer you to the experiences of these United States. The total national income of the U.S.A. for 1928 was estimated at about 89.4 billion dollars. This would have meant \$750 for each of the 120 million of the population of the United States, man, woman and child, or over \$2,000 a year for a family of three, if it were not for the fact that more than one-half of this national income went to owners of land and capital—and don't forget that this was a year where mass earnings were rather high. Under a system of Communism nothing

would go to the private owners of land and capital because there would be no such owners, and everything would go to the working people because everybody would be a worker. But Communism would not content itself with a national income equal to that produced under capitalism. Communism is an incomparably higher organization of society than capitalism. If the Soviet Union, an industrially backward country, was capable of increasing the output of industry 300 per cent in five years, an industrially more highly developed country like the U.S.A. would be able to increase its output at least five times in five years. Assuming then that the national income of the American Soviet was originally equal to that of 1928, the income of a family of three after the first American five-year plan would be more than \$10,000. If we add the use of all the cultural facilities, all the buildings and all the playgrounds now denied the working class, the income in terms of utility would increase still faster. In ten years, even at a moderate rate of industrial development, working only about five hours a day, a family of three would have a standard of living measured today by, say, \$20,000 a year. And that would be only a beginning, for human inventiveness knows no limit and the progress of science is unending.

The application of science to human society was the slogan of the technocrats in the heyday of their propaganda. But the technocrats proposed to busy themselves with production without reorganizing the foundation of society. This is why all their recommendations remained suspended in the air. In one respect, however, they were correct: they showed what immense possibilities for the satisfaction of human wants are contained in the achievements of science and in its future growth.

Communism compared to capitalism is like capitalism compared to the economy of the native Indian population of three centuries ago. Communism builds. It encourages scientific advance on a colossal scale. It makes man complete master of nature and of the social system. It reduces human labor to the easy task of supervising machinery a few hours a day. It leaves mankind free to engage in the higher intellectual pursuits. It makes every worker a highly cultured being and everybody responsible for the welfare of all. It inscribes on its portals: Let everybody work according to his ability; let everybody receive from the common stock of goods according to his needs. In the lower stage of Communism, called Socialism, the rule is that everybody receives according to his work; but here too there is no exploitation, no oppression, no insecurity, no poverty, but everybody is working and work is made the badge of honor. Life is made humane. With this begins the great ascent of man.

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But isn't it a utopia? Aren't those Communists dreamers? We propose to show that the Communists are the greatest realists, that the program advanced by them is not only capable of fulfillment, but that the forces that will realize it are already in operation.

#### UTOPIA AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Speaking about realism. The year of grace 1928 certainly was a year of prosperity in America. Everybody praised the new era. Professors advanced ingenious theories to show that the progress of industrial expansion could not be checked. Newspapers hailed the great organizers of industry, who, in their judgment, made this unprecedented progress possible. Preachers and scenario writers, vaudeville singers and Senators, generals and Salvation Army lassies—everybody gloried in America's powerful upswing. And the leaders of the Socialist Party, who are supposed to be against capitalism, declared that capitalism in America was on the upgrade, that its constructive forces were growing and that the only way radicals could expect to accomplish anything was by pleading with the powers that be for some concessions to alleviate certain social evils.

It looked all sweetness and light. But there were those stubborn Communists who refused to share in the general hallelujah. Those fellows were equipped with the *Marxian method*. Some clever guys in the American labor movement made light of that "old German scholar" Karl Marx, who, they said, spent his life in the British Museum and knew nothing about America of today. Yet what Marx did was to provide revolutionary workers with a *method* wherewith to analyze society, and that method can be applied to every society whether Marx himself is alive or not. The Marxian method was further advanced by *Lenin* who applied Marxism to 20th century capitalism, the era of the rule of finance capital, which he called imperialism. Lenin was thus able to predict, not only the World War, but also the Russian revolution.

The method of Marx and Lenin made it possible for the Communists of America to foresee what all the thousands of learned professors and practical industrial leaders failed to see: the coming of the crisis in the U.S.A. Why was it possible for them to predict the coming disaster? Because they analyzed the basic forces of capitalist society, they understood the maturing contradictions, they did not let themselves be fooled by the superficial progress. They were the only realists in America. Compared with them, such men as Ford and Morgan, Mellon and Dawes, Hoover and Mills, looked like shadow-hunting fools.

The N.R.A. is another example. When this child of the New Deal was born there wasn't a group or a party in America—outside of the

Communists—that did not greet it with high hopes. Everybody saw the coming of a new era. Everybody sang Roosevelt's praises. Congress ate out of Roosevelt's hand. Labor leaders bowed before the great planner. Socialist leaders hailed the plan as a way to socialism. The press was one great stream of enthusiasm. All were happy. The Communists alone sounded the warning to the working class. They pointed out from the very beginning that the N.R.A. aimed to secure greater profits for the bosses at the expense of lower living standards for the workers. They foresaw the further crushing of the small businessmen by large-scale business. They realized that the N.R.A. could not abolish the crisis because it did not plan to do away with private ownership of wealth.

Or take the realism of Soviet achievements. When the Communists (Bolsheviks) seized power in Russia in November 1917, all the wise men of the world, statesmen and professors, socialists and liberals, predicted the imminent downfall of the new regime. Yet the Communists believed it could succeed. Here and elsewhere, the Communists were equipped with the Marxian analysis. They were under the leadership of Lenin. They knew what all the theoreticians of the capitalist countries refused to understand: that within the working class there had come into being a new power, a new consciousness born out of the new freedom, a new driving force that could not be crushed. Were they dreamers? Far from it. They were scientists, social scientists. The Communists are the only social scientists in the world today.

A scientist is not against dreaming, but his dreams are real. A scientist has before his mental eye the whole structure he plans to erect before the first foundation stone is laid. Is he dreaming? Not at all. He is equipped with the understanding of the laws of nature; he knows his material; he knows how to arrange it; he visualizes all the processes which his material will have to go through until it is shaped to form a building. He knows the machinery and the other equipment necessary to carry his plan to completion. And yet, he is the biggest dreamer in the world because he dreams of things that can be made to exist. His dreams are not shadows. They are forecasts of realities to come.

In the very same way, Communists are dreamers. But they are practical dreamers. They see the forces of present-day society at work. They see the trend of this work. They realize the absolutely unavoidable outcome of the clash of social forces. They realize what has to be done in order to hasten the unavoidable outcome. They have before their mental eye a complete picture of the fundamentals of society to be erected on the ruins of capitalist society. They see the social instruments whereby this stumbling block of a capitalist system can be cleared away to give room to the new, the



Communist, society. They apply their forces at the most advantageous points to achieve the greatest results.

While the final goal, the Communist Society, is always kept in the Communists' mind, *they have a practical and realistic program for every day.* They do not expect you to sit idly by and wait until a Communist Society has fallen into your lap like a ripe apple off a tree. They formulate for the working class a program of action through struggle, based on the needs of the workers and toiling farmers at the present time.

#### IV

#### The State

**W**E have surveyed the economic system that is the basis of capitalist society. Let us now examine its political superstructure, the State.

You have been taught that we live in a *democracy*, that the institutions of this country are bulwarks of freedom, that the government of the U.S.A. is a government by, for and of the people. From time to time you are allowed to cast your vote, and on this occasion you are told that by universal suffrage the "sovereign will of the people" is expressed.

Yet, somehow or other, you as a worker and millions like you have *small chance with the State.* Take such an issue as unemployment insurance. A law to guarantee every unemployed worker a certain subsistence minimum is a vital necessity for the workers. Over five years have passed since the beginning of the economic crisis. Numerous laws have been passed to protect the bankers, the real-estate owners, the mortgage holders, the railroad magnates—but very few laws to alleviate the sufferings of the unemployed through direct State aid. Apparently the State is not there to aid the workers.

The Wagner-Lewis bill pending in Congress does not provide unemployment insurance for any working man or woman now unemployed. The bill proposes to create funds for those who will become unemployed in the future—and those funds are to be meagre enough. The bill is a mockery of unemployment insurance, an insult to the working class.

Or take another example. There are laws and courts and jails for the criminals—and you were told that all citizens are equal before the law. But you know perfectly well that a big swindler, a banker who robbed a great many poor people of their savings, a racketeer who is extorting hundreds of thousands from innocent people, seldom lands in jail, and if he does, he is soon pardoned or else his imprisonment is turned into something like a vacation in a country

club. But if you, a worker, steal a loaf of bread to satisfy your hunger, the law will be after you and there will be no mercy.

### A RICH MAN'S STATE

The truth of the matter is that this is a rich man's State and a rich man's government. The State is there to act on behalf of finance capital and to protect its interests against the people. The government is the executive committee of the big trusts.

You, an American worker, may be shocked to hear such a statement. You have been fed so much "democracy" bunk that you think it almost sacrilege to reveal the true nature of the State. This is exactly what your masters are after with their propaganda. They want you to believe that the State is holy and that its high functionaries are like saints surrounded by halos. All the pulpits, schools, newspapers, radio, lectures, moving pictures and other sources of information controlled by big business are engaged in giving you false notions about the State. Yet consider for a moment the simple fact that one per cent of the population controls nearly two thirds of the nation's wealth,—and it will not be difficult for you to realize that the individuals composing this one per cent must have vastly more power than the individuals composing the 87 per cent of the population who own, together, only 10 per cent of the national wealth. Compare your own influence with the influence of the big banker of your community in dealing with the precinct policeman, the police captain, the judge, the prison warden, the governor, the legislature. Why, a plain worker doesn't count at all when it comes to what they call the seats of power.

The State is an instrument of power in the hands of the big industrialists, bankers and landlords, who by this token are the ruling class. The State is there to effect the exploitation and oppression of the workers and the poor and small farmers, and also of the subjugated colonial peoples, by the ruling class. The Constitution, the government, its laws, its agencies: the army, the militia, the police, the courts, the jails, the legislatures—all are there to effect the exploitation and oppression of you and millions like you.

We know you, an American worker, may hate to call yourself "exploited" and "oppressed". You have been taught false pride, not the pride of refusing to be exploited, but the pride of refusing to *admit* that you are exploited. Your refusal, however, does not change the fact that the coal barons squeeze the last drop of your life blood for the sake of their profits and that when you go out on strike the State sends its deputy sheriffs and militia to crush your resistance. Here, in labor disputes, you can easily recognize the State as *the executive committee and the strong arm of entrenched wealth.*

We Communists do not like the expression, "labor dispute". It suggests a disagreement among people on an equal basis. It suggests a friendly bickering of parties to an agreement who happen to disagree on a certain point. It suggests an amicable and perfectly lovely settlement of mutual grievances. What a false and misleading notion! There are no labor disputes. There is the wish of the capitalist to press some more sweat and blood out of the workers, and there is the wish of the workers to fight their enemy, who feeds on them. There is war. It is class war. It is waged by the representatives of one class, the oppressors, against the mass of another class, the oppressed. In this war, the State is always and invariably on the side of the oppressors. Some of its representatives may try to achieve the ends of capital by cajoling and wheedling. But they always keep the big stick ready. The State—that is the big stick of the owners of wealth, the big stick of the big corporations.

This is the only realistic view of the State. Every one who tries to persuade you that the State is your friend, your defender, that the State is impartial and only "regulatory", is misleading.

We hear Roosevelt saying that the State is there to protect both industry and labor. But under capitalism you cannot protect both "industry" (meaning the capitalists) and labor (meaning the workers)! When you protect "industry" you give it freedom to exploit "labor". When you protect labor you make it possible for labor to get more out of industry. You cannot keep fire and water reconciled.

In reality the State under Roosevelt is a more efficient instrument at the service of big capital than it was under Hoover. All these administrators, adjusters and consolidators are nothing but agents of the State serving the interests of big business. The States locally are especial instruments of the capitalists. The militia is rampant everywhere. Sheriffs are breaking up strikes. Policemen are carrying out evictions. Militant workers are being imprisoned for strike activity. Unemployed workers and their leaders are being clubbed and jailed for demanding relief. Negroes are lynched under the benevolent guardianship of the State.

You were told that the State under the New Deal guarantees you the right of collective bargaining. Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act, you were told, guaranteed the workers the right to bargain collectively through representatives "of their own choosing". But the State helped the manufacturers to use this very section to organize *company unions* which carry out the will of the employer. Section 7a has been used, says a former government agent, Thompson, appointed by Roosevelt to investigate the N.R.A., "to force through compulsory arbitration and company unionism". As to enforcement of Section 7a, that is to say, punishing those

bosses who do not carry out the provisions of the N.R.A., Mr. Biddle, Chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, declared in a report, March 13, 1935, that "enforcement had virtually been suspended", that in no case except one had suit been brought against an employer and that in the one exception the employer had been found not guilty.

The State under the New Deal has greatly increased its machinery which is working overtime against the workers. The State has incorporated into its Boards a number of important reformist leaders; the N.R.A. is supported by most of the leadership of the A. F. of L. With their open or covert aid, the State has broken many a splendid strike and robbed the workers of the fruit of many a valiant struggle by dispatching against them either armed men or "mediators" or both.

If you, a worker, fail to realize that these bluecoats and district attorneys, judges and prison wardens, governors and presidents, generals and admirals, "mediators" and "arbitrators", together with the gentlemen in the legislatures, State and Federal, are *nothing but* a corps of agents of big capital, you are merely reacting the way these gentry wish you to.

The Communists are the only group in present-day society who recognize the basic nature of the capitalist State. The State may change its appearance and its appendices. It may use the parliamentary system, with a limited freedom of speech to opponents—as long as this opposition is not too dangerous. It tightens the screws and tries to silence the opposition when the situation becomes disturbing for big capital—as this was done under Wilson during the war. It may do away with parliamentary procedure altogether and institute an open reign of terror when danger to capitalism becomes particularly acute due to the rising tide of the revolutionary labor movement—as was done in fascist Germany. The forms change. The phraseology differs according to time and place. The essence remains. The essence of the capitalist State is service in the employ of capitalism for the preservation of capitalism.

#### THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES

On the question of the State the Communists naturally and unavoidably come into clash with other political parties. The question is put squarely: Can the working people achieve their liberation by merely using the State machinery of capitalism? To this question the liberals answer in the affirmative; the reformist union leaders answer in the affirmative; the Socialists answer in the affirmative; the Communists answer in the negative.

The liberals are dissatisfied with the functions of the State. They point out its "shortcomings". They do not close their eyes to the

fact that there is inequality. They know the war-breeding nature of the capitalist State. But what do they propose to do? They propose a little tinkering here and there. Direct primaries were one act of such tinkering. The abolition of the lame duck session is another. The initiative and referendum is a third. But that has nothing to do with the very nature of the State as a bulwark of private property and capitalist exploitation.

An improvement in the electoral laws, an extension of the freedom of the press, no matter how important for the working class, does not touch upon the fundamentals of the capitalist State, namely, its being an instrument of power in the hands of the big owners of wealth. Improve the State—and you have made it more flexible, more capable of adapting itself to circumstances; you have made it a better instrument of oppression.

The American labor leaders of the William Green, Matthew Woll and John Lewis type, do not wish to have a revolutionary political party organized to defend the interests of the working class. They are not opposed to the capitalist system even in words. They propose to support such representatives of the Republican and Democratic parties as are willing to introduce reforms on behalf of labor.

Not much breath need be wasted on the program of the labor leaders of "punishing enemies and rewarding friends". The Republican and Democratic parties are the parties of big capital. They may fight one another at the elections for the control of the administration, but they differ little from each other and they do the bidding of the big trusts. Their treasuries are filled from the coffers of the big industrialists and bankers and, quite often, their chief leaders are, themselves, big industrialists or bankers or both (Andrew Mellon, Charles Dawes, the late Dwight Morrow in the Republican Party; Owen D. Young, John Raskob, Bernard Baruch in the Democratic Party). To expect that the gentlemen of these parties will help the workers achieve their end is to expect that the leopard will change its spots.

The Socialists, on the other hand, have their own political party and they claim to be opposed to the capitalist system. They sometimes wax eloquent in denouncing the evils of the capitalist system. But what do they propose? They propose to "improve" the capitalist State so as to make it an instrument for doing away with private ownership of wealth. In other words, they preach the nonsense of turning the exploiters' club, by the power of prayer, into a rosebush. Since this "theory" appears in the garb of Socialism and since there are a number of workers who lend it their ear, it is necessary to dwell on it a little longer.

## NO NEED OF REVOLUTION?

The Socialists say there is no need of a revolution. They say democracy has prepared for the workers all the means necessary to achieve Socialism. Let the workers use universal suffrage, they say, to send Socialists into the legislative assemblies. Let the Socialists form a majority in these assemblies. When this is done, the road is open to pass laws abolishing the capitalist system. Of course, there is the Federal Constitution which prohibits the confiscation of property by legal procedure, but this, says the leader of American Socialists, Mr. Norman Thomas, can be overcome. Let us have a Constitutional Convention to amend the Constitution so as to permit Congress to enact Socialist legislation. Let Congress then enact a law which orders the big corporations to cede their industrial establishments and all their property to the State. Let us not expropriate them, say the Socialists, not by any means! Let us pay them with bonds issued by the government and redeemable in thirty years. This will mean introducing Socialism by pacific methods. No revolutions; no seizure of power; no infringement upon the law; no mass action; no expropriation of the exploiters. Everything lawful. Everything in a gentlemanly fashion. The electoral law works. The citizens vote. The legislators assemble. They count noses and find a Socialist majority. The Socialist majority, both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, passes a law. Capitalism passes out. The big trusts bow before the "will of the people". "Gentlemen, you are the lawful heirs of our system", they say politely, and leave the stage for the Norman Thomases and their associates.

What a sweet picture! And how deceptive! We are sorry to mar such an idyllic scene. But we Communists are realists, and we do not wish to be carried away by fancies, especially when these fancies are beneficial to the capitalist system as they tend to keep workers from fighting the capitalist State.

Let us not argue at length about the ingenious invention of paying the owners of industrial establishments with bonds, which means recognizing that the exploiters are entitled to their monopoly of the means of production and that, if they are to give them up, it is to be only through sale. It is not really difficult to see that if you pay your exploiters with bonds, you continue their exploitation in another form. You may have taken over the factories but you still continue working for the profits of the former owners. Everybody can see that. Let us rather examine the proposal of introducing Socialism by means of the ballot.

What does the State consist of? It consists not only of the legislative assemblies, which, by the way, play a lesser and lesser role as big monopoly capitalism grows. It consists first of all of the army

with its commanding staff, the militia, the police force and the executive branch of the government which uses the armed forces to achieve the ends of capitalism. Is it possible to get a majority of Socialist Congressmen? Even assuming that such a miracle would happen, it still wouldn't spell Socialism. Even before there is any danger of a majority of Socialists actually ready to legislate Socialism, the electoral laws can be changed to prevent such an emergency. Even were a Socialist majority to convene, their decisions may not be carried out. One squad of soldiers is sufficient to disperse an entire legislative assembly, the way this was done in Italy, in Germany, and in many other countries.

In case of a Socialist majority, we have before us one of two possibilities. Either the capitalists are certain that the Socialist leaders are harmless to capitalism—as was the case on numerous occasions in Germany and England when power was in the hands of the Socialist leaders; in such a case they will rather be glad to have them carry the burden of government for capitalism; or the capitalists do not like that Socialist majority, because it suits their interests better to have an open dictatorship,—and then they will have every means to get rid of the unwelcome legislators.

Remember that the Socialists are against revolutionary methods. Remember that they do not appeal to the masses to offer resistance against brutal capitalist oppression. And do not forget that capitalism is *armed to the teeth* and that it will use its armed force to secure its domination. Capitalism never gives up its wealth and power voluntarily and it has little respect for its own laws when it comes to defend its rule.

He who says that you can use the capitalist State to abolish capitalism verily resembles one who says you can demolish the enemy fortress by the sounds of trumpets.

It would seem at first glance that the Socialists are merely engaged in day dreaming. Unfortunately, it isn't as harmless as that. The activities of the Socialist leaders are actually harmful to the interests of the workers.

What is the real role of the Socialist leaders? We have no quarrel with those rank-and-file workers who are at heart revolutionists and Socialists but do not see through the fog of Socialist phrases. But we are obliged to point at the pernicious role of the Socialist leaders. At a time when it is necessary for the workers to understand the real nature of the State as an instrument of exploitation and oppression, they tell the workers that the State, as constituted at present, can be a means of liberating them from exploitation and oppression. At a time when it is necessary for the workers to gather strength and fight against the capitalist State and its laws, the Socialists preach to the workers a reliance on this very State and its laws. At a time when it is necessary for the workers

to develop the will to power which shall ultimately crush the capitalist State and make the workers and farmers the ruling power in a State of their own making, the Socialists tell the workers that nothing of the kind is needed and that they have to remain within legal limits prescribed for them by the ruling class.

The Socialist Party of the U.S.A. has recently become divided into three major factions: the "old guard", the "militants", and the Revolutionary Policy Committee. The "old guard" are rock-ribbed reactionaries who have openly supported the N.R.A. and who boost capitalist democracy. The "militants" waver, in words, towards class-struggle policies. In practice, however, although they are the majority of the National Executive Committee, they have virtually been capitulating to the "old guard" on all major issues. As to the Revolutionary Policy Committee, it is torn between revolutionary sentiments and the reformism of the Socialist Party. While the "old guard" definitely and openly opposes the united front of workers' struggle, while the "militant" leaders employ tactics of delaying and blocking, the Revolutionary Policy Committee has never put up a real fight within the Socialist Party for a united front. Common to all groups is their shrinking before revolutionary struggle. The division within the Socialist Party only serves to show that the rank-and-file Socialist workers are becoming tired of reformist policies and are moving to the Left. It is their pressure that makes the leadership shaky.

#### VITAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED

Our dispute with the Socialists is not a dispute in words. It is a clash in politics. Perhaps we need not go so far as the summer of 1917 in Russia, when the Socialists, holding power, refused to ally themselves with the workers and peasants organized in Soviets against the exploiters and their State, but rather entrenched themselves in the capitalist State together with the exploiters *against* the workers and peasants, until they were dislodged by the November, 1917, Revolution, under Bolshevik leadership, which crushed the capitalist State and established the Soviet State as the organ of power of the workers and poor peasants.

Perhaps we need not go back to 1918 and 1919 in Germany, right after the November, 1918, Revolution, when the Socialists, taking over the power in the capitalist State, actually crushed the uprising of the workers, flooded the country with workers' blood and thus secured Germany for capitalism. We have facts of the more recent past which are no less illuminating.

For fourteen years the Socialists held power in Germany. There is a cruel logic to the situation of a Socialist leader becoming a defender of the capitalist State. Once you defend the State there



is no reason why you should not become a member of the Cabinet in the government of that State. The Socialists became ministers, chiefs of police, judges, prison wardens, executioners, in the German State. This was the case not only in Germany, but also in Great Britain, in Austria, in Belgium, and elsewhere. Once you are part of the machinery of the capitalist State, you of necessity do the bidding of the owners of wealth. Such is the nature of that State.

The Socialists everywhere fought against the revolutionary labor movement which was trying to secure higher wages, shorter hours and better working conditions. They suppressed workers' demonstrations by force of arms. Remember Wedding and Neukoeln, sections of Berlin, where a Socialist chief of police, using Socialist policemen, fired machine guns point-blank at workers celebrating May First by a street demonstration, and where scores of workers were killed. Remember a Socialist air minister in the Socialist MacDonald Cabinet of Great Britain sending military airplanes to drop bombs on Arabian villages in territories in which an oppressed nation arose against foreign rule. Remember a Socialist war minister in the same Cabinet sending troops to India to crush the struggles of the workers and peasants for Indian freedom and thus to secure India for the British capitalist exploiters. Remember the activities of the German Socialist leaders in cutting the wages of the workers, in cutting the unemployment insurance of the workers, in voting appropriations for the construction of battleships and allowing the fascists full freedom of propaganda, organization and action. When the fascist danger became acute, the Socialist leaders, instead of agreeing to united action of all the workers, whether Socialist or Communist, against fascism, made common cause with von Hindenburg, appealing to the workers to vote for him as the savior of "democracy". The German Socialist leaders did not defend the interests of the workers but they defended the interests of the capitalist State in its democratic form. They allowed the Nazis to grow strong and to seize the power of State.

There is blood on the hands of many Socialist leaders, blood of the workers. Do not call us vindictive when we say that these Socialist leaders are traitors to the working class. We merely call a spade a spade. We are realists.

We have discussed the war danger. What is the stand of the Socialists towards the war danger? In 1912 the Socialist Parties of the world met in Basle, Switzerland, at an extraordinary congress of the Socialist International, and passed a resolution pledging everybody to fight for Socialism in case of war. But when the imperialist world war came, in 1914, the leadership of the major Socialist Parties joined hands with their capitalist governments in delivering the masses to fight the war for the profits of the capitalists,

for colonies, for markets, for plunder. Since then the parties of the Socialist International have been instrumental in preparing the war and in carrying out the war policies of their capitalist overlords.

An extraordinary international Socialist Conference met in Paris at the end of August, 1933. The Socialist leaders discussed the question of fascism, the question of war and peace. Did they suggest any effective remedy against fascism? The only real remedy is a revolution of the working class to overthrow capitalism by first destroying the capitalist State. But the Socialist leaders were opposed not only to revolution; they were opposed even to the united front of struggle against war and fascism. The Socialist leaders again talked "democracy" instead of revolution. They talked League of Nations and disarmament conferences instead of a real mass struggle against war. What was the actual achievement of the Socialist conference? It spread illusions among the workers to the effect that by using the instrumentality of the capitalist State, they can abolish the evils of capitalist oppression and by using the instrumentality of capitalist international institutions like the League of Nations or the Hague Tribunal, they can abolish wars.

We in America have not seen Socialists in the role of Cabinet members or Senators. But we have seen Socialist Congressmen, Socialist mayors (Milwaukee, Reading, Bridgeport), Socialist judges and Socialist chiefs of police. Were they in any way fighting the capitalist State? Not at all. A Socialist Congressman during the imperialist world war gave his consent to all the military appropriations. Another Socialist Congressman later gave his consent to the predatory Versailles Treaty, the venomous child of the war. The Socialist city administrations were as adamant in refusing to introduce unemployment insurance as were the Republican and Democratic city administrations. Workers demanding home relief and unemployment insurance were just as brutally beaten up in Milwaukee and Reading under a Socialist mayor, as were their class brothers in Pittsburgh and New York under Republican and Democratic mayors. A Socialist mayor in Milwaukee was no less prompt in cutting the wages of city employees than was his Democratic master in the White House in cutting the wages of the federal employees. And just as the Socialists of every other country condone and support the wage-slashing actions of the capitalists, so the Socialists of the United States condoned and supported the National Recovery Act which is a concerted attack on the living standards of the masses.

In the summer of 1934, at their Detroit convention, the Socialist leaders, under pressure from below, reversed themselves and voiced mild criticism of the N.R.A. But those were mere words. The Socialist leaders did not undertake any action to fight the N.R.A. Many of them continued cooperation with government boards. Many

of them continued preaching that the N.R.A. was a boon for the workers.

The Socialists of the United States are not in the Cabinet, but they have "arrived". They are treated by the capitalist masters with respect. They are "good". They are peaceful. They are loyal. They are held up as a shining example in opposition to the militant Communists. The labor baiter, Mr. Grover Whalen, one time chief of police of New York and later N.R.A. administrator for that city, appealed to the Republican, Democratic and Socialist politicians alike to help him in the blue eagle drive. A Socialist leader, Panken, was appointed judge by the capitalist mayor of New York. Another Socialist was appointed member of a charter committee which is to improve the Constitution of the City of New York—for the benefit of the bankers. Time is not far distant when the Socialists may be called to governmental positions—to stem the tide of rising workers' revolts by means of sweet phrases about achieving Socialism by the power of the ballot.

