

**COMMUNISM**

Versus

**FASCISM**

William Z. Foster

## NOTE

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# COMMUNISM VERSUS FASCISM

A Reply to Those Who Lump Together the Social Systems  
of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

In approaching this general question it is necessary to make two definitions. First, the present social order in the U.S.S.R. is not communism, but socialism, which is only the first stage of communism. Hence, instead of the word communism, as applying to the present system in the Soviet Union we will hereinafter use the correct term, socialism. Second, we have to bear definitely in mind that the fascist regime now in effect in Nazi Germany is not a new social order, but capitalism. The real issue, therefore, as presented by the Soviet and Nazi regimes is socialism versus capitalism, and it is in this sense that it is dealt with throughout this pamphlet.

The different social systems of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany represent the opposite poles of modern society in their economic structure, their forms of political government, their class composition, their foreign policies, their culture and their outlook upon life generally. The socialism of the U.S.S.R. is the beginning of a new world system, whereas Nazi fascism is the most reactionary expression of the dying capitalist world order.

The fundamental difference between socialism and fascism (which is capitalism) is the most significant political fact of our times. This oppositeness in the make-up and policies of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany (also of fascist Italy), would seem to be so obvious as to be unmistakable. Yet we have witnessed on all sides the fantastic spectacle of a determined attempt to convince the toiling masses in the United States and other capitalist countries that "Soviet socialism and Nazi fascism are essentially the same." Some capitalistic writers even insolently assert that Soviet socialism gave birth to fascism. All of which constitutes the most brazen political distortion in history.

The systematic lumping together of Soviet socialism and Nazi fascism as "totalitarian dictatorships" originates in capitalist circles

and is assiduously propagated by their innumerable mouthpieces and agents. Semi-literate “poll-tax Congressmen,” wise-cracking radio commentators, slippery newspaper columnists, and other spokesmen for capitalism glibly spout forth this grotesque identification of socialism and fascism and with an air of finality as though it were “revealed Bible truth.” Conservative trade union leaders sing the same song of confusion; similarly various liberal (sic!) scribblers assert that “the Soviet Union is a fascist state,” and the several brands of Social-Democrats – Thomasites, Waldmanites, Trotskyites, etc. – blather about “Communazis.”

This remarkable ideological campaign to confuse socialism and fascism together under one head has its roots in the capitalists’ fear for the safety of their world capitalist system, which obviously is in deep crisis. The first and major objective the capitalists and their mouthpieces are aiming at by this campaign is to discredit socialism, which they fear as the nemesis of their own outworn system. Realizing that the masses have a deep hatred of fascism, they try to direct this hatred against the socialist system of the Soviet Union by alleging it to be “the same” as the fascism of Nazi Germany. The second aim of the capitalists’ campaign of confusing socialism with fascism is to free their own social system from the stench of fascism. They would have the people believe that Nazism is a reactionary growth independent of capitalism. They argue that Hitler’s fascism, so hated by the American people, originated because the capitalist system in Germany was overthrown by a middle class revolution. By this means the capitalists in the United States and other countries hope to hide from the workers and the farmers the fact that the big bankers and industrialists are striving to transform what is left of bourgeois “democracy” into open reactionary dictatorship according to the Hitler pattern.

The World War II gave a sharp stimulus to the campaign to tar the Soviet Union with the fascist brush. The Hearsts, Peglers, Dennises, Greens, Coughlins, Hillmans, Thomases, Waldmans, Utleys, Coreys, Lovestones, Burnhams and similar elements, who draw their ideology from capitalist sources, are now insisting more stridently than ever that the U.S.S.R., like Nazi Germany, is a fascist, totalitarian state.

These detractors of socialism and defenders of capitalism follow the Hitlerian formula that they can make people believe any lie, provided it is big enough and they keep hammering away at it. For

the most part they confine themselves to generalities, reiterating ceaselessly their central theme that Nazi fascism and Soviet socialism are identical. In this pamphlet, therefore, it will be the aim to look beneath these generalities; to make clear to open-minded workers that Nazi fascism is capitalism, rotten and reactionary; and that Soviet socialism is a totally different type of society, healthy and progressive.

### *Who Owns the Industries?*

The foundation difference between socialism and fascism (capitalism) is the fact that in a socialist system the industries and the land are owned collectively by the people; whereas under fascism these social means of production and distribution are owned privately. The widely differing political and cultural superstructures of the two forms of society, as well as their contrary political directions, develop out of their basically different systems of ownership of the industries and the land.

In the Soviet Union, which is a socialist country, the industries and the land are the property of the people, and are operated solely with the objective of improving the people's condition. There are no private capitalists or landowners whatsoever to exploit the toiling masses. There are neither rich nor destitute in the U.S.S.R. The very essence of the Russian Revolution of 1917 was the transfer of the ownership of the social means of production and distribution from a private to a collective basis by the revolutionary action of the masses, carrying with it the abolition of human exploitation. Section I, Article 4, of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. states the economic basis of the country as follows:

“The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, constitute the economic foundation of the U.S.S.R.”

