

YOUR



QUESTIONS

ANSWERED

ON POLITICS, PEACE, ECONOMICS,
RELIGION, ANTI-SEMITISM, RACE PREJUDICE,
DEMOCRACY, SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM

by

Wm. F. Foster

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WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

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AMERICANISM, DEMOCRACY,
SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM

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FOREWORD

THE COMMUNIST PARTY is rapidly becoming a major political force in the United States. Increasingly, masses of workers and other toilers, harassed by the miserable working, living and social conditions of the decaying capitalist system and alarmed by the growth of fascism and the war menace, are turning to our Party for guidance. They want to know its position on all the complicated questions of the day. This pamphlet seeks to help satisfy this growing mass demand for information about the Communist program by answering briefly a number of key questions, selected out of several thousands directed to our speakers in public meetings, to our teachers in new members' classes and to the editors of our press.

In replying to these questions, I have used many quotations from Communist authorities for the purpose of stimulating further reading in the original sources. Never was the need of a thoroughgoing understanding of the Marxist-Leninist analysis of capitalism so burningly urgent as in these days of fascism, war and revolution.

At this time I wish to extend my thanks to Comrade Price and her co-workers who contributed much research work to this pamphlet, to Comrades Stachel, Hathaway, Ford, Hudson and Dennis who, in a number of instances, wrote specific answers to questions, and also to Comrade Bittelman, who read the proofs.

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

CHAPTER I

THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT

1.

Q. Can it happen here? Is there a fascist danger in the United States?

A. Yes, and it will happen here unless the great masses of the people unite in a broad democratic front to defend our democratic institutions.

The fascist danger arises in the United States, as elsewhere, because the capitalist system is in decay. Capitalist markets are shrinking, the purchasing power of the people has fallen deeply, agricultural crisis and mass unemployment have become chronic, and class struggles and international antagonisms are constantly intensified. In this critical situation the rich bankers and industrialists strive to increase the exploitation of the masses and to break opposition to their own war plans through demagoguery, terrorism and the abolition of democracy; that is, by taking the path toward fascism. The main fascist source in this country are the "sixty families" of "economic royalists"—the Morgans, the du Ponts, the Mellons, the Fords, the Girdlers, etc. Their chief organization is the Republican Party and their most active allies and spokesmen are such groups and individuals as the reactionary wing of the Democratic Party, the vigilantes, the Ku Klux Klan, the Black Legion, the German-American Bund, the Associated Farmers, Father Coughlin, Hearst, Hoover, etc.

Incipient American fascists, to confuse and demoralize the people, treacherously operate under false slogans of democracy, Americanism and opposition to fascism. But their real program is to slash wages, to smash trade unionism, to repeal New Deal social legislation, to load the tax burden on the masses, to give the monopolies a free hand in maintaining high prices

and, with their control of finance and industry, to sabotage industrial recovery. Should these reactionaries again succeed in getting control of the federal government they would move swiftly in the direction of fascism.

2.

Q. *What is the composition of the democratic front and what is its program?*

A. "Against the fascist and reactionary offensive the forces of democracy are organizing themselves and more and more gathering into a common front. Especially important from this viewpoint is the deepening struggle of the progressives against the reactionaries in the Democratic Party and the growing differentiation in the Republican Party, whose progressive sections are moving in the direction of a common democratic front. These forces are drawing into closer collaboration with the growing independent organizations and political activities of the workers, farmers, middle classes and Negroes, such as Labor's Non-Partisan League, the American Labor Party, the Farmer-Labor Party, the Progressive Party of Wisconsin, the Washington Commonwealth Federation, the National Negro Congress, etc. . . .

"A program, around which the democratic front could be organized, would include the following as its chief measures:

"A. To protect and improve wages, hours and working conditions, and to further the development of labor's organizations, by giving support to the working class in its day-to-day struggles and by defending its interests through legislation.

"B. To utilize the nation's available wealth for providing work or relief for the jobless, and to promote socially desirable projects, and to improve and extend social insurance and security, unemployment relief, old-age pensions, farm relief, etc., *financed by taxation based upon ability to pay*, especially by a sharp increase of the income tax in the higher brackets.