The capitalist State is a glaring fact. It is flesh and blood of the capitalist system. It stands in the way of the workers' progress towards a new, free life. Can it be abolished by gradual transformation? Those who say it can are the staunchest supporters of the capitalist robbers and the most active promoters of imperialist wars. Their theory is not harmless, indeed. It is a poisonous theory. It is a smoke screen behind which cruel capitalist exploitation is hiding.

We Communists say that there is one way to abolish the capitalist State, and that is to smash it by force. To make Communism possible the workers must take hold of the State machinery of capitalism and destroy it.

## V

### A Program of Action

#### 1. ECONOMIC STRUGGLE

**H**OW can it be done?

Once you agree that this State is your enemy the answer to the question is not difficult. Once you have freed yourself from the democracy illusion your road is clear.

Watch the State. Try to understand every one of its maneuvers. The State is often used by the capitalists not only as a big stick but also as poison gas or as an anesthetic, as is the case under the New Deal. Quite often you are told you are given privileges at the same time that your pockets are being picked. Analyze the functions of the State. Try to understand the forces behind its actions. And

remember that if it ever yields anything to the workers it does so under pressure.

This leads us to the road along which the working class can arrive at the destruction of the capitalist State: *revolutionary struggle*.

The working class is placed in this capitalist society in a position where to live it must fight. This fight, to be effective, must be aimed not only at the capitalists but also at their State. And once the fight is effective enough it must inevitably lead to the smashing up of the State. This is the logic of the class division of today. And this indicates the program of action for the working class for today and tomorrow and day after tomorrow until the final reckoning with the capitalist system has arrived.

The fight begins in factory, mine, and mill. It is first of all a fight for higher wages, for shorter labor hours, for better working conditions. It is a fight for unemployment insurance, for social insurance generally, by which is understood that the State pays a minimum wage to those out of work, to the sick, the injured, and the aged. Capitalists love to indulge in humanitarian phrases. History has proved, however, that they never grant anything to the working class unless forced to do so by the fight of the workers. This is why the very existence of the working class is under the sign, *Fight*.

Every fight, however, demands its own organization. The working class has long created agencies for the *economic struggles*: the labor unions and the unemployed councils, the former to fight for better conditions for those employed, the latter to fight for those who are unemployed. We call these struggles economic because their main purpose is to secure for the workers a larger share of the products created by their own labor. They challenge the economic power of the ruling class.

Not much acumen is needed to realize that economic struggles can not remain purely economic. When you strike, when you form a picket line, the State in the shape of policemen and armed thugs rushes to the aid of the employers. When you demonstrate for social insurance you are again confronted with the armed force of the State which is busy "dispersing the crowd". We are living now under the blue eagle. The National Industrial Recovery Act promised the workers pie in the sky. But under this new dispensation one injunction after the other is issued against the strikers. One "arbitrator" after another is sent to confuse the workers, to promise them a favorable settlement if they give up the strike—only to betray them in the end. The very aim of the N.R.A. is to crush the resistance of the workers. It is therefore inevitable that whenever the workers are bent on actually defending their economic demands they are forced to fight the State.

We Communists hold that every class struggle is a political strug-

gle. When you demand social insurance you address yourself both to the capitalists and to the State. When you demonstrate for home relief you present your demands to the city or state government which is a political body. When you fight for the eight-hour work day or the abolition of child labor by law you are defending an economic demand by directing your struggle against the State. When you fight for higher wages to be gotten from the owners of a plant or a mill you always confront the agencies of the State not only as policemen but also as injunction judges, as "mediators", "arbitrators", and other kinds of official "peacemakers" who have the interests of the employers at heart. This is why we say that every class struggle is a political struggle.

#### THE LABOR UNIONS. THE FIGHT FOR SOCIAL INSURANCE

And it is here that we Communists come into the sharpest clash with the leaders of the American Federation of Labor and similar organizations, including unions under Socialist leadership, all of which we term "reformist". It is a foundation stone of the policy of such labor leaders to cooperate with the State. These leaders claim to defend the interests of the workers but they also claim that they have no quarrel with the system. The most they admit is that they have "labor disputes" with some "unfair" employers. The State to them is fair. The majority of capitalists, they believe, is also fair. The minority of recalcitrant employers, they say, must be either cajoled or persuaded or else frightened by public opinion to fall in line. Once this is accomplished, they contend, nothing remains for the workers but to "cooperate" with their employers and the government for the common benefit of all.

Again we have before us a rosy picture. And again we must remain realists. We must see those leaders in action. We must unmask them before the workers.

At first, however, we call your attention to the very outlook of many of those leaders, to what is called in scientific language their ideology. They proceed from the conception of unity of interests between employer and employee. By this alone they deceive the workers. There is no more unity between the employer and employee than there is between the robber and the robbed. There is a clash of interests. There is an eternal antagonism. There can be no peace and no unity between the exploiter and his victims. The capitalist strives to secure for himself as much of the workers' product as he can get by force or fraud or both; the workers, resisting exploitation, strive to get as big a share of their own product as they can force the boss to yield. That is fundamental. That is the law of capitalist society. It is the division of classes. It is the never-ending class conflict as long as capitalism lasts. This

conflict may not always break out in mass action, like demonstrations and strikes, but it always smolders underneath. Capitalist society is a battleground and the workers are an army on the march against the enemy.

He who says then that there is unity of interests between employers and employees is committing treason to the working class.

Needless to say, the State is not "neutral". At best the State only pretends to be a friend of the workers. Under the N.R.A. you are told you have equal rights with your employers and that the State is in partnership with both. The truth of this statement is revealed by the fact that numerous strikes, of the miners, steel workers, auto workers, marine workers, textile workers, and others, were crushed by the government in league with the leaders of the A. F. of L. The truth of this statement is revealed in the shooting and killing of pickets in Philadelphia, in the calling out of militia with artillery and machine guns against the striking miners in New Mexico and Utah, in the introducing of martial law in the South during the great textile strike of 1934, in the reign of police terror during the marine strike in San Francisco, in innumerable injunctions against picketing. When a labor leader of the reformist type tries to persuade the workers that the State is equally fair to employer and employee, he is blinding the workers and undermining their resistance.

This is exactly what those "labor leaders" have been doing for many years. They have been preventing the workers from realizing their own strength. They have discouraged many a strike which broke out spontaneously because the workers could stand their conditions no longer. Wherever these leaders call a strike because they are forced to do so by the militant spirit of the rank and file, they do it reluctantly and with no real fighting spirit. Instead of broadening the strike, calling out neighboring industrial establishments and spreading the struggle over a wide area, instead of firing the strikers with confidence, with enthusiasm, with a consciousness of their strength, the leaders most often smother the movement by underhand machinations with the bosses. Wherever a real strike with a true militant spirit developed, of late, it was under rank-and-file leadership and in defiance of the reformist top leaders. The latter are happy when they succeed in putting an end to the militant struggle and in getting arbitrators to step in.

And who are the arbitrators called to decide the issues affecting the lives of the workers? As often as not the board of arbitration is composed of an equal number of representatives from the workers and the employer. Those who represent the employer know very well how to defend his capitalist interests. The reformist leaders who represent the workers do not fight for the interests of the workers with a firm hand, because that can be done only when the

workers' side at the conference table is reinforced by a mighty struggle outside. The reformist representatives at the conference table do not act as fighting representatives of workers facing the enemy. They wish to please—the bosses. At best they try meek persuasion. A usual method with them is to plead with the bosses on the grounds that the workers will “get out of hand”. Often they are interested in their own private advantage rather than in the welfare of those whom they are supposed to represent. These two “parties” to the “dispute” agree on an “impartial” chairman who is to decide between them. The impartial chairman is either a lawyer or a capitalist politician. Under the N.R.A. the “arbitrator” is often a blue eagle State agent, which is often worse than an “impartial” chairman. The fate of the workers is left in the hands of people who belong to the enemy class.

Nor is that all. Under the N.R.A. the reformist leaders have been incorporated into the administration as members of the innumerable advisory boards. Their task is to please the government rather than serve the workers. And there is no fundamental difference in this respect between reformists belonging to the Republican or Democratic parties and the reformists belonging to the Socialist Party. William Green or John Lewis, Matthew Woll or David Dubinsky, Edward McGrady (now raised to the post of Assistant Secretary of Labor for his good services to the bosses) or Sidney Hillman—no matter how different their coloring may be, they are all birds of a feather.

They claim to be pure and simple unionists and their slogan is “No politics in the labor movement”. What a lie! They themselves are steeped in politics. They are mixed up with the State. They are part and parcel of the machinery of the State. They are not free of politics; they are only engaged in *rotten* politics, in capitalistic politics, in politics that tend to bind the workers hand and foot.

We Communists look upon the labor union as upon the front-trench organization of the working class. It is this organization through which the workers directly confront the employers in the struggle for better conditions. The union cannot do away with exploitation, for exploitation will disappear only with capitalism itself. But the union can improve the conditions of the workers—to a degree. The union is the organization that fights for the interests of the workers at the very source of exploitation. Its place is in the shop, facing the employer. It must be on the alert. The employer is always ready with new schemes to squeeze greater surplus value out of the workers. He is assisted by all sorts of advisers. He never lets up. He will even go as far as to assure you that your own standard of living won't be reduced if only you allow him greater profits. He will complain bitterly that your “unreasonable” demands may force him to close his business.

To meet all these machinations you need a union that is wide-awake, flexible, and has great fighting power. Such a union trains the workers for the final clash with capitalism to abolish it altogether.

The strength of the union is in its closeness to the workers, in its responsiveness to all their grievances in the shop, in its ability to communicate with the rank and file on short notice. For this purpose, *shop committees* must be elected by the workers of every shop. The shop committee must represent the workers of a given production unit and be under their control. The unions must be built on the basis of the shop committees. The unions must be under the closest control of the shop committees.

When we Communists speak of fighting we do not always mean the strike. We mean the defense of the interests of the workers in every instance and in every possible way. If the workers are organized, they can bring pressure to bear upon the "office" against every encroachment on the workers' rights. If the workers are a *power*, the voice of their representatives has weight. This power must always be felt. It is therefore necessary that *all* the workers of the shop understand their class interests, understand the meaning of unionism, and are ready to back up their shop committee. Obviously, the union must be more than a dues-collecting apparatus. The union must be alive and functioning every hour of the day. It must have the rank-and-file spirit. It must have knowledge of every detail of the situation. And it must have guts.

When the workers go on strike, the employers summon all their forces, including the State. They use every means to demoralize and split the strikers' ranks. The workers must summon all their forces. The efforts of the bosses can be defeated only by a union which is capable of bringing out the strikers' fighting spirit, only where there is a militant rank-and-file leadership close to the masses and sharing the life of the masses.

It is for such a militant spirit and for such leadership that we Communists are fighting in the labor unions. And it is just for this that the reformist leaders call us "disrupters", "irresponsible elements" and "Reds".

We understand why the reformist leaders are dead set against us. We see through them and we tell the workers the truth. Wherever we are we organize the workers; we help organize the union; we try to enlighten the workers as to their class interests. Many reformist leaders shun the word "class". They favor class collaboration, collaboration with the employers. Therefore, they do not want the workers to look upon themselves as a class, to understand that their class interests cannot be reconciled with those of the bosses. We try to develop class consciousness, class militancy, class pride. They call us disrupters; but what we disrupt is the unity between some reformist leaders and the bosses. They call us irresponsible, but



the responsibility we reject is responsibility for the bosses' profits. Also, we have no fear of bosses. We say that the workers *can* be stronger than the bosses, if only they are organized and conscious. We say that even the powerful Steel Trust can be forced to yield concessions to the workers if they organize their strength.

Next to the union struggle and closely related to it is the struggle for unemployment and social insurance. There are about 17,000,000 unemployed at the present time. This vicious system has excluded them from production, although all the goods accumulated in this country are the fruit of their labor. They are entitled to all the wealth. They insist on their right to live. The capitalists have all along opposed the enactment of any social-insurance legislation. Now, however, in the face of the persistent and determined struggle for unemployment insurance, they are scheming to put over a sham social insurance which guarantees no human existence. The Wagner-Lewis Bill leaves out completely the 17,000,000 at present unemployed. It speaks only in terms of future unemployed. The Bill leaves the States free to introduce or evade unemployment insurance. Where introduced, the insurance funds will not accumulate before three years after the law is enacted. The majority of State Legislatures close in April or May and will not reopen this year (1935). At best they could pass insurance laws in 1936. The system then will begin to pay benefits only around 1939—and even then the payments will be meagre and only for part of the year and will cease as soon as the funds are exhausted. That the funds will rapidly be exhausted is clear from the fact that wages are low and that the funds are only a small percentage of the very low wages.

As to those who are unemployed *today*, the government does not offer them any security whatever. Public works are supposed to be organized by the government, but they are only temporary; they do not pay a living wage, and they absorb only a small fraction of the unemployed. Late in 1934 Roosevelt promised to put three and a half million workers on relief jobs. This figure was obviously exaggerated—for publicity purposes. But even so, what is to become of the other thirteen and a half millions? Figures officially published in the early spring of 1935 showed that there were 2,664,000 persons in need of aid in the City of New York. Fully one half of them received no aid. What is to become of these? How shall they live? Needless to mention that even those receiving relief cannot live a half-way decent human life.

As against this the Communist Party initiated the Workers Unemployment, Old Age, and Social Insurance Bill, which was introduced in Congress by Congressman Lundeen. This bill, known as *House Resolution 2827*, provides real insurance. It calls for compensation, in an amount equal to average wages, to *all* unemployed. The moneys are to be raised by taxing incomes, inheritances, and

gifts of \$5,000 and over, and by curtailing unproductive appropriations, like those for the army and navy and other militaristic and imperialistic ventures. The funds thus formed are to be administered by the workers themselves.