Nazi Germany, on the contrary, has a capitalist economy, the same in all fundamentals as that of the United States, England, France and other capitalist countries. The bulk of the wealth of the country is in the hands of a few people. The industries, as before the Hitler regime, remain privately owned. A small clique hold as their personal property the great banks, factories, mines, etc., and system-

atically use this ownership to rob the German people. In the *New Masses*, Feb. 11, 1941, G. S. Jackson showed that in the year 1938 the profits of the fifteen largest industrial concerns in Germany averaged 7.7 per cent, as against 5.6 per cent for the fifteen biggest American corporations.<sup>1</sup>

The only important change Hitler brought about regarding the ownership of the industries was to strengthen enormously the position of the great monopolists by more active government intervention in their interest in the shape of state subsidies, favorable taxation, repression of the workers, etc. Now, after the advent of Hitler, the German monopolists far more completely dominate the industries at the expense of the working class, the peasantry, and the small merchants and manufacturers. The land, too, in Nazi Germany is privately owned, with the big landlords steadily increasing their holdings and power. The same general situation exists in Italy. Under the Nazi fascist regime in Germany the big business elements in industry (and also in agriculture) are eating up the smaller ones and are securing complete control of the nation's economy. Thus the situation in Germany is just the reverse of what it is in the U.S.S.R. There has been no revolution in Germany (or in Italy). Despite all the current allegations of capitalist-minded American politicians, hack newspaper writers, phoney political economists of the Burnham, Thomas, Corey type, and conservative labor leaders to the contrary notwithstanding, Hitler has not collectivized the industries or the land. He has only strengthened the big monopolists. His so called national socialism is only a demagogic lie, designed to deceive the German working class, which has long since lost faith in capitalism and is socialist-minded. The wholly capitalist character of the economy of Nazi Germany was made clear by G. S. Jackson in her above-cited article, from which the following is an excerpt:

“The same complex financial set-up is present under German fascism as under American capitalism. The industrial plant of the country is owned and operated by private individuals. There are partnerships, limited liability companies, corporations, joint stock companies, trusts, monop-

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<sup>1</sup> *Note: The figures given by G. S. Jackson are based upon the following sources: Moody's, Industrials; Moody's, International Who's Who; German Who's Who, and Handbuch der Deutschen Aktiengesellschaften. – Ed.*

lies, cartels and syndicates. There are stocks, bonds, debentures, treasury notes and mortgages. Money is borrowed from private persons, corporations, banks, credit companies and the government, and interest is paid on these loans.”

*Who Controls the Government?*

The U.S.S.R. and Nazi Germany differ no less fundamentally in their government make-up and policies than they do in their systems of industrial ownership. In the Soviet Union the political power is in the hands of the workers, farmers and working intellectuals—who comprise almost the entire nation – and it is consistently used by them to advance their interests. This fact is evidenced by the Soviet Government’s class composition, as well as by its policies. Thus, in the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet, of the 1,090 delegates 465 are workers, 310 are farmers, 315 are office workers and professionals. There are no capitalists or landlords, or their agents in the Soviet parliament. The many thousands of local, state and district Soviets are similarly constituted, and the army, courts and all other government organs are also fully in the hands of the people.

In Nazi Germany, however (as in fascist Italy), the government is entirely dominated by the big bankers, industrialists and landlords, personally and through their agents. This is true also in the United States, although the forms of capitalist state domination are not precisely the same as in Germany. The central purpose of the Nazi Government is to further the interests of the capitalist exploiters at the expense of the overwhelming mass of the German people. This patent fact is denied, however, by those who are trying to smear the Soviet Union with charges of totalitarianism, and at the same time to shield capitalism from the ill repute of fascism. Such people seek to make it appear that the capitalists are no longer in power in Germany; that they have been overthrown by a middle class revolution.

This is the argument of Corey, Burnham and Eastman. In the same sense President Roosevelt, in his Jackson Day speech, said: “We have seen what has happened to the great capitalists of Germany who supported the Nazi movement, and then received their reward in Nazi concentration camps or in death.” Norman Thomas, who reflects every capitalist demagogy, similarly says in his book, *Socialism on the Defensive*, “The German industrialists who helped Hitler to power miscalculated.” *Labor*; the conservative railroad

union weekly, likewise misinforms us that Hitler has “enslaved the industrialists and financiers.” James Burnham’s recent book, *The Managerial Revolution*, is based upon the same idea, and innumerable similar assertions could be cited.

Such statements, which now fill the press and the radio, are utter falsifications. Not the capitalists, but the Communists and other militant workers, populate Hitler’s concentration camps and face his executioners. Not the middle class rules Germany, but the great capitalists. Nazi fascism, in its government as well as in its economic system, constitutes the rulership of the most reactionary sections of monopoly capital. What the Nazis have done is not to place the middle class in political power, but to strengthen enormously the grip of the great capitalists on the state by smashing the trade unions, cooperatives, and workers’ and liberal parties, and by eliminating the toilers’ representatives from all sections of the government. Under the Nazi regime, as never before, the big bankers, industrialists and landlords have a free hand in ruling the country. They have greatly centralized the state and tightened their grip upon it. Their system is state capitalism raised to the maximum. In person or through their agents, the great capitalists occupy all the key positions in the Nazi party, the state, the army, the industries, the press, the state trade unions, the schools, and every other important social institution, and they make full use of their control to advance their own interests. The exiling of the big capitalist Fritz Thyssen by Hitler, an event upon which Roosevelt and others base their assertions that the capitalists have been expropriated and displaced by the Nazis, was simply the result of a gang quarrel among the great capitalists themselves over the advisability of the Soviet- German non-aggression pact.