Not only has the Communist Party created this real social insurance plan, but it has mobilized large masses of workers, farmers, professionals, and small businessmen to fight for the bill. The Communist Party was instrumental in calling the great Labor Congress in Washington (Jan. 5-7, 1935) that put all its weight behind the social insurance bill. It made this country aware of the urgent need for unemployment insurance. It mobilized wide support for this bill among the rank and file of the A. F. of L., winning endorsement of a vast number of local unions, as well as a number of central bodies and international conventions, in the face of persistent opposition of the top leadership of the A. F. of L.

Wherever some relief was introduced, this was done as a result of numerous struggles led by the Communist Party. The Communists were instrumental in organizing the Unemployment Councils which, together with other workers, fought for every crumb of bread for every unemployed.

## 2. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR

War is inseparable from the capitalist system. The Great War of 1914-18 was fought for the redivision of the world. During the sixteen years after the conclusion of the first imperialist war all the contradictions of capitalism have become much sharper than they were prior to 1914. More rivalries among nations, more armaments, greater international tension, sharper conflicts, as the conflict between the U. S. A. and Great Britain ("the war of the dollar against the pound"). In the last couple of years Nazi Germany has loomed as the greatest menace to the peace of Europe. Hitler's open declaration of organizing a new conscript army, a military air fleet, and a large navy has made the war danger more acute. War may become a fact almost any hour. War appears to the capitalists as a way out of the crisis. War is a great feast for the robbers. It means huge war orders, an orgy of speculation, an accumulation of unheard-of fortunes, and this may look like the overcoming of the crisis, temporarily at least. War offers to the capitalists the prospect, or at least the hope, of victory over the other imperialist powers and in consequence gigantic indemnities, seizure of territories, extension of colonial possessions, and otherwise an increase of markets, spheres of influence and other gains. War, to be sure, means squandering the wealth and the man power of the nations; it means actual devastation of provinces and countries and death for great masses of the

people; but these "costs of war" have never deterred the capitalists from plunging the countries into that bloody mess.

Witness the dismal failure of all the so-called international conferences to settle disputes among the imperialist nations. Not only have all the conferences of the last years ended in fiasco, but they have actually led to a sharpening of all contradictions that rend the capitalist world asunder.

There was the *Lausanne Conference* where the greatest European imperialist powers tried to settle the reparations problem. It seemed to be settled, but the settlement was shipwrecked on the rocks of America's refusal to yield on the question of war debts. The Lausanne agreement has remained suspended in the air.

There was the question of *Manchuria*, invaded by Japan. The League of Nations made the gesture of trying to settle the dispute. It sent the Lytton Commission to study the problem. In reply Japan quit the League of Nations. War in the Far East has not stopped for over two years. Japan is making ever new encroachments on Jehol Province, on Mongolia, and practically establishing its protectorate over China.

The *Geneva Conference* met for months and months. It was supposed to reach a disarmament agreement. The result is an increase in armaments throughout the entire imperialist world. There is only one class of industries that is prospering in the capitalist countries: war industries. Naval armaments are making tremendous progress. Swanson, the Secretary of the Navy, advanced the "second-to-none" program for the American navy. This program is being carried out with great dispatch. The Japanese imperialists and the imperialists of Great Britain have replied with a gigantic naval construction plan. There is a race of armaments between the French and Italian imperialists.

The *World Economic Conference* was a total failure. The result is a sharpening of all international rivalries. "Economic nationalism", promulgated by the leading imperialist nations, is a method of economic warfare; at the same time it is a method of preparing the economic system of the imperialist countries for the coming armed conflict. Never has the question of *markets* for the capitalist countries been as acute as it is at present. The question of markets is nothing but the question of *redividing the globe* among the imperialist nations. And that means war.

The forces that produce war are more powerful in 1935 than they were in 1913. The only country that stands for peace and that tried to promote a program of peace, disarmament and unhampered world economic intercourse in Geneva and London is the Soviet Union.

War against the Soviet Union is a fundamental policy of capitalism. Between 1917 and 1922, the U.S.A., England, France, and Japan fought the Soviet Republic with arms. They dispatched

armies of intervention into the Soviet territory and they financed the counter-revolutionary generals that were trying to overthrow the new workers' rule. When intervention and counter-revolution collapsed before the irresistible onslaught of the workers and peasants organized in the Red Army under the leadership of the Bolshevik (Communist) Party, and the foreign armies had to be withdrawn, there began the economic war against the Soviet Union. This war continues to the present day. But not this alone. There have been innumerable attempts at military intervention. In 1929, an army was actually sent into Eastern Siberia through the Manchurian warlord, but this attempt was frustrated by the quick and decisive action of the Red Army. Over and over again Soviet embassies and trade missions in the capitalist countries have been raided and Soviet representatives imprisoned. Over and over again officially sponsored campaigns were conducted in the capitalist countries against the Soviet Union. The Fish Committee is still fresh in the workers' minds. It was a Congressional committee supposed to investigate Communism in the United States. It did not investigate Communism; it made no attempt to study Communism as a social phenomenon. Instead it made it its specific business to disseminate the most malicious propaganda against the Soviet Union. Nor was the Congress of the United States alone guilty of fabricating insidious lies against the Workers' Republic. Cabinet members and politicians in high standing degraded themselves by spreading tales about Soviet "dumping". The "forced labor" story was widely circulated and made the basis for discrimination against Soviet imports.

In the autumn of 1933 this government recognized the Soviet Union. For a while the attitude of open official hostility to the Soviet Union was toned down. Negotiations were begun for credit extension to the Soviet Government. Soon, however, the government of the U.S.A. began to "cool off". A campaign of unprecedented malice against the Soviet Union was unleashed by the Hearst press. Red-baiting, with a view to "Moscow", was undertaken by a Congressional committee headed by Dickstein and McCormack, which was ostensibly set up to investigate fascism. Debt negotiations were abruptly terminated. The U.S. Government recalled its military attaché from Moscow.

Whether openly hostile or pretending official "friendship"; whether recognizing the Soviet Union, as this was finally done also by the U.S.A., or stubbornly refusing recognition; whether concluding non-aggression pacts or severing commercial treaties or even severing diplomatic relations, the attitude of the imperialist countries towards the Soviet Union remains that of an enemy camp. There is not a secret confab of the imperialist powers in which conspiracies against the Workers' Republic are not hatched.

We live in an atmosphere of imminent war. All national policies are now directed towards the preparation for war. What are these so-called conservation camps if not training grounds for the future army to be used in the war? What is this militarization of the schools and colleges if not preparation for war? What are these numerous "war games" on the water and in the air, on the land and in the sea if not preparations for war? What is this mobilization of the industries of the United States, with administrators ready in every section, with a machinery so timed as to make it possible to put the whole country on a war basis within a few hours? What are these repeated declarations by cabinet members that the navy was needed for the purpose of "expanding American commerce"? What is this modernization of the army, modernization of battleships, and the huge increase in the aerial forces of the United States, if not preparation for war?

Roosevelt's government is a war government. And it is in order to screen these war preparations from the public view for a while that pacifist phrases are used. Roosevelt talking of world peace! Socialist leaders applauding, trying to make the people believe that Roosevelt is an angel of peace. Reformist union leaders singing in unison with Roosevelt's apostles of peace. A mutual admiration society for laying a smoke screen. Gabriel over the White House. While this hosannah is being sung the munitions plants are working overtime; poison gas is manufactured in huge quantities; tanks and armored cars are turned out by the thousand; dozens of new formidable battleships are being feverishly constructed to make the navy "second to none"; a large part of the public works appropriations is turned to military purposes; seven hundred thousand youths are being drilled in the "conservation camps" under army officers; a militarist propaganda under the slogan, "Stand behind the President", is in full swing and reminds one of war time under Wilson; plants that do not at present work for the war are mobilized to begin such work at a moment's notice; and the entire war machinery is being perfected by the application of the latest inventions. The administration of the N.R.A. is backed by the war industries and administered by leading war-mongers. The N.R.A. has the slaughtering industry uppermost in mind. The N.R.A. means war.

Here as elsewhere we Communists remain political realists. We say to the workers, Words are chaff; they mean nothing; they mean less than nothing; deeds count. The deeds of the Roosevelt government are war deeds.

We say the workers must fight against war. The workers must realize that war is against their interests. There is only one war that is just—and that is the war of an oppressed class for its libera-

people; but these "costs of war" have never deterred the capitalists from plunging the countries into that bloody mess.

Witness the dismal failure of all the so-called international conferences to settle disputes among the imperialist nations. Not only have all the conferences of the last years ended in fiasco, but they have actually led to a sharpening of all contradictions that rend the capitalist world asunder.

There was the *Lausanne Conference* where the greatest European imperialist powers tried to settle the reparations problem. It seemed to be settled, but the settlement was shipwrecked on the rocks of America's refusal to yield on the question of war debts. The Lausanne agreement has remained suspended in the air.

There was the question of *Manchuria*, invaded by Japan. The League of Nations made the gesture of trying to settle the dispute. It sent the Lytton Commission to study the problem. In reply Japan quit the League of Nations. War in the Far East has not stopped for over two years. Japan is making ever new encroachments on Jehol Province, on Mongolia, and practically establishing its protectorate over China.

The *Geneva Conference* met for months and months. It was supposed to reach a disarmament agreement. The result is an increase in armaments throughout the entire imperialist world. There is only one class of industries that is prospering in the capitalist countries: war industries. Naval armaments are making tremendous progress. Swanson, the Secretary of the Navy, advanced the "second-to-none" program for the American navy. This program is being carried out with great dispatch. The Japanese imperialists and the imperialists of Great Britain have replied with a gigantic naval construction plan. There is a race of armaments between the French and Italian imperialists.

The *World Economic Conference* was a total failure. The result is a sharpening of all international rivalries. "Economic nationalism", promulgated by the leading imperialist nations, is a method of economic warfare; at the same time it is a method of preparing the economic system of the imperialist countries for the coming armed conflict. Never has the question of *markets* for the capitalist countries been as acute as it is at present. The question of markets is nothing but the question of *redividing the globe* among the imperialist nations. And that means war.

The forces that produce war are more powerful in 1935 than they were in 1913. The only country that stands for peace and that tried to promote a program of peace, disarmament and unhampered world economic intercourse in Geneva and London is the Soviet Union.

War against the Soviet Union is a fundamental policy of capitalism. Between 1917 and 1922, the U.S.A., England, France, and Japan fought the Soviet Republic with arms. They dispatched

### 3. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

We have mentioned above that the capitalist State changes its form and tactics in accordance with the interests of the ruling class. When social conditions are more or less stable, when no great mass movements threaten to overthrow the rule of the owners of wealth, the State allows itself to appear democratic. You are told then that "the people" are the actual rulers of the land.

But even when the State appears in its democratic guise it is democracy for the owners of wealth and a dictatorship over the masses. The system in the United States is a democracy for the Morgans and Mellons, the Rockefellers and the Fords, and everybody that "counts" inasmuch as it carries out their will. But what about the striking miners that are being gassed? What about the hunger marchers that are being clubbed? What about the textile workers that are being shot down in cold blood? What about the milk strikers that are being surrounded by squads of deputy sheriffs, beaten and jailed? What about the legal weapon of injunctions used against strikers fighting for a bigger crust of bread? What about those numberless cases of workers' blood spilled for the sole reason that they are trying to defend their right to live?

Democracy for the rulers, dictatorship over the workers; terror, legal or extra-legal, is always used against the workers even where the semblance of democracy is preserved.

This semblance, however, is easily and eagerly removed whenever it suits the interests of the rulers. The system prevailing in the U.S.A. at the present time hardly deserves the name democracy. Government is increasingly becoming a one-man affair. Congress is ceding its prerogatives of law-making to Roosevelt, who is a virtual dictator, acting through a number of boards appointed by him. All this vast economic legislation that has been introduced now is not of Congressional origin and has not received Congressional approval. In foreign policies Congress has long become nothing but a rubber stamp, while the treaty power is in the hands of the President and his advisers. There was once prevalent in America the theory of the "balance of power" between the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of the government. It is no accident that the executive branch has gained ascendancy over the rest. This is in keeping with the interests of Wall Street. It assures quick action. It makes for quiet "deals" away from the glaring light of publicity. It makes it unnecessary to dicker with numerous legislators who may have to reckon with the moods of their electors (although by and large it has not been difficult for Wall Street to keep Congress in line). It clears the ground for further developments along the road of an open dictatorship.

Wherever capitalist democracy is displaced by open capitalist

dictatorship for the primary purpose of crushing the revolutionary labor movement that threatens capitalist rule and for the purpose of fusing the State with big business in order to prolong the existence of capitalism, there we have fascism. Fascism is brute force against a rising working class which begins to challenge the capitalist power. Fascism at the same time attempts to organize industry and commerce on behalf of the owners of wealth. The iron hand that is used against the workers and poor farmers is aimed to force them to accept lower wages and worsened working conditions in order thus to secure greater profits for the employers. Government regulation of industry and commerce, government subsidies and aid from the treasury, *i. e.*, from the taxes squeezed out of the masses of the population, also have the purpose of increasing the profits of the great industrialists and bankers. Fascism is a form of government which reduces the overwhelming majority of the population to abject poverty and degradation so that a few heads of large corporations may prosper.