The Nazi Party is the party of the big businessmen, on the same principle, if not in the exact form, that the Democratic and Republican Parties are the parties of big business in the United States. Hitler is the instrument of the great capitalists, not their master. The big monopolists financed the rise of the Nazis to power and they are now in full control of the Nazi regime. The Nazi leaders who were not capitalists at the outset have since enriched themselves on a large scale (as their fascist friends have also done in Italy). Many of the Nazi moguls have grabbed vast properties, Goering now being one of the biggest capitalists in Germany. What wealth Hitler himself has amassed is being kept a state secret. Undoubtedly anticipat-



ing the eventual collapse of Nazi Germany, the Nazi leaders have also made huge investments abroad. The weekly magazine *Friday* (April 18, 1941) gives the following figures regarding these people's financial holdings in the United States and Latin America: Joseph Goebbels, \$4,635,000; Rudolph Hess, \$473,000 (plus \$1,000,000 in Switzerland); Heinrich Himmler, \$2,000,000; Joachim von Ribbentrop, \$3,165,000; Hermann Goering, \$2,000,000.<sup>1</sup>

### *Different Modes of Production*

Just as the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany differ fundamentally in the vital matters of which social classes own the industries and control the government, so also they differ in their respective basic modes of production. The Soviet Union operates upon the socialist principle of production for use: that is to say, production is carefully planned, carried out and distributed upon the basis of the needs of the people. Whereas Nazi Germany operates its industries and agriculture upon the familiar capitalist principle of production for profit, as we have in this country; that is, goods are produced only if they can be sold profitably, regardless of the masses' real wants. The Soviet production for use creates a sound national economy, but the Nazi production for profit results in a rotten economic system, essentially like that of the United States and England.

In the Soviet Union, with no profit grabbers to rob them, the toilers receive the full value of what they produce, minus only what is necessary to operate the government, to develop industry and to maintain the social insurances. Consequently, there being a balance between the producing and consuming powers of the workers and other toilers, there are no unsalable surpluses, no problem of securing markets. Production and consumption stimulate each other and both rapidly increase. In the U.S.S.R., there can be no starvation in the midst of plenty, such as we see in all capitalist countries. Under the Soviets the question of unemployment has been permanently solved, and likewise the disaster of recurring industrial crises. During the whole period of the recent great world economic crisis which paralyzed every capitalist country the Soviet economy went steadily and rapidly ahead without any depression. Because of its

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<sup>1</sup> Figures on this subject are also given by Edgar Ansel Mowrer, in the *World-Telegram* of Sept. 27, 1939; see also *The Economist*, London, Jan. 25, 1941, pp. 109-10 – *Ed.*

fundamental soundness, based upon the socialization of the means of production, the abolition of human exploitation, production upon the basis of the people's needs and its planned character – Soviet economy has made the fastest progress in the whole history of man. Capitalism, even in its best days, cannot compare with the U.S.S.R. in the speed and scientific character of its industrial development. Thus, in the period from 1917 to 1936, while industrial production in the capitalist world increased at the rate of only 11/2 per cent yearly, that of the U.S.S.R. leaped ahead at the rapid speed of 28 per cent annually.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast with the healthy, growing Soviet industrial system, the economy of Nazi Germany displays the basic weaknesses and sicknesses characteristic of capitalist countries generally (including the United States) and in aggravated forms. Its system of production for profit operates even more disastrously than the same system does in other capitalist countries, because of the lack of organization and democratic rights by the workers, with resultant greater exploitation of those masses. With the increase of German industrial efficiency the fatal gap between the producing power and consuming power of the masses constantly widens. The inevitable results are the characteristic clogging of markets, industrial shut-downs, mass unemployment and industrial stagnation inseparable from all capitalist economies. Fascist apologists brazenly lie when they say that Hitler (or Mussolini) has abolished mass unemployment and industrial crises. The fascists have only temporarily obscured these incurable diseases of capitalism by their present wholesale production of munitions and the gearing of the nation's whole economy to the waging of war. Only by carrying on the horrible trade of organized mass slaughter can the Nazis keep their industries going, even for the time being. This is true also of American and British capitalism.

The Soviet system creates an economy of abundance. Automatically, the more the workers produce the higher the real wages they receive for their labor. Their consumption of commodities keeps pace with their increased producing power. Consequently, as Soviet economy makes its unparalleled advance, so do the living standards of the masses. No other country can or does systematically plan the material welfare of its people. In all capitalist countries, prior to this war, the number of employed workers had been stagnant or declin-

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<sup>1</sup> *Two Systems*, E. Varga, International Publishers, N. Y., p. 38.

ing, whereas in the Soviet Union their number increased from 11,600,000 in 1928 to 30,400,000 in 1940. The U.S.S.R. also is the only country in the world where the living standards of the people are rising, and at a rate never equaled anywhere under capitalist conditions. The average wages of Soviet workers jumped up from 1,566 rubles in 1933 to 3,467 in 1938; the national payroll increased from 56,000,000,000 rubles in 1935 to 175,000,000,000 in 1941; retail sales increased from 15,000, 000,000 rubles in 1929 to 174,000,000,000 in 1940; government appropriations for the Soviet system of social security increased from 10,000,000,000 rubles in 1937 to 16,000,000,000 in 1941. The tempo of this improvement of the people's material conditions constantly speeds up as industry expands and develops.

In Nazi Germany, on the other hand, the prevailing profit system creates the economy of scarcity characteristic of capitalism in all countries. While the German capitalists continue to pile up their ill-gotten wealth, the living standards of the constantly more exploited toiling masses rapidly fall. The German toilers (and the Italians, too) have suffered a deterioration of at least 25 per cent in their real wages since fascism came to power. Their work week has been increased from 48 to 60 and 70 hours and their shop conditions have been greatly worsened. Their old age, sick and unemployment insurances have been slashed. Restriction of useful production is the policy of the Nazi regime, as it is that of Roosevelt and of monopoly capital in the United States. Fascist spokesmen attempt to glorify the spreading mass pauperization. "Cannons, not butter," cried Goering, the Nazi industrial overlord. "We are against the easy life," says Mussolini. In the United States the fascist Lawrence Dennis, in his book *The Dynamics of War and Revolution*, says "An economy of easy abundance would create no spiritual values to give life dignity and meaning." Lewis Mumford, in his *Faith for Living* (pp. 311-13), demands "a transfer of loyalty from an economics of comfort to an economics of sacrifice."

### *Socialism Is for Peace; Fascism for War*

In no sphere does the fundamental difference between socialism and fascism stand out clearer than in the vital matter of peace and war. In Nazi Germany the monopoly capitalists, the organizers of imperialist war, reign supreme. Their economic system, plagued with "overproduction," industrial crisis and mass unemployment,

can only be kept going upon the basis of a war economy. Their greed for profits, prosecuted vigorously in all corners of the earth, brings them into violent collisions with other imperialist states. They seek the solution of all their problems – economic breakdown, mass discontent and international rivalries – through war. Fascism *is* war.

Recognizing the logic of this situation, the fascists everywhere systematically glorify imperialism and war. They picture human mass slaughter as the greatest aim of mankind, the measure of all social progress. Mussolini says (*Doctrine of Fascism*, pp. 43-44): “Fascism sees in the imperialistic spirit – *i.e.*, in the tendency for nations to expand – a manifestation of their vitality.... War alone brings to their maximum tension all human energies and stamps the seal of nobility on those people who have the virtue to face it.” Hitler said (Dec. 9, 1930), “In the long run the sword will decide everything.” Fascist youth are taught that their greatest ambition should be to die in imperialistic war. Fascist countries and fascist groups everywhere are distinguished by their ultra-chauvinistic nationalism and warlike character. Hitler’s so-called new world order, could he set it up, would be only a jangling collection of mutually hostile and antagonistic states, kept together by armed force and holding before the world an endless prospect of ever more brutal and devastating war.

Since the first days of his seizure of power in Germany Hitler has proceeded upon a policy of war. With the help of the British Tories, who hoped that he would turn his growing power against the Soviet Union, Hitler militarized the whole German nation. In building up his tremendous armed force, he has reorganized the entire economy of Germany upon a war basis. No less important to his war policy, Hitler broke up the organizations of the peace-loving, democratic masses of the people, thereby giving the big capitalist imperialists a free hand to prosecute their warlike program. Hitler’s policy of aggression and war found its logical culmination in Germany’s violent clash with the militant imperialist Anglo-American alliance and in his bid for world conquest.

In total contrast to the warlike character of Nazis fascism and of world capitalism generally stands the peace policy of Soviet socialism. The Soviet economic system does not require the violent stimulant of war in order to keep going. On the contrary, with production and distribution balanced and with no unsalable surpluses clam-

oring for outlets in foreign markets, the Soviet economy imperatively needs a regime of peace for its development. The peace policy of socialism is rooted in its economic system. This peace policy is further fortified by the fact that the great capitalists, the makers of modern war, have been long since totally defeated in the U.S.S.R. and the full political power resides in the hands of the democratic and peace-loving toiling masses. Socialist workers and farmers, who hold the power in the U.S.S.R., have no interest in exploiting the peoples of foreign lands; hence they have no urge to war. Whereas fascism is impelled along a policy of war by the very nature of its fundamental economic and political structure, the whole make-up of socialism commits the latter irresistibly to a policy of peace. While Nazism has no other perspective than war, Soviet socialism has consistently sought to live in harmonious economic and political relations with all other countries. Socialism is the bearer of world peace. Mankind will find in an eventual world federation of socialist countries the final end of war.

In accordance with the nature of its socialist economic and political system, the Soviet Union, ever since its foundation, has conducted a ceaseless struggle for world peace. Born in the fight of the Russian masses against World War I, one of the first official acts of the newly-born Soviet Government was a call to the people of the world to put an end to that suicidal imperialist war. Soviet influence ever afterward has also been constantly exerted on the side of peace. Repeatedly the U.S.S.R. proposed the complete or partial disarmament of all countries; it also followed the policy of making non-aggression pacts with the capitalist states; and it was the world leader of the "collective security" plan to restrain the war aggressor states by an international peace front of all the democratic peoples. In the imperialist World War II the Soviet Government, true to its basic peace policy, maintained an attitude of neutrality, and of preventing the spread of the war, despite constant efforts by both sides to involve it in the ruinous struggle. American newspaper talk about the Soviet's foreign policy being an "enigma" was sheer nonsense. On the contrary, it has always been quite clear. Desiring peace ardently, the Soviet Government fought resolutely to keep peace in the world; and then, when this effort failed and the imperialist wolves went to war, the Soviet Government adopted a determined policy of keeping itself out of the slaughter that it had worked so hard to prevent. There is nothing enigmatic about such a consistent policy of peace.