Fascism is a form of capitalist rule designed to save the system of exploitation for the big exploiters. But it uses for its purpose large numbers, masses of the harassed middle class, sections of the peasantry, and even some backward elements of the working class, particularly those that have not gone through the school of productive industrial work. The crisis of capitalism hits hard the small owner, who begins to despair. The same crisis creates numbers of young sons and daughters of workers who never have a chance to work and thus practically become declassed. All these elements are greatly dissatisfied, but they do not have the class feeling, the organization and the experience of the industrial workers. They are an easy prey to illusions. They hope for political miracles to happen. They are inclined to put their faith, not in concerted mass action, but in the leadership of some individual whom they believe to be great. It is to these masses that fascism comes with its anti-capitalist phrases. It promises them a short cut to prosperity—something like a “share-the-wealth” program, confiscation of large incomes, nationalization of department stores, etc. It promises to abolish poverty without abolishing the capitalist system. At the same time it hides from these masses the real cause of their misery; instead, it chooses some scapegoat, like the Jews or other minorities, to put on them the blame for everything evil that capitalism brought to the people. *Social demagogy* and *rabid nationalism* are the two main instruments of fascism to beguile those strata of the population that are being crushed by large-scale capital in the course of the deepening crisis. Rabid nationalism includes not only persecution of national minorities and hatred for all other nations but, in the first place, it serves to cover up the class differences and to let loose an unbridled national aggressiveness. Let our nation become



strong, says fascism, let it have the greatest possible army and navy; let it take the place under the sun that belongs to such a chosen nation—by war preferably—and all the difficulties will disappear, and everybody will be happy—“every man a king”, according to Huey Long.

From this it is quite obvious that the difference between the rule of capitalist democracy and the rule of fascism is a difference in form and method, not in principle. The principle remains the same: serving the interests of the owners of wealth. The foundation of society remains the same: private ownership and exploitation. The fascist regime is the open dictatorship of the capitalist class, the terrorist dictatorship, with the veil of democracy cast away. We Communists value the democratic rights which the workers have won—as a consequence of incessant struggle—under capitalist democracy. We are ready to defend these rights. We strive to bring about united working-class action to defend these rights. But we realize that capitalist democracy is the disguised dictatorship of the capitalist class, that there is no fundamental difference, no difference in substance, between capitalist democracy and fascism.

Here, as elsewhere, the Communists have a clear understanding of the social forces, whereas the Socialist leaders spread illusions and pursue policies which weaken and disarm the workers. The Socialist leaders put all their hopes in capitalist democracy. In their eyes it is the open road to the peaceful introduction of Socialism. They reject the warning of the Communists that the capitalist class will fight to the bitter end to retain power. They carry on class-collaboration policies. And even when they see capitalist democracy crumbling under the pressure of the crisis of the capitalist system, when they are confronted with the menace of rising fascism, when they see capitalism preparing to replace its democratically-gloved iron hand by the openly brutal fascist fist, they still persist in their class-collaboration policies and refuse to prepare the workers for the unavoidable struggle. They place every possible obstacle in the way of the united front fought for by the Communists. Not only that, they rush frantically to unite with capitalist groups who profess opposition to the open fascist movement but proceed, with the support of the Socialist leaders, to introduce measures of fascism. This united front with capitalist groups the Socialist leaders call “choosing the ‘lesser evil’”.

Thus, in Germany they supported Hindenburg against Hitler rather than support the working class revolutionary movement against both Hindenburg *and* Hitler. Thus, in Austria they supported the fascism of Dollfuss against the Naziism of Hitler Germany. In this way they broke the unity of the workers, disarmed them in face of the enemy, sought to persuade the working class even to support its bitterest foes. In this way they made fascism in Ger-

many and Austria possible. And this is why we Communists say that the road to fascism was paved by the Social-Democratic leaders.

Do not be surprised if you see Social-Democracy persecuted by fascism. When capitalism dispenses with the democratic form of government it has no use any more for its Social-Democratic maid-servants as an agency for spreading democratic illusions. Besides, the fascist rulers are very much afraid of the Social-Democratic rank-and-file workers, who, they rightly see, are eager for common revolutionary action with the Communists against capitalism.

Here in the U.S.A. we have no full-fledged fascism as yet. But the elements of it are fast growing before our very eyes. Those attempts to prevent workers from striking; those N.R.A. codes supposed to organize industry and commerce by State regulation; that "partnership" between government and industry and government and labor that has been proclaimed as the policy of the Roosevelt administration; that reign of terror that is sweeping the strike areas of the country—what is it if not the manifestation of fascist tendencies? That dictatorship of one man so eagerly acquiesced in by everybody, except, of course, the revolutionary workers—what is it if not something very much akin to fascism? That propaganda of super-nationalism which comes from high places in Washington, especially after the collapse of the London conference, is it not reminiscent of fascist tactics? We certainly have a fascization of the governmental apparatus, and there is being developed an atmosphere where fascism may quickly become the order of the day.

Outside of all sorts of "shirted" secret organizations, like the Silver Shirts, the Crusaders, etc., we have three large centers of fascist propaganda, headed by William Hearst, Father Coughlin, Huey Long. Hearst is poisoning millions of people every day with pro-Hitler, pro-Mussolini, pro-fascist and anti-Soviet propaganda of the most pernicious and unscrupulous kind. Father Coughlin, the "radio priest", has won tremendous popularity through his advocacy of "social justice" and his apparent opposition to Wall Street. Huey Long has become a power due to his fascist domination of the State of Louisiana and his "share-the-wealth" plan. This trio may some day shape the destinies of the U.S.—if the masses are not on the alert.

It should be remembered that from the very beginning of the New Deal we Communists warned against the menace of fascism inherent in it while the leaders of the A. F. of L. and the leaders of the Socialist Party hailed it as a "new charter for Labor", "a step in the direction of Socialism", etc. Even today many of these leaders still maintain their faith in the N.R.A. and in Roosevelt's democracy as opposed to fascism.

How can we recognize the fascist nature of such gentry as the Coughlins, Longs, and their ilk? Here are a few signs. They all

preach "justice" within the framework of capitalism, whose very foundation is injustice. Coughlin and Long speak of a more "equitable" distribution of wealth, but they leave the large owners in possession of their millions, and they leave private ownership of the means of production unshaken,—which means that what they preach is only a bait to catch the masses. They appear as advocates for the "small fellow", but they are backed by large bankers and trusts. They declare that unions and class struggle are unnecessary and that the government is to be the sole judge as to wages, hours and working conditions. They mouth the words "democracy" and "Americanism", but they inject in their preachments national hatred, national aggrandizement, and glorification of the fascist dictatorships. They are fostered by the capitalists because they aim to attract large numbers of people and thus to divert them from anti-capitalist struggles. They do in the United States what Hitler did in Germany between 1923 and 1933: they are preparing the ground and perfecting the organization of fascism "made in U.S.A."

The fight against fascism in all its manifestations is one of the fundamental tasks of the American workers. The united front of struggle to stem the rising tide of fascism is of vital historic importance. Fascism can be crushed if all those opposed to it unite to form one mighty force and if they fight it day in and day out. The experience of the united front in France proves this conclusively.

#### THE NEGRO PEOPLE

One of the major policies of American capitalism is *the oppression of the Negro people.*

There are about 12 million Negroes in the United States, according to the official census, but it is commonly believed their number is about 15,000,000. About 9,500,000 of them live in the South. Those living in the North are mostly concentrated in industrial centers and a few large cities. Thus New York has a Negro population of 328,000; Chicago, 234,000; Philadelphia, 222,000. New Orleans, Baltimore and Washington have about 130,000 each. This great population of colored Americans suffers under a system of oppression more vicious and cruel than any known in modern times.

Over seventy years ago the chains of chattel slavery that crushed the Negroes were supposed to be lifted. As a matter of fact, the chains of slavery still cut into the very vitals of the Negro people.

The overwhelming majority of the Negroes are either workers or farmers. In the South they are mostly tenant farmers and sharecroppers, and over them the white landlord rules supreme. When the landlord sells his land he sells it together with those who work on it as he used to do under chattel slavery. When the Negro tenant and cropper borrows money or receives food, fertilizer and other

necessities on credit—and he must do so since he is poverty-stricken—he pays exorbitant interest, sometimes as much as 37 per cent per annum, and his debt binds him to the farm. When as debtor he tries to leave the farm, he is arrested and put into the chain gang unless “bought out” by his landlord or another white boss. He works himself to death for the owner of the land. It was estimated that even before the present crisis 7,000,000 Negro people in the South lived on an income of less than \$5 per week *per family*, and of these, 3,000,000 lived on an income of only \$3 a week per family. During the crisis the situation of the Negro masses has grown worse.

In the industrial centers both of the North and of the South, the Negro workers receive less pay for the same work as white workers, and they are treated worse. In the large cities of the North, as well as of the South, they are segregated in special ghettos, where they pay more for crowded and unsanitary rooms. The reformist unions refuse to organize the Negro workers; many unions of the A. F. of L. would not admit Negro workers at all, and others admit them only into Jim-Crow locals. The Negro unemployed are more often excluded from relief and, when relief is granted, they receive less than even their white brothers, although unemployment has been much more severe among Negro than among white workers. Under the N.R.A. thousands of white bosses have discharged their Negro workers to replace them by whites, whose work was by no means superior to that of the Negroes.

The striving of the Negro masses towards education is being hampered by the white ruling class. There are fewer schools for the Negro children and fewer educational institutions for the youth. Negro intellectuals, physicians, scientists, educators, lawyers, as a rule are barred from practising among the white population and are discriminated against in a thousand other ways. Even the Negro business man has to contend with obstacles and barriers, legal and otherwise, unknown to the white members of his class. At every step the Negro meets with a barbed wire fence blocking his progress.

All this economic oppression is accompanied by a system of political and social degradation, which is hardly different from that prevailing before the Civil War. The Southern Negro is almost entirely deprived of the vote. The Jim-Crow laws make his existence intolerable. A vicious propaganda is conducted by the white ruling class against the Negroes, branding them as an “inferior race”.

This whole structure of oppression is backed up by the special weapon of the American white ruling class—lynching.

We Communists declare that the cause of Negro liberation is the cause of all the white toilers, in the first place that of the working class. We take it as self-evident truth that every nation is entitled to freedom and equality and we know that the fable of “race superiority” was purposely invented by the exploiters to justify their op-

pression of other nations. We proclaim that the American Negroes are a nation and that *Land, Freedom and Equality*, the demands that glowed on the banner of the fighting Negroes during the Civil War and Reconstruction, must be the watchword of the struggle for Negro liberation today. By this is meant—that the plantation system in the South should be destroyed; the land should be divided among the Negro farmers, croppers and tenants; full economic, political, and social equality should be guaranteed for the Negroes in every section of the country, and that the Negro people be given full freedom to develop unhampered as a nation.

To those acquainted with the *national problem* there is nothing unusual in this idea of the Negroes in the United States being a nation. What traits distinguish a nation? Stalin, the man who not only made a profound study of the national problem, but was instrumental in liberating the many nationalities that groaned under Czarism in Russia, enumerates the following features of a nation:

A nation, he said, is “an historically developed community of people with a common language, territory, economic life and an historical tradition reflecting itself in a common culture”.

All these traits we find combined in the Negro people. They certainly are an historically developed community of people. They have a common language; they are bound together by a common economic life; they have historical traditions that are different from the traditions of other Americans; they are developing a culture all their own. All this must be granted by every observer.

As to territory, there is a continuous stretch of land running from the eastern shore of Maryland down into Texas through twelve States, and embracing about 397 counties, in which the Negroes form the majority of the population. This territory, commonly known as the Black Belt, is the homeland of the Negroes. They have tilled that land virtually from the time it was first settled. It is one economic unit since it is identical with the old cotton-belt of the South. It is there where 70 years ago the Negro masses valiantly fought for their liberation. It is there where today they have begun to battle for the new freedom. This new freedom we call *National Self-Determination*.

Every nation has a right to live its own life, independent of other nations. Together with the most advanced and courageous fighters among the Negroes we Communists say that this territory, this Black Belt, which by right belongs to the Negroes, must be organized as a distinct political unit regardless of state lines that now cut across it. In this political unit the Negro majority must have full governmental control, which means the right to set up a government and to organize armed forces to defend their rights. This does not mean excluding and discriminating against the white toilers now living in this territory. On the contrary, they will have equal rights with

the Negroes and therefore more freedom than they have ever enjoyed under the dictatorship of the white ruling class. The governments and the armed forces of the white ruling class must be removed from the Black Belt.

This demand may be new to many American workers. Yet it is simple justice. It is in line with the general demand for the liberation of all oppressed nationalities everywhere in the world. The white workers in the South will fight for this demand of the Negro people for this will be the only way they will be able to destroy the power of the ruling class.

American capitalism is oppressing not only the Negro people, although their oppression is the worst. American capitalism oppresses also a number of colonial and semi-colonial peoples, like those of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Cuba and many others. Wall Street capitalists are taking the cream off these countries, leaving the workers and poor farmers in servitude and starvation.

#### HOW THE FIGHTING IS TO BE DONE

We Communists say it is the duty of the workers to fight against capitalist terror, against manifestations of fascism, against the oppression of other nations. We say it is in their interests to fight. We appeal to the *class interests* of the workers and the exploited masses of the population. Stand guard. Offer resistance to capitalist terror. Fight for your right to organize, to assemble, to strike. Break the capitalist dictatorial rules directed against you. Do not submit. Strike back. In unity is your strength.

Freedom must be fought for and this fight cannot wait. It is a matter requiring action right now and every day. Your employers try to prevent you from organizing: organize. They will try to fire your organizers: stand pat, defend them! They will try to discharge more: answer by calling a strike: picket the plant! They will send policemen and hired deputies to break up your picket line: stand firm, don't yield! They will send a reformist union leader to persuade you to accept boss arbitration: drive him out like a yellow cur! They will put some of your leaders in jail: demonstrate, protest, fill the court room with hundreds of workers, demand the release of your comrades, picket the court house, picket the judge's house, call other workers to help you in your struggle; make your struggle the struggle of great numbers of class conscious workers!

Your masters send marines against a Latin-American country as was recently done against Cuba, when 29 warships were mobilized to crush the workers' and farmers' revolution. Your masters always aid the local exploiters against whom the masses have risen. Their aim is to maintain in the Latin-American countries a puppet government, submissive to Wall Street, because Wall Street is getting hun-

dreds of millions out of the toil of the local masses. Remember that you cannot be free as long as the colonial and semi-colonial masses are oppressed. Remember it is the same enemy you are fighting and the same struggle will liberate all of you. The workers have to fight against every step of American imperialism, extending a brotherly hand of aid to the peoples of the oppressed countries.

The chains of slavery that cut into the Negro people are cutting also into the very heart of the white workers and farmers. The great working class leader, Karl Marx, once said: "Labor with a white skin cannot emancipate itself where labor with a black skin is branded". Your masters trample the Negroes to the ground in order to lower not only the standards of living of the colored masses but also those of the white workers and farmers as well. If the bosses succeed in crushing one section of the working class that is black they can more easily crush the other section that is white. By oppressing the Negroes the bosses wish to make you weak; by uniting with the Negroes the white workers can make themselves strong. There is a great fighting spirit among the Negro people. To break the rule of the master class the workers of America need the Negro people as allies. To break their chains the Negro people need the American workers as champions and allies. Their interests are the same. Their enemy is the same. Their struggle must be united.

We say therefore to both white and Negro people: Black and white, unite. Violate the Jim-Crow rules, both in the North and in the South. Unite in the same revolutionary unions, in the same cultural and social organizations. Negro and white, fight side by side. Stop the lynch-crimes. Teach the lynchers the lesson of militant resistance. Make them feel in their very bones that one cannot murder people and escape unpunished. Once a strong united front of white and Negro workers and poor farmers meets the lynchers in a fighting order, they can put an end to those bloody crimes.

We say to the Negro people: Remember that only through the struggle of the workers and exploited farmers against capitalist domination can you become free as a nation. Do not heed the propaganda that calls you "Back to Africa", back to Liberia, or any other preachment that would have you relinquish the field of battle. Remember that there is no escape from exploitation and oppression unless through revolutionary struggle that puts an end to the rule of the oppressors and exploiters. Remember that your own Negro reformists, like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who bow before the ruling class, begging them to be "good" to the Negroes in return for obedience and slavish docility, are not the best friends of the Negro people; as a matter of fact, they are only perpetuating your slavery and serving your masters. Remember that the propaganda of "Unity among the colored races" (this poison is right now being instilled by Japanese imperial-

ists among the American Negroes) is misleading. Humanity is split not into races but into oppressors and oppressed. The interests of the Negro nation are inseparably tied up with the interests of the white workers and farmers who suffer under the same masters. The interests of the white workers and farmers are inseparably bound up with the interests of the people oppressed by the same rulers.

We say to the Negro workers in particular: *You* are the most militant of all your people. You have to be in the forefront of the battle for liberation. You must join hands with your fellow workers in the factories, in militant labor unions, in all other working class organizations, in the struggle for higher wages and for all other working class demands. Do not heed your nationalist friends who try to persuade you that all the whites are your enemies. Look at the way in which all minority nationalities have been liberated and made to live a free and happy and cultured life under the Soviets, *thanks to the united struggle of all the toilers.*

We say to the white workers: Those who preach among you the doctrine of "race superiority" are your bitter enemies. When they speak about the "purity of the white race" they mean the profits of the white exploiters. When they speak about the white race being a "master race" they are concerned with piling up millions for the masters. When the labor bureaucrats refuse to admit the Negroes to the unions they are acting in the interests of the bosses to prevent a coming together between white and Negro exploited. It is in the interests of you workers to repudiate the poison of your masters. Remember that *white chauvinism* weakens your ranks and strengthens the power of the oppressors. Remember that even your *indifference* to Negro oppression is support to boss rule. Your banner is therefore the banner of brotherly unity, of a fighting unity with the Negro people.

The Communist Party is the only party in America that has actually introduced Negro equality in the practice of our organizations and our every-day fights. The proof of our theory is not in our words but in our action. Such struggles as that in connection with the *Scottsboro frame-up* have become landmarks in the history of the struggle against American capitalism.

#### THE UNITED FRONT

We have enumerated the basic struggles of the workers. There are many more struggles. Each day brings its own tasks. Each step of the capitalists and their State demands new struggles of the workers. These struggles are not separated from each other. They are intertwined into a united whole. One struggle helps another. One victory makes others more easy. All of them strengthen the working class. All of them weaken the capitalist system. The



struggle is always for immediate demands, but it inevitably implies the ultimate goal: overthrow of the capitalist system. If you keep your eyes open you will soon realize that only those who are for the overthrow of the capitalist system actually fight for immediate demands. The reformist labor leaders and the Socialists, who are not fundamentally opposed to capitalism, are not really fighting for immediate demands. Take the instance of the strikes or of the struggle for unemployment insurance. Whatever fighting has been done in the last few years for higher wages and unemployment insurance and relief was done under a revolutionary leadership with the closest participation of the Communists.

These struggles are nobody's invention. They are dictated by life itself. They are an outcome of existing conditions. They are vital to the very life of the workers. With the deepening of the crisis, with the increase of the number of the unemployed, with the increase of the war danger, with the increase of the capitalist attacks on the standards of living of the masses, with the increase of the fascist danger, with the increase of lynch terror, mass struggles of the workers have become a greater necessity than ever. These struggles will be the more effective, the greater the masses that participate in them and the stronger their unity and will to fight. This is why we Communists advocate the *united front of action*.

The capitalists are organized. They have the government at their beck and call. And they are crafty. They have decided to make the best of a bad situation. Of course, they would prefer prosperity with its sky-rocketing profits. But they see their way even in the midst of depression. There are plenty of Americans, they think. If you squeeze each one of them a little more—the foreign-born are also classed as Americans when it comes to squeezing—you can still accumulate enough profits. Reduce the standard of living of eighty million people a dollar a month and you have "saved up" for the capitalists a handsome yearly sum of 960 millions. Make it five dollars a month—and you have the magnificent sum of 4 billion, 800 million dollars yearly. Profits will be on a good level. Business will be able to "carry on". Roosevelt will say "we are definitely out of the red". The New Deal will be hailed as the great social achievement. As to those eighty millions of workers, farmers, professionals, small businessmen with their families—well, the rulers on top will express sympathy with the bad luck of those unfortunates; preachers will speak of charity, Morgan will appeal on the radio for a dime to help the "destitute", and rich ladies will organize charity balls. All of them will do their best to persuade the masses to accept a pauper's standard of living with starvation as companion, and sickness and death from malnutrition as a prospect.

This is the capitalist way out of the crisis.

In case the masses do not readily agree to live like paupers in

this land of plenty, the capitalists have at their command the flood-gates of propaganda ballyhoo on the one hand, the club of the American Brown Shirts on the other. The former has been used without stint, but there is no limit demagoguery can go. The latter is being effectively developed and can easily be put into operation. As part of the program we have increased terror, more lynchings, persecution of foreign-born workers, deportations. The crowning glory of the whole scheme is—war.

We Communists say this simple thing—that the masses must refuse to carry the burden of the crisis. It is not the workers' crisis. It is not the farmers' crisis. We workers and farmers are willing to work, to produce. It is the profit-seekers' crisis. They have brought it about by their greed. Let them bear its burden.

To put it as plainly as possible. The Communists say, The masses of America are entitled to American standards of living. If the capitalists want to reduce us to beggary we must resist. We must secure for ourselves a decent existence. The country is rich enough. It can afford it. If there is a choice between the capitalists making profits and the workers and farmers making a living, we say: down with the profits. But of course, the capitalists won't give up readily. There will be fights for every inch of ground. These fights must now assume gigantic proportions. It is literally a life-and-death struggle. Shall we live—or shall Morgan accumulate some more wealth? Shall we have a roof over our heads—or shall Mellon buy himself a new estate? Shall our children receive education—or shall the Steel Trust declare a new dividend? Our program is to make the capitalists foot the bill. They don't like it. They will resist. They do resist. This is why the exploited must form a powerful front—a united front of all the exploited and oppressed.

This is the crying need of our times.

The idea is simple enough. We are Communists. But our neighbors may not be Communists. They may be Socialists or Democrats or Republicans, or non-party. Yet if they are workers they must be interested in unemployment and social insurance. We tell them: The broader the front of struggle for social insurance the more certain the results. Therefore, let us unite. Let us agree to fight unitedly for social insurance. Let us all organize one great drive, one demonstration, one hunger march, one petition campaign. We do not amalgamate in this drive. We keep our organizational independence. Yet we unite for this particular act. We thus can greatly widen our front. We can make it as wide as the working class itself.

The same is true about the struggle against fascism. The same is true about the struggle for Negro rights. The same is true about the struggle against war. And of course the struggle for higher wages, against police terror, for the right to organize can only be

successful as a united struggle of large masses irrespective of their political affiliation.

It is for this reason that we Communists have been advocating and organizing the united front for the last few years. While we have met with resistance on the part of many reformist union leaders and leaders of the Socialist Party, we have met with response among the workers and farmers. Thus, united May-Day demonstrations, united anti-fascist and anti-war demonstrations, united fights for home relief, united campaigns for social insurance, and above all other things, the great San Francisco general strike, have been brought about. Two anti-fascist congresses were organized with thousands of delegates in each. The American League against War and Fascism was formed. The Congress for Social Insurance was called. The drive behind H.R. 2827 was organized. Numerous strike struggles were fought.

The Communists say the united front must be extended to embrace all those interested in resisting the capitalists' attempts at lowering the standards of living of the masses and in fighting the danger of fascism and war.

In our efforts to build the united front we have approached every working-class organization. Thousands of local unions of the A. F. of L. responded. Many fraternal and cultural organizations joined. Many professional groups lent support. Yet the bulk of the top leaders of the A. F. of L. and of the Socialist Party oppose the united front.

By this they refuse to strengthen the working class in this crucial historic period.

They advance a number of "arguments" that are equally clumsy and false. First they say we are "insincere". But, my dear reformists, how can you prove sincerity if not by action? The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The proof of our sincerity is in our joining every united front, carrying out the terms of the agreement with other organizations, doing the work, participating in the fighting. The proof of our sincerity is in the fact that we Communists are the only organization that has consistently and unremittingly fought for the creation of the united front.

Then they say we are pursuing "our own" Communist interests. This is an old claim. It does not hold water. The only aim we pursue *everywhere* is to make the workers more successful fighters for their right to live. In the united front we want to see more unity, more firmness, more red-blooded fighters.

Another accusation is that we want to "capture" everything we touch. Nonsense. We do not want to make the American League against War and Fascism or the League of Struggle for Negro Rights a Communist organization. We want every section of the toiling masses in the united front and we have joined in united

action with various and widely divergent mass organizations, workers' organizations, farmers' associations, pacifist groups, church organizations, student bodies, etc. We have not attempted to capture any of the existing united-front organizations. And we have kept the standing agreement not to criticize the affiliated bodies in relation to the united-front action as long as they adhere to the policies of the united front.

Back of all this loose talk about this or that vile Communist plot is a very simple reason. The reformists are afraid of revolution. In this they are entirely subservient to the existing system. They shun everything that may give a jolt to the masters of the land. In the united front they sense an instrument that may cause the rulers no amount of trouble. This they try to avoid. They pretend to be shocked by the "unreasonableness" of some of our proposals, but they are shocked by the struggle against the capitalist system.

It may sound comical, but many a reformist is against the demand of high wages or a decent standard of living on the ground that "business cannot afford to pay that much". The reformist argues that if the demand is carried business will be "forced to the wall". He argues for the exploiter, not for the exploited.

We Communists say: If the exploiters have created a system which cannot yield profits for them and secure a decent living for all, then why should the exploited worry about the profits? If the exploiters are forced to the wall because we must live, then let them stay at the wall. All this is not of our making. We do not have to support the exploiters. If they cannot carry on their business under such conditions, somebody will. In fact the workers themselves will carry on the business without profits—for the benefit of all. This, of course, cannot be achieved without revolution. But such is the present situation in America, that the very necessity to live drives the workers to a revolution. There is only one way open for the workers—the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

The reformists are afraid of the united front because that will make the working class more powerful and hence more prepared for revolutionary battles. The reformists dread an attack on the capitalist system. But the workers do not. The workers have no stake in this system. They have nothing to lose but their chains. This is why they must join the united front and force their leaders to yield to a united front.

We do not conceal the fact that through the united front we as Communists may gain greater influence among the masses. Such has notably been the case in France where Communists and Socialists formed a united anti-fascist, anti-war front. But this is solely due to the fact that the actual experiences in the united-front struggles teach the workers the correctness of the Communist policies. Let the reformists blame themselves if their programs and tactics

make a poor impression compared with the Communist program and tactics. Apparently the latter are more suited to the interests of the workers.

The time has come to organize a united front of all workers who are ready to break with the capitalist parties but are not yet ready to line up with the Communist Party. There is no reason why these workers should continue to support the Republican and Democratic parties, which carry out the policies of finance capital. There is no reason why they should not unite to build a *Labor Party* that would fight for unemployment insurance, adequate relief, higher wages, abolition of child labor, a guaranteed 30-hour working week, the right of the workers to organize, the right to strike and picket, the closed shop, economic, political and social equality for the Negroes, anti-lynching laws, etc., a party that would fight militarism, fascism, police terror, war. One need not be a Communist to support such a program.

What we have in mind is not a party that would be controlled from on top by the reactionary labor leaders and, calling itself a labor party, would actually be a third party of capital; what we have in mind is not a party that might talk nice words about "redistribution of wealth" but in practice would check and suppress the struggles of the workers and serve to preserve capitalism, like the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota or the LaFollette Progressive Party of Wisconsin. What we propose is a Labor Party founded on the trade unions and other working-class and working farmers' organizations, a party controlled by the rank and file and fighting for the immediate needs and interests of the working people. Such an anti-capitalist Labor Party, the Communist Party is ready to help organize. In such a Labor Party the Communist Party is ready to participate as a component part. This means that the Labor Party must be a mass united front of many organizations agreeing on a militant program for continuous all-year-round struggle.