The U.S.S.R. has built up powerful armed forces, but these are for defense, not for preying upon other peoples. There is no such thing as “red imperialism,” nor can there be, because in the Soviet Union there is no monopoly capitalism, the fountainhead of imperialism. It is absurd to characterize as imperialism the active assistance given by the U.S.S.R. to the attacked peoples of Spain and China, or to condemn as imperialism the peaceful joining to the U.S.S.R. of the peoples of Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Eastern Poland and Bessarabia, a federation which was carried out with their overwhelming consent. And as for Finland, the Soviet Government would have been able peacefully to settle with the Finnish people the boundary changes necessary for the safety of Leningrad, had it not been that British, French and American imperialists interfered with the negotiations, in the hope that their machinations would result in the long-planned general capitalist war against the U.S.S.R.

#### *Soviet Democracy vs. Fascist Dictatorship*

As in all other respects, Soviet socialism and Nazi fascism differ fundamentally on the question of democracy, both in theory and practice.

“Proletarian democracy,” said Lenin in 1918, “is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; the Soviet Government is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.”<sup>1</sup>

Stalin, speaking on the new Soviet Constitution, at the time it was being adopted, said:

“...Democracy in capitalist countries where there are antagonistic classes is in the last analysis the democracy for the strong, democracy for the propertied minority. Democracy in the U.S.S.R., on the contrary, is democracy for all.”<sup>2</sup>

In his famous pamphlet *Mastering Bolshevism* Stalin, in the spirit of Soviet democracy, said:

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<sup>1</sup> *The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky*, International Publishers, New York, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Stalin on the New Soviet Constitution*, International Publishers, New York, 1937, p. 23.

“We must pay careful attention to the voice of the masses, to the voice of the rank-and-file members of the Party, to the voice of the so-called ‘small men,’ to the voice of the people.”<sup>1</sup>

These democratic principles are fully realized in the life of the Soviet state. The people are guaranteed incomparably the most extensive rights of any nation in the world, including the rights of suffrage, speech, organization and conscience, the right to work, of recreation, of full education, of social security, of racial equality, of sex equality, etc. The Stalin Constitution is by far the most democratic in the world. Contradicting the current anti-Soviet slanders, an impartial witness, Professor John McMurray of the University of London, says in his book *Creative Society*:

“Communism is both in theory, and in the substantial, economic side in practice, democratic.... In the real sense, Soviet Russia is already far more democratic a society than any other has ever been.”

As against the profoundly democratic character of Soviet society, the Nazi regime is altogether autocratic. Nazi propaganda is saturated with contempt for the masses and adulation for their so-called natural rulers of the people, the “elite,” or “leaders.” This fascist “elite” is in reality nothing more than the organized gang of agents of the most reactionary sections of finance capital, who, at the moment, find themselves in power. The Nazi program calls for all power to the “leader.” Hitler declared at the 1935 Nazi Congress that “The fuhrer is the party and the party is the fuhrer”; and in his book *Mein Kampf* (p. 520), he stated also that the National-Socialist Party “must not be the servant of the mass, but its master.” Mussolini’s writings are crowded with similar autocratic sentiments, and in this country the Nazi echo, Lawrence Dennis, states in his *Dynamics of War and Revolution* (p. viii), “let me say categorically that I do not believe in democracy or the intelligence of the masses.” The Nazi regime is organized from top to bottom around such anti-democratic principles, and the masses of the people are utterly deprived of all democratic rights.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mastering Bolshevism*, Joseph Stalin, Workers Library Publishers, 1938, p. 55.

Contrary to those who try to lump fascism and socialism together, the fascist dictatorship of Nazi Germany has nothing in common with the proletarian dictatorship of the U.S.S.R.

At the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International Georgi Dimitroff said correctly, "fascism in power is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and imperialistic elements of finance capital." It is naked, autocratic domination by the biggest capitalists over the toiling masses, who have been robbed of all parliamentary democracy, and who have had their trade unions, political parties, cooperatives and other democratic mass organizations ruthlessly broken up. In the United States we can see the same autocratic trend developing in the reactionary policies of the big capitalists and their political agents. The Nazi one-party system represents the suppression of all the political organizations of the working class and petty bourgeoisie by the dominant big capitalists.

The proletarian dictatorship, so named by Karl Marx almost 100 years ago, on the contrary, is the rule of the toiling masses. In the U.S.S.R. dictatorship of the proletariat constitutes a temporary form of the socialist society adopted for that period in which it is still necessary for the victorious workers and farmers to hold in check the remnants of the former ruling classes and also to defend themselves from the external capitalist enemy states. The Soviet regime, however, is heading toward a stateless society. The one-party system of the U.S.S.R., opposite to the situation in Nazi Germany, signifies and expresses the victory of the toiling classes. On this point, in the pamphlet *Stalin on the New Soviet Constitution* (pp. 22-23), Stalin says:

"...several parties and consequently freedom of parties can only exist in a society where antagonistic classes exist whose interests are hostile and irreconcilable, where there are capitalists and workers, landlords and peasants, kulaks and poor peasants.