## VI

### **The Revolutionary Overthrow of Capitalism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat**

**T**HE overthrow of the State power, and with it, of the capitalist system, grows out of the everyday struggles of the workers. One is historically inseparable from the other.

As the organization of the workers grows, as their struggles become fiercer, while many non-proletarian elements like farmers, intellectuals, and oppressed members of the lower middle class join the revolutionary movement, the final onslaught on the fortress of

capitalism draws nearer. These struggles are the reaction of the masses to the misery wrought by the crisis of capitalism. The capitalists try to overcome the crisis by putting additional burdens on the shoulders of the masses, but they cannot cure the incurable disease. There comes a time when large sections of the population say that this simply "cannot go on". The government seems to be entirely incompetent to cope with the political and social difficulties. The belief of the population in the wisdom and all-powerfulness of the "men higher up" is shaken. These men are losing their confidence. The confidence of the masses in their own strength is growing apace. The struggles of the masses meanwhile become broader and deeper. The government tries suppression. It does not succeed in crushing the spirit of revolt. It cannot stem the tide. The previous struggles of the workers count greatly. The clearer the class-consciousness of the workers, the more steeled they are in fighting, the better the revolutionary leadership they have developed in the course of years (the Communist Party), the greater the number of friends they have allied with themselves from among the other oppressed classes, the more capable are they to deal the final blow.

It is not necessary that this final blow, *i.e.*, the revolution, should come in connection with an imperialist war, although this is very likely. Capitalism will seek to prevent a revolution by plunging the country into war. War is to serve not only as a way out of the crisis but as a means to arouse the patriotism of the masses, to increase governmental terror (martial law), and to divert public attention from internal affairs. War, under such conditions, for a while retarding the revolutionary movement, may hasten it later when the war sufferings begin to tell on the masses.

A time comes when there is demoralization above, a growing revolt below; the morale of the army is also undermined. The old structure of society is tottering. There are actual insurrections; the army wavers. Panic seizes the rulers. A general uprising begins.

Workers stop work, many of them seize arms by attacking arsenals. Many had armed themselves before as the struggles sharpened. Street fights become frequent. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the workers organize Revolutionary Committees to be in command of the uprising. There are battles in the principal cities. Barricades are built and defended. The workers' fighting has a decisive influence with the soldiers. Army units begin to join the revolutionary fighters; there is fraternization between the workers and the soldiers, the workers and the marines. The movement among the soldiers and marines spreads. Capitalism is losing its strongest weapon, the army. The police as a rule continue fighting, but they are soon silenced and made to flee by the united revolutionary forces of workers and soldiers. The revolution is victorious.

## HISTORIC EXAMPLES

Can it be done? It has been done more than once. A revolution broke the backbone of tsarism in Russia in 1905, but was soon defeated. A revolution abolished tsarism in March 1917 when a provisional revolutionary capitalist government was established. In each case the workers played the leading role. A workers' revolution was accomplished in Russia in November 1917 when the Soviet Government, which is the government of the workers and peasants, was established. The Soviet system has been in existence for nearly 18 years. A workers' revolution took place in Germany in 1918, in Hungary and Bavaria in 1919, in China in 1927. A revolution took place in Spain in 1932. In most of these revolutions the workers were betrayed; they were either deprived by shrewd capitalist politicians of the fruits of their revolutionary struggle or defeated in armed combat, with Socialist leaders aiding the exploiters. In Russia the revolution has survived first of all because the workers had a strong, well organized Bolshevik (Communist) Party that headed their fight. The defeat of the other revolutions does not argue against the eventuality of revolution. In fact, revolutions are inevitable. They are a natural outcome of the existing system. Our time is a time of workers' revolutions. If not all of the revolutions of the last 15 years succeeded in securing the workers' rule, this was due either to the absence of a strong Communist Party entrenched among the workers, or to the absence of other strong working-class organizations, or to the intervention of foreign imperialists, or to some of these causes combined. And in either case, the reformists were playing the role both of enemies within the working class betraying the revolution and of leaders of the capitalist forces from without the working class against the revolution—all in the name of "democracy" and "freedom".

Can a revolution be won? Capitalism creates a situation where large masses of the people are dissatisfied, embittered, emboldened by intolerable hardships. Capitalism itself prepares the conditions for its cataclysm. If under conditions of a severe capitalist crisis the majority of the working class is ready to wage a determined armed fight for the overthrow of the capitalist system, then the revolution may be victorious, provided there is in existence a mass Communist Party recognized by the workers as their leader in struggles against capitalism.

A standard reformist argument against the revolution is: "The weapons of warfare are so strong in our days that the workers have no chance of winning in open conflict". The wish is father to the thought of the reformists in this respect. Because they hate a revolution of the workers, they maintain that a revolution cannot win. What is true is that a revolution cannot win unless the armed forces,

or at least *part of them*, join the workers. But once they join, the workers have not only rifles and cannon but also airships and poison gas and battleships to fight the bosses. Poison gases are destructive, to be sure, but their destructive power can be turned also against the old system. There is no reason why the workers should not use them against the enemy when the final conflict has arrived. In all revolutions throughout history the armed forces of the old system were at the beginning *stronger* than the armed forces of the revolutionists.

#### THE QUESTION OF FORCE AND VIOLENCE

"But this is force and violence", somebody will contend. "Don't you Communists know that the use of force and violence is wrong?" We reply to this, first, that if being a "red-blooded American" means anything, it means that you must not take punishment lying down, that you must offer resistance; secondly, that it is not the workers but the capitalists and their State that start the use of force and violence. When you wish to stay on in your place of work and the employer who wants you "fired" sends for the watchmen and has you thrown out, it is he that uses force. When you wish to stay on in the apartment of a house you and the like of you have built, and the landlord calls the sheriff to evict you, it is he that uses force. When you go out on a demonstration in the open in front of a governmental office and the government sends the police and armed thugs to beat you up and disperse you, it is the government that is using force. When you are thrown in jail for refusing to transport ammunition in time of war, it is the government that is using violence against you. Force and violence are the daily bread of the exploiters and their government in dealing with the exploited. Force and violence are the very essence of the State. When the warehouses are bulging with foodstuffs you and the like of you have produced while you, the hungry, are kept from them by the armed force of watchmen and police, force and violence are used against you. How can you live and breathe if you do not resist? How can you defend your fundamental interests if you do not defy boss restrictions? To defy boss restrictions, to resist the attacks of the enemy class is just as natural for the working class as it is for a red-blooded human being not to take punishment lying down.

What a picture! Those who live on your sweat and blood tell you it is not "right" to resist this robbery. Those who hold the big stick over you tell you to be meek as a lamb. Those who make the oppressive laws against you preach among you about the sanctity of the law. This is boss law, boss justice, boss ideas of right and wrong. If the workers were to submit they would not be able to live; they would be reduced to something worse than chattel slavery.



We Communists say the workers cannot have respect for boss law and boss morality directed against them. The class interests of the working class—these are the supreme law for the workers. Defending their lives and their future they must inevitably come into conflict with boss law. Defending their very lives they are driven to stand up against boss force. Fighting against the boss system they are defending not only their own class interests but the interests of mankind. For capitalism has reduced mankind to a state of chronic misery, poverty, insecurity, fear, periodic carnage, insane luxury for the few, hunger and degradation for the many—a state that simply cannot continue if mankind is to progress. Capitalism is decaying and, to save humanity, this putrid wound on its body must be removed.

When you fight capitalism you are doing what is right and just and lawful from the point of view of your class interests and of the future of humanity. You are not “outlaws” the way the capitalist world brands revolutionary fighters. You are fighting for a higher morality and a higher law that will forever abolish exploitation—the morality and the law of the social revolution.

Having crushed the capitalist State the social revolution, acting through armed workers and soldiers, will establish the *Soviet State* as the instrument of the workers’ and poor farmers’ power.

#### THE SOVIET STATE

The Soviet State was first established in Russia, but it was later introduced wherever workers seized power: in Bavaria, Hungary, in large sections of China, and, most recently, in Asturias and Biscay (Spain). The Soviets are composed of Deputies elected at the places where men and women work. In cities, the Soviets are elected by the workers in factories, plants, offices and educational establishments. In villages, the Soviets are elected by all working peasants. Each person engaged in any kind of work is entitled to a vote. Owners of wealth, capitalists, land-owners, and other exploiters, as long as they have not yet been turned into useful citizens working for the community, are excluded from suffrage. They have no voice in the administration of public affairs. On the other hand, suffrage is extended to vastly greater numbers of working people than is the case under capitalism. The Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies form the local government everywhere. Representatives of the local Soviets form the central Soviet which is the government of the country.

The Government of the Soviets is a government of those who work. It is elected in the places of work from among those who work, and it is responsible to those who elected it. It consists exclusively of workers and peasants, which means that it is the

greatest democracy in the world. It is a real government of the rank and file. Exploiters are barred from it. Its deputies and other officials are paid no more than the average wage of a skilled worker. Its deputies are subject to instant recall by their electors. Under the Soviets the workers and peasants are armed, and police and judicial functions are carried out by the workers and peasants themselves.

This government has the great task of taking away from the owners the plants, factories, railroads, banks and turning them into public property to be administered by the workers for the common benefit of all. In other words, it is the task of the Soviets *to abolish private property in the means of production* and to establish *Socialist production and distribution*.

This cannot be accomplished peacefully. The exploiters won't give up their loot even after their State power is crushed. They will have to be routed. The Soviet government will have to *expropriate the expropriators by force*. The latter will conspire and plot against the new system; they will organize counter-revolutionary uprisings. The Soviet State will have to crush these with an iron hand. The former exploiters will be given no quarter. The old system of robbery with all its rubbish will have to be cleared away. This means that the Soviet State must be ruthless; it must destroy the counter-revolutionary forces—the quicker the better for the workers and for the future of mankind. This is why the Soviet State is named *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. It is the reverse of capitalist dictatorship. It does not pretend to be a government treating all on the basis of equality. It openly declares itself to be a *class* government directed against the former ruling class. It is avowedly an instrument for the expropriation and suppression of the former exploiters and oppressors. It is a government of the former exploited and oppressed. *And it does away with exploitation and oppression forever*. As soon as private property is abolished, as soon as the industrial machinery of the country has become socialized, as soon as the individual farmers have been induced, for their own advantage, to unite in collective farms, exploitation of man by man ceases to exist. That means freedom.

With the workers coming into their own, the road is open for economic and cultural progress undreamed of under capitalism. Production is rapidly increased. Standards of living rise higher and higher. Education, letters, art, invention blossom under proletarian rule. Exploitation of man by man is abolished. Differences between farmers and workers disappear. Minority nationalities, oppressed and kept backward under capitalism and granted self-determination by the revolution, rapidly develop. The whole country becomes one big working community on a high plane. The rule is soon established: "Let each person work according to his ability;

let each person receive from the common stock of goods according to his needs". This is Communism.

Man himself changes under such conditions. Soon the State is no more needed. In a *classless society* there is nobody to suppress or keep in check. Highly cultured men and women, bred in a spirit of collective life, masters of nature and of their own society, do not need the big stick of the State. They manage their affairs without the State force. Mankind is free, forever.

## VII

### The Communist Party

**T**HE Communist Party is the vanguard and general staff of the workers in their struggle against the old system, in their revolution against it and in the upbuilding of the new system.

The Communist Party is a political party, which means that its concern is the struggle of the working class as a whole for State power. Whereas the primary concern of the militant unions is the economic struggle for better conditions while preparing the workers for their ultimate struggle; whereas the primary concern of the Unemployment Councils is the fight for unemployment and social insurance; whereas the fraternal organizations concern themselves primarily with mutual aid and the struggle for social insurance (none of these struggles is isolated from the others and all of them must be fought on a political basis), the Communist Party concerns itself with all phases of the movement, unifying them, giving them direction, filling them with the spirit of the class struggle, orientating them towards the ultimate overthrow of the capitalist system.

The Communist Party is a political party. Its aim is to effect the seizure of political power by the workers. It therefore looks upon every activity of the workers (and poor farmers) from this point of view. But there is no contradiction between the ultimate aim and the immediate interests of the workers. Whatever contradicts the political aim of the workers is also harmful to them at present and therefore rejected by the Party. The outlook of the Communist Party is wider and more all-embracing than the outlook of the other working-class organizations, even those that assume the point of view of the class struggle.

The Communist Party not only draws into its ranks the most advanced and most militant workers, but it gives them political training. It teaches them Marxism-Leninism, which equips the worker with a thorough understanding of the society he lives in and of the historic task of the working class. The Communist Party

looks upon its members as leaders in the struggle and it trains them to be fit for this work. The Communist Party is a school of the class struggle in every one of its phases.

At the bottom of all the activities of the Communist Party lies a clear and exhaustive analysis of the social forces in the society of the present.\* The Communist Party watches very carefully every turn in the development of the country, whether economic, political, social or cultural, and at every turn it points out to the workers what they have to do in order finally to achieve the maximum results, the overthrow of capitalism. This plan of struggle for the working class is called the *Party line*. The Communist Party is the only political organization that works out a line of activity for every branch of the labor movement at every given moment.

The Communist Party is active directly as an organization and indirectly through its members within other organizations. The Communist Party leads political as well as economic struggles, like the fight for the liberation of political prisoners, the fight against high taxes levied upon the workers, the fight for better housing, free lunches for school children, the fight against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union, the fight against governmental terror, the fight against the Jim-Crow system and lynchings, the fight against fascism, the fight for the liberation of the oppressed colonial peoples, and many others. These fights are conducted through literature, through mass meetings, through demonstrations and, when occasion demands, through open mass combat with the police in the streets.

The Communist Party also participates in the election campaigns as a separate and distinct political party. It nominates its candidates for federal and local offices and it solicits votes. It is anxious to have its representatives in the legislative bodies. But its election campaigns and its activities within parliament are fundamentally different from those of, say, the Socialist Party. We Communists are not here to help the capitalists govern the masses. We are here to help the masses press their masters, get from the capitalists and their government a maximum of concessions. We do not spread the false notion that there can be cooperation between the exploited and their exploiters. On the contrary, we go to the legislatures to prove to the workers that such cooperation must not be because it is good only for the bosses. In other words, we go to the legislatures—and we conduct our election campaigns—in the spirit of the class struggle. We use the platform of the legislatures, from which our voice can be heard better than the voice of private citizens, to help organize the workers and help them conduct all their daily struggles.

\* For the daily opinion of the Communist Party on all economic and political questions read the *Daily Worker*, published at 50 East 13th St., New York City.

At the same time we try to force the law-makers to pass legislation that would bring relief to the workers. We do so, not by pretty speeches, not by telling the law-makers, who are servants of the big money bags, how fine and noble they are, but by heading great movements of the masses which would make those gentlemen sit up and take notice. In other words, while the Socialists solicit votes in order to reform the State and thereby to make it more effective for the capitalists, we Communists practice *revolutionary parliamentarism*, by which is meant strengthening the working class and weakening its enemies. We go to the law-making institutions, not to tinker them up for the benefit of the capitalists, but to be a monkey wrench in their machinery, preventing it from working smoothly on behalf of the masters. We use, while there, every step of those agents of the capitalists to expose them before the people, to show what these so-called representatives of the people and what all these so-called democratic institutions actually are.

#### THE PARTY UNIT

Aside from these political activities directly conducted in the name of the Communist Party, every Communist is obliged to be active in the organization to which he belongs and in the place where he works. Wherever there are three or more Communists, whether in a factory or in a mine, in a union or in a fraternal organization, they have to get together and form a group. A group formed in a place of work is called *Party nucleus*. A group formed in an organization is called *Party fraction*. The group discusses the problems of the shop or the organization and instructs its members to act in the best interests of the working class. A good Communist is a worker who thoroughly understands the problems of his place of work or his organization and who develops activity that can serve as an example for his fellow workers. A good Communist is a social being who has the interests of his fellow workers at heart and who is devoting his best energies to advance the cause of the workers wherever he happens to be. A good Communist is a man or a woman who by virtue of these qualities becomes a leader amongst his fellow workers—not a leader by dint of some mechanical control, but a leader by dint of better understanding, more courage and superior organizing abilities. Communists are trained to be that way. This is why a small number of Communists will often achieve more than greater numbers of unorganized workers pulling in different directions. What is important to remember is this, that Communists have no interests other than the interests of the working class, the improvement of its life at present and the destruction of capitalism in the future. You have undoubtedly heard about the “sinister plots” of the Communists. There is nothing

sinister about the Communist organization. Here are a dozen Communists working in the same shop. It is natural for them to get together and form a shop nucleus. It is natural for them to constitute themselves as a *permanent body*. They may use secrecy to avoid the spying eye of the employers; but this again is most natural under capitalism; the workers would be foolhardy to expose their plans of activity to the bosses.

A Party nucleus holds its meetings regularly every week. Our shop nucleus will discuss at nearly every meeting how to organize the struggle of the workers against the employer in that particular shop. The shop nucleus will not keep itself isolated from the rest of the workers. On the contrary, it will be the duty of every Communist to be in closest touch with the workers, to be part of the workers, to understand every issue of their shop life. The Communists will distribute papers and pamphlets among the workers. If need be, they will publish a local paper which will expose the evils of the shop and organize the workers for struggle. The Communists will keep secret from the management and the stool pigeons but not from the workers. They will invite non-party workers to their nucleus meetings to discuss certain problems. They will gain the confidence of the workers just because they have a well-thought-out and fitting solution for the pressing problems and because they show resistance in dealing with the boss or with the foreman. They have got to stand up as fighters or else they cannot be Communists. They will soon become known to the workers as a militant group. Many more will join. The influence of the Communist Party will grow.

The time comes when the Communists head an open struggle against the employer or the State. It may be a strike for higher wages. In this case the Communists will help organize a *strike committee* from among the rank-and-file workers, this committee to consist of Party and non-Party workers and to act under the direct leadership of the trade union of that industry. It may be a mass demonstration for unemployment insurance. In that case the Communists will help organize a local rank-and-file *Unemployment Council*. It may be any other act of struggle. In either case the Communists will not force their will upon the workers. On the contrary, they will see to it that they share the initiative with as many workers as possible. They are not here to give orders. They are workers themselves who suffer like all the other workers but give a clearer voice to the protest that is brewing among the workers. The more workers participate in preparing an act of struggle the greater the chances of victory.

In such struggles some of the workers will move to the front as more clear-sighted, more active, more able to express the needs of the workers, and more quick-minded in finding a solution to an

emergency problem. These will become the *mass leaders*. Some of them will be Communists, some non-Party workers, but in the long run every fighting mass leader will find his way to the Communist Party because he will realize its advantages for the workers' struggle.

Thus the Communist nucleus will establish itself as the fighting organization recognized by the workers. It will lead. It will put fear in the heart of the boss. It will put confidence in the hearts of the workers. It will become the vanguard and the leader of the local workers.

The Communists who, for one reason or another, are not members of a shop nucleus (or mine or mill nucleus) organize locally in the place of residence into a *street nucleus*. The street nucleus is composed of the Communists living in the same neighborhood. It may consist of from ten to thirty, but rarely more members, because a large nucleus becomes unwieldy. When a street nucleus grows too large, part of it is organized into another nucleus and given another territory to work in. The street nucleus organizes and leads the workers' struggles in its territory. Suppose there is a shop in that territory and the workers are unorganized. The street nucleus concentrates on that shop. It organizes open air meetings in front of the shop just at the time when the workers finish work. Some of the workers stop to listen, become interested, receive papers and pamphlets distributed around the meeting place. The nucleus repeats this action until contacts are established with the shop. Once there is a group of sympathetic workers inside, the task of organizing the shop workers to defend their interests becomes much easier. One street nucleus may concentrate on a number of local shops. It also concentrates on unemployed work. It makes a canvass of all the unemployed in its territory, organizes from among them an Unemployment Council, fights together with it for unemployed relief; if need be, the street nucleus calls a demonstration in front of the local Home Relief Bureau to insist on aid for those discriminated against. The street nucleus heads many other workers' struggles in its territory. The fight against the eviction of unemployed, the fight for free gas and electricity for the unemployed, the fight for the release of imprisoned local workers, assistance to strikers' pickets, local demonstrations against the oppression of Negroes in the neighborhood—all these and many other activities are the almost daily tasks of the street nucleus.

Both the shop and the street nuclei, thus, exist not for themselves, not for "Communist interests", as you are so often told, for there are no Communist interests outside of the interests of the working class. The Party nucleus is a center of fighting workers in a shop or neighborhood. That is a bad nucleus which stews in its own juice. A good nucleus is one that is in various ways connected with the workers in the shop or neighborhood, is recognized by them as a

fighting unit, is supported by them, is continually increased by the joining of new workers, and is proved as leader in many class conflicts for the benefit of the workers.

Not the least among the functions of the shop and street nuclei is the distribution of the Communist papers, magazines and pamphlets. After all, the press is a good propagandist and a good organizer. Its influence can be great, if the workers are induced to read it and to spread it. The Communists make it their business to talk to non-Party workers, explaining to them the meaning of the Communist press as the workers' press, and offering to provide them with a paper or magazine. In the same way they distribute pamphlets and books. Once a worker has begun to read a paper or pamphlet explaining to him the class struggle, he soon recognizes the truth of that explanation which he can supplement by numerous facts from his own experience. Reading about the class struggle, recognizing the correctness of the class struggle, is a step to actual participation in the class struggle.

Here as elsewhere there is a deep gulf between us Communists and the Socialist leaders. They say the American workers are difficult to move and that there is no hope of workers putting up a stiff fight in this country. We say, but let the American worker recognize his class interests, and he will fight in great working-class militant organizations for his life, for his freedom, for the final liberation of his class and all oppressed.

Aside from shop (mine, plant) nuclei and street nuclei of the Communist Party, there are *Party fractions*. The Communists belonging to any organization form a special fraction which discusses the problems of its organization and proposes a line of action for its members. This enables the Communists in a reformist union or fraternal organization to follow the same line. The Party fraction advocates militancy and strives to transform the whole organization into a real fighting unit.

It is quite obvious that Communist activity requires training. Every Party nucleus is in fact a training school in the practice of the class struggle. It also gives theoretical classes to its members. It conducts discussions on current questions. Its most capable, militant members are sent to special training schools. The whole Party is engaged in raising, as we call it, the theoretical level of its members.

You will now understand what there is to those tales about "Communist plots". The Communists have a good organization and a uniform line; they plan work and they carry it out. The bosses certainly dislike such a method, when used by the workers. You will also understand why the enemies speak so much about "rigid Communist discipline". They would like the workers to be undecided, without unity and cohesion. That would be good for the capitalist interests. When they see a party of revolutionary workers organized,



enlightened, trained to do revolutionary work and acting in harmony with one another in accordance with a preconceived plan, they decry it. In this plan, unity and cohesion, however, is the strength of every workers' organization, including that of the Communist Party. We discuss problems, we study them carefully, but once a decision is made it is binding for every member. We are a democratic organization because every member has a vote and every rank and filer is entitled and invited to criticize the activities of the organization or of individual leaders, and to participate in shaping the policies of the Party. We are at the same time a centralized organization because we work according to one plan and because decisions of the higher Party bodies are obligatory for the lower bodies—from the center down to the units. The Communist Party is thus built on the basis of *democratic centralism*. That makes for unity of action.

#### THE PARTY IN ACTION

Let us now have a look at the Party as a whole. At the head of it is the Central Committee elected at the national convention. In the Districts there are District Committees elected at District conventions (the country is divided into 27 districts). Each District is divided into Sections and each Section comprises a number of units, *i.e.*, shop and street nuclei. Under the District and Section Committees are the various *fractions*. The interests of the Party require that all members should have thoroughly discussed every issue that comes up in the life of the working class. They should have discussed in each unit what every member has to do in the coming few days. Directives are given from the Center to the Districts, from the Districts to the Sections and the units. Everybody must be prepared. Everybody must understand the meaning of what is to be done. Everybody is obliged to assist his comrade. There should be complete unity of purpose and unity of action. Today we are having a unit meeting which first discusses an important problem, theoretical or practical, and then assigns work to each member. It is at this meeting that the fundamental unity of the Party is forged. Tomorrow each one of these Party members will plunge headlong into one or the other realm of work. One will confront the boss with the demand of the workers in his shop; another will lead a group of unemployed workers to the Home Relief Bureau to demand immediate relief for those that have been discriminated against; a third will participate in the picket line facing the clubs of armed thugs; a fourth will be active in putting back into an apartment the furniture of an evicted family; a fifth will be speaking to a group of marine workers, trying to make them join the union; a sixth will be speaking to a group of workers engaged in an ammunition plant, trying to make them understand the necessity of organizing in order

to be ready to stop work in case of war; a seventh will distribute leaflets calling for a demonstration to protest against U. S. imperialist intervention in Cuba; an eighth will be speaking in the open air in favor of the local Communist candidate for mayor; a ninth will be showing the workers a Soviet film in which the free life of the workers under the proletarian dictatorship is vividly depicted. All these Communists will be animated with one ideal. They will all work along the same line. They will work hand in hand with all the workers they are connected with, trying to make them understand the better ways of struggle and to make their struggle more effective. At the next unit meeting every comrade will have to report as to how he or she carried out the assignment. All the Communist units, forming concentration points of the workers' struggle, are engaged in practical everyday work, the more practical the better, but at the same time they never for a moment lose sight of the ultimate goal of the movement—the destruction of capitalism.

When you observe the Communist Party in action you cannot fail to compare it with the blood-stream of the human body. Like the blood-stream it brings life to every section of the body of the working class. Like the blood-stream it helps build up every tissue. Like the blood-stream it makes the organism live, act, grow.

There can be working class movements without the Communist Party, but there can be no real movement for the liberation of the working class without the Communist Party. There can be no ultimate overthrow of the entire capitalist system without the Communist Party.

Hand in hand with the Communist Party and under its guidance functions the Young Communist League, the revolutionary organization of the young workers. Many other organizations function under the guidance of and in close cooperation with the Communist Party.

There is a Communist Party in every country of the world. All of them work for the same end, and all of them adapt their activities to conditions existing in their country. Delegates from each Communist Party gather once in a few years to an international Communist Congress (there have been six of them so far). The Congress meets for two or three weeks and discusses thoroughly the international situation and the situation in every country. Experiences of a world-wide struggle are shared and a general line of further struggles mapped out. The Congress elects an Executive Committee which is the leading body between one congress and the other. The decisions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International guide the activities of the parties. The Executive Committee meets at intervals of a few months. Its meetings very much resemble a small congress. Between one meeting and the other a smaller body

called Presidium is conducting the affairs of the organization. The organization is called the Communist International and expresses the common purpose and common decisions of all the Communist Parties of the world. The Communist International (Comintern) gives unity of policy and leadership to the entire revolutionary movement of the world. It is the general staff of the world revolution of all the exploited and oppressed.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is affiliated with the Communist International. It is the most influential but not the only influential Party in the International. It is one part but not the whole of the International. Its advice is highly precious because it has long accomplished what the Communist Parties of the world are only striving at—the proletarian revolution. The advice and experiences of the other Parties, however, are also of great value in determining the policies of the Comintern. The seat of the Comintern is Moscow because this is the capital of the only workers' and peasants' government in the world, and the Comintern can meet there freely. As the workers become the rulers of other countries, the Comintern will not have to confine its meetings to Moscow alone.

The Communist Party of the U.S.A. is thus part of a world-wide organization which gives it guidance and enhances its fighting power. Under the leadership of the Communist Party the workers of the U.S.A. will proceed from struggle to struggle, from victory to victory, until, rising in a revolution, they will crush the capitalist State, establish a Soviet State, abolish the cruel and bloody system of capitalism and proceed to the upbuilding of Socialism.

This is why every worker must join the Communist Party.



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