"But in the U.S.S.R. there are no longer such classes as capitalists, landlords, kulaks, etc. In the U.S.S.R. there are only two classes, workers and peasants, whose interests not only are not antagonistic but, on the contrary, amicable. Consequently, there are no grounds for the existence of several parties, and therefore for the existence of freedom for



such parties in the U.S.S.R. There are grounds for only one party, the Communist Party, in the U.S.S.R. Only one party can exist, the Communist Party, which boldly defends the interests of the workers and peasants to the very end.”

The anti-democratic character of Nazi fascism, originating in the reactionary nature of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, is further demonstrated by its monstrous racial theories. With its ridiculously unscientific contention of Nordic superiority, it seeks to make all other peoples slaves to the German capitalist class. Fruits of this barbarous racialism are the ferocious and distorted fascist nationalism, its savage anti-Semitism, its sneers at neighboring nations and its blazing contempt for Negroes and all colonial peoples. Similar tendencies are also evidenced in American and British imperialism. Contrary to all such uncivilized racial doctrines of superiority and God-chosen master peoples, the Soviet Union is based upon the democratic, internationalist, scientific Marxist principles of the equality and solidarity of all the races and nations of the earth. Within the Soviet Union’s own borders its many constituent peoples live together in harmony and equality. It is the one great country in which anti-Semitism is punishable as a crime. The Soviet Constitution (Article 123) says (and this clause is strictly applied):

“Equality of rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

“Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.”

In industry, as in politics and other spheres, the Nazis apply their “leadership” principle, to the exclusion of all democracy.. The employers are the autocratic “leaders” in the shops and factories and the workers have nothing to say about setting their wages and working conditions. It is the open shop carried to the maximum. The so-called German Labor Front is only a monster company union, but more degenerated and employer- controlled than anything we have ever had

in the United States. Hitler tries to justify this monstrous tyranny thus: (cited by R. Palme Dutt in *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 214).

“The employers have worked their way up to the top by their industry and their efficiency. And by virtue of this selection, which shows that they belong to a higher type, they have the right to lead. Every leader of industry will forbid any interference,” from the workers.

In contrast with this system of Nazi industrial slavery the workers in the U.S.S.R. enjoy an industrial freedom utterly unknown in any other country. Their great trade unions, now numbering 25,500,000 members, not only actively look after questions of hours, wages, working conditions, etc., but they also have charge of the gigantic social security system, they play, furthermore, a vital role in organizing production, and from their ranks come the tens of thousands of managers of industry and political leaders. The great democratic trade unions are the mass foundation of Soviet democracy. Compared with them, the Nazi Labor Front is a ghastly mockery, and such unions as our A. F. of L. and C.I.O. are but skeleton organizations, both in size and function.

The working class and peasant woman is especially a victim of the brutal Nazi dictatorship. She has no democratic rights and is reduced to an inferior status, economically, politically and socially. The Nazi aim is to make her into just a breeder of industrial slaves and soldiers for the capitalist ruling class. She is excluded from political life and is denied a higher education. Long ago Spengler, from whom the Nazis have copied much, said (*Years of Decision*): “Woman is to be neither comrade, nor beloved, but only mother.” In this thoroughly reactionary spirit Hitler, at the 1934 Nazi Congress, outlined the status of women under German fascism, as follows:

“The world of man is the state, the world of man is his struggle, his self-dedication to the community, and thus we may say that the world of woman is a smaller one. For her world is her husband, her family, her children and her house.... We do not believe it to be right for woman to penetrate into the world of man, into his special sphere; on the contrary, we feel that it is natural for these worlds to remain separated.”

The Soviet woman, contrary to all this fascist reactionism, enjoys the fullest equality. One of the greatest achievements of the Russian revolution was to strike the shackles from doubly enslaved womankind. The Soviet Constitution (Article 12 a) provides that: "Women in the U.S.S.R. are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life." Accordingly, Soviet women are to the forefront in all activities. In the Supreme Soviet, of 1,090 delegates 187 are women, as against *no* women in the German Reichstag, and only half a dozen in the United States Congress. In Soviet industry the 11,000,000 employed women get the same wages as men doing similar jobs; they work in all occupations, many of them being factory and farm managers, locomotive drivers, ship captains, surgeons, scientists, etc.; there are 100,000 women industrial engineers in the U.S.S.R., as against 10,000 in the rest of the world. In 1938, women numbered 43 per cent of the students in the universities of the Soviet Union and 66,000 physicians, or 60 per cent of the grand total in the U.S.S.R., were women. In her home life the Soviet woman is also surrounded by protections and freedoms, quite unknown in any other country. Small wonder that the birth rate in the U.S.S.R. is more than double that of either Germany, England, or the United States.

Nazis and other fascists shout a great deal about the youth and about what fascism has to offer the new generation. But this is all a monstrous lie. The reality is that in Nazi Germany, as in all other capitalist countries, the way is barred to a real life for young people. The German industries, the government, the educational system and all other vital social institutions, based on human exploitation and saturated with crisis and rottenness, are firmly in the grip of the big capitalists and their agents. The only real opportunity open before the great masses of proletarian and farmer youth in Nazi Germany is to perish on the field of battle, and this is now opened also as a future for the youth of the United States. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, is truly the land of the youth. Every line of social endeavor – industrial, political, cultural – is wide open and clamoring for the youth. In the Supreme Soviet, of the 1,090 delegates 596 are under 35 years of age. This situation is typical of every phase of Soviet life. In no country in world history has the youth blossomed as now in the U.S.S.R. Fascism teaches young people to die and drives them into mass slaughter; socialism shows them the way to live and provides them the means for so doing.

### *Soviet Culture; Nazi Barbarism*

As the world capitalist system, caught in the meshes of its own incurable crisis, strangles and smothers, so also its culture withers and dies. Under fascist regimes, which arose where the capitalist crisis reached a very acute stage, the decay of capitalist culture is the most pronounced. In fascist Germany education is decadent, science is in decline, and the arts are stultified. The whole educational apparatus – universities, colleges, schools, etc. – has been drastically curtailed. The only science the fascists are interested in is that which advances their war technique, and the same tendency is growing in all other capitalist states. The Nazis have a supreme contempt for the popular mind. All they seek is the most effective means to deceive the people into obeying their autocratic commands. Hitler says in *Mein Kampf* (p. 198), “The receptivity of the masses is very limited; their ability to understand small.” Only the restricted, so-called elite (the ruling capitalist clique) can appreciate or absorb culture. As for the masses, says Hitler, “the primitive simplicity of their minds renders them a more easy prey to a big lie than a small one.” On this basis he feeds them the most outrageous demagoguery. In the conquered countries Nazi “culture” reaches its lowest depths of degradation.

The burning of the books, the persecution of such outstanding scientists as Einstein, the resurrection of astrology, Nordic heathen god worship and other forms of medieval obscurantism, are typical indicators of the cultural barbarism that the Nazis are trying to inflict upon the world. This barbarism is fully in harmony with their ruthless exploitation of the workers in industry, their suppression of every trace of democracy, and their brutal slaughter of the people as cannon fodder in imperialist military adventures.

At the other extreme, the Soviet Union represents the progressive cultural tendency. In that country, in full harmony with its socialization of industry, its abolition of human exploitation and its development of the broadest democracy, there also exists the most intense promotion of culture in all its forms. The economic and political structure of the U.S.S.R. is healthy and progressive and so, too, naturally, is its culture. The whole country is involved in a mass cultural advance such as the world has never before witnessed. Science, literature, art – every form of culture – is expanding at an unheard-of rate. Superstition and ignorance of all sorts are being sys-

tematically combated. And this culture is not being restricted to a small ruling, exploiting “elite,” but is extended to the broadest masses of the people, regardless of their national background.

One of the most striking aspects of the great Soviet cultural renaissance is the tremendous development of mass education. The illiteracy of tsarist times, embracing nearly 75 per cent of the people, has now been almost wiped out. In 1913 Russia had but 859 newspapers, which printed only 2,700,000 copies; the U.S.S.R. in 1940, however, had 8,500 newspapers, with a total circulation of 38,000,000 copies. Today in the U.S.S.R. there are some 40,000,000 pupils in the primary and secondary school grades, as against only about 8,000,000 before the revolution. The Soviet universities and technical schools contain 650,000 students, or about as many as all the rest of Europe put together. In *Foreign Affairs* for January, 1941 (pp. 433-434), Walter Kaempffert, a hostile critic of Soviet life, says that while

“The Germans have closed most of their universities;... For 1942 the [Soviet] plans call for thirty-four times as many students in various Russian [higher] schools as there were before the revolution.”

The Soviet state has set for itself the unparalleled task of raising the educational level of the workers to that of the intellectuals. Says Stalin regarding this revolutionary program:

“...The elimination of the distinction between mental labor and manual labor can be brought about only by raising the cultural and technical level of the working class to the level of engineers and technical workers. It would be absurd to think that this is unfeasible. It is entirely feasible under the Soviet system, where the productive forces of the country have been freed from the fetters of capitalism, where labor has been freed from the yoke of exploitation, where the working class is in power, and where the younger generation of the working class has every opportunity of obtaining an adequate technical education.” (Speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, Nov. 17, 1935.)

Another tremendous task now being gradually accomplished by the vast Soviet cultural renaissance is to raise the cultural level of

the country population up to that of the cities. Ernst Fischer says in his pamphlet *What Is Socialism*<sup>1</sup> (p. 54),

“But it is not only the borderline between the worker and the intellectual, between manual and mental labor that socialism removes and obliterates; it sets out to efface the age-old distinction between town and country, to overcome the immemorial backwardness of the countryside.”

To this end mighty educational work is now going on among the millions of collective farmers. Every Soviet village is surging with the new intellectual life brought to it by the growing educational system, by the expanding industrialization, and by the never sleeping care of the Soviet state.

Under Nazi fascism, as under capitalism generally, the individual worker and farmer is reduced to a mere cog in the great capitalist machine which operates to make wealth for the ruling class and to wage war against other nations. His personality is warped and stunted, and he passes through life robbed of its potential beauties and richness. In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, where there is no ruling, exploiting class, the whole aim of the regime is to develop and expand the toilers' freedom and personality. Capitalism, especially in its fascist aspects, corrodes and destroys human personality; socialism develops personality to its utmost. In the Soviet Union there is literally a new type of man in the making, not only in the economic and political sense, but also with regard to his physical, mental and individual characteristics.

#### *Fascism and Socialism in the United States*

The foregoing analysis of Nazi fascism and Soviet socialism shows definitely that they constitute two basically different types of society. Fascism, with its private ownership of industry, monopolist dominated government, production for profit, imperialist war-making, anti-democracy, and cultural barbarism, is capitalism in its most ruthless form. Whereas Soviet socialism, with its collective ownership of the industries and the land, worker-farmer government, production for use, broad democracy and cultural progress, represents a new and higher order of society. The former is obsolete, moribund capitalism, and the latter is the developing higher world system that

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<sup>1</sup> Workers Library Publishers, New York, 1940.

humanity is entering, socialism. Nor can all the pen pushers and paid liars of capitalism, in their eagerness to discredit socialism and to defend capitalism, obscure this profound oppositeness of the social systems of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

The wide gulf between fascism and socialism is clearly seen when we consider these movements in terms of the American situation. Let us indicate briefly the opposite origins, goals and trends of fascist-minded reaction in this country on one hand and of the Communist Party on the other. In the United States, as in Germany, the fascist danger originates among the great capitalists. Wall Street is the breeding place of American fascism, and the Hearsts, Coughlins, Lindberghs, Peglers, McFaddens, etc., are the mouthpieces of big capital. The great monopolists, Morgans, du Ponts, Fords, Girdlers, Weirs, etc., are now dominating the Roosevelt Administration and shaping its policies, but they at least are partially restrained by the resistance of the organized workers, farmers and city middle class. If the monopolists could break this opposition they would then proceed systematically to destroy what we have left of parliamentary democracy, nationally and in the states, and would set up a dictator on the Hitler model; they would smash the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and all other democratic organizations of the people and enormously increase the exploitation of the workers and farmers; they would create a powerful Gestapo with some Martin Dies at the head of it; they would strew the country with concentration camps and jam them with anti-fascist elements. In short, as we can see dearly from their present-day activities, if the Wall Street moguls, fountain-heads of American fascism, were able to overcome popular resistance and to have their complete way they would create a terroristic fascist regime in this country similar in all essentials to that now prevailing in Nazi Germany. The Fords, Girdlers, du Ponts and Weirs of the United States are the blood brothers of the Hitlers, Goerings and Schachts of Germany.

On the other hand, the present program and daily activities of the Communist Party prove that it aims at creating a totally different kind of an America. While striving now to raise the workers' wages and unemployed relief under capitalism, it is eventually aiming at the socialization of the industries and the land and the abolition of human exploitation altogether. Every worker would have a job as his constitutional right. Today the Communist Party defends the democratic rights of the people and urges the formation of a great

Farmer-Labor Party in order better to carry on this defense, and it at the same time looks forward eventually toward securing a government completely in the hands of the workers and farmers. The Communists also strive to strengthen the trade unions and other mass organizations, and would eventually build them into the basic organizations of the new social order. The Communists are opposed to imperialist militarization and war, and they would finally put an end to these monstrosities and establish a world at peace. This program realized, in broad outline, would be socialism. It would be no mere replica of Soviet socialism, but would be adapted to specific American conditions. Its fruits would be peace, freedom, prosperity and cultural development for the people; instead of the war, slavery, hunger and barbarism that are the inevitable results of fascism. Socialism and fascism constitute two different worlds.

The lumping together of Nazi fascism and Soviet socialism by the capitalists and their lickspittle agents in the press, on the radio, among the trade union leadership, etc., is triply dangerous to the American people. In the first place, it tends to prevent the workers and other toilers in this country from understanding the tremendous progressive significance to them of the socialist development that is now taking place in the Soviet Union, in relation to the basic solution of their own problems of unemployment, poverty, oppression and war. Second, it tends to drive a wedge between the peoples of the Soviet Union and those of the United States and to prevent the vital collaboration between those two peace-loving nations. Third, the confusing together of fascism and socialism tends to blind the American people to their main enemies, the capitalists of this country. These reactionaries, by directing their campaign against the Soviet Union and the Communist Party, thus divert attention from their own schemes to enslave the workers and other toilers of the United States.

Red-baiting is the tactic of the capitalist reactionaries, whether it is practiced by labor leaders, "liberals," or what not. It is the method by which Hitler and Mussolini came to power and it is the one whereby American reactionaries are step by step seeking to wipe out democracy and to set up their own brand of fascism in this country. Should they be able to break up the Communist Party, which stands in the front line of every battle for the people's rights, it would not be long before the trade unions, the farmers' organizations, and all other democratic movements of the masses would con-



front a life and death struggle. That's the way fascism seized power in Germany, Italy, France and other fascist countries and that's how the reactionaries want it to "happen" here.

To possess a clear picture of what is actually taking place now in the Soviet Union, so as not to be fooled by the lie that "Nazi fascism and Soviet socialism are the same," is of the most fundamental importance to the American workers and other toilers. Only if they have\* such an understanding can they defend their vital economic and political standards, and eventually find in socialism the final solution of the increasing menace of fascism, hunger and war that is being bred by the obsolete and rotting capitalist system.

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