"c. To defend and extend the democratic rights of the people, to promote national unification and to limit the power of

big capital in the government and economy of the country through curbing the autocratic power of the Supreme Court, through legislation against the trusts and monopolies, stock exchange control, nationalization of banks, railways and munitions, moratorium on debts for farmers and small property owners, price regulation under democratic control, public and cooperative marketing, improvement and democratization of the agricultural and farm measures, etc.

“D. To promote concerted action with the democratic peoples and governments of the world in order to halt and to isolate the fascist war-makers, to assist their victims, and to guarantee world peace.” (*Resolution of the Tenth Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A.*, pp. 5-7.)

This program can be summed up by the slogans, “For Social and National Security” and “For Jobs, Security, Democracy and Peace.” Most of its provisions are already contained in the platforms of the above-listed organizations. Examples of the growing democratic front in action were the Roosevelt campaigns of 1932-36, the LaGuardia Mayoralty campaign of 1937, and the Olson, Murphy and Lehman gubernatorial campaigns of 1938.

3.

Q. Communists speak of the united front, the democratic front, the people's front and the Farmer-Labor Party—what is the difference between them?

A. These terms are in no way contradictory. They represent various stages in the development of the political bloc of workers, farmers and middle classes and they cannot be arbitrarily separated one from another.

The *united front* is the coming together of proletarian mass organizations for common action. The term is usually employed with regard to unity of the working class, as joint action between the C.I.O., A. F. of L. and Railroad Brotherhoods.

The *democratic front* is an elementary form of the political anti-fascist alliance between the workers, farmers and middle classes to preserve and extend democracy. During elections it involves the getting together of all such toilers, whether they be Democrats, Republicans, Socialists, Communists, or non-party, in solid support of common legislative programs and progressive candidates for political office. In some cases the jointly-backed candidates may be on the Democratic ticket, in others on the Farmer-Labor, Labor Party, or even the Republican ticket. At first the democratic front may be only a loose cooperation of democratic mass organizations around a very simple program, but the tendency is more firmly to cement this alliance and more fully to develop its common program.

The *people's front*, as we have seen it organized in France, for example, is a more advanced form of the anti-fascist democratic front, both with regard to organization and program. The French People's Front was formed upon the basis of a concrete alliance between three political parties—Socialist, Communist, Radical Socialist—plus trade unions, professional groups, veterans' societies, peasant organizations, etc., all around one fundamental program of demands, and with the working class playing the leading role. The people's front election tactic calls for the united support by all groups of whichever of the progressive candidates receive the highest vote in the preliminary elections.

The *Farmer-Labor Party* of Minnesota is also an advanced detachment in the democratic front, where the alliance between the workers, farmers and middle class functions as a political party. Here we have the regular conventions, a unified policy, ward or assembly branches and dues payments of a political party, to which the trade unions, farm bodies, cooperatives, middle class organizations, etc., are directly affiliated.

Unity of action between workers, farmers and middle class is necessary because of their common interests and the need of a joint defense against the ever-sharpening attack of ruthless trustified capital. This unity is rapidly developing in this country as a great democratic front of the toiling masses.

Q. Under what circumstances does the Communist Party support candidates of the Democratic and Republican Parties? Put up candidates of its own?

A. The Communist Party supports the policy of all the people's forces uniting behind single progressive election candidates, whether these be on the Democratic, Republican, Labor, Communist or other party ticket, against the candidates of reaction. In cases where there are no such progressive candidates in the field from other parties, the Communist Party puts up its own ticket. This policy aims at the objectives, first, of creating united action by all democratic front forces and, second, of making sure that there is a progressive candidate in the field for each elective office.

Q. What class does President Roosevelt represent? What is his relationship toward American imperialism? What relation, if any, does his policy bear to a people's front program?

A. Roosevelt, born and reared in upper class circles, believes in capitalism. But he is opposed to the fascist course being pursued by the big monopoly capitalist groups. He believes that capitalism, that private ownership, private profit, private initiative, can best be advanced by preserving democracy, by carrying through a limited reform of those most marked abuses which threaten to arouse the people against capitalism. This has brought him into sharp conflict with the representatives of monopoly interests in politics and has compelled him to rely more and more on the masses of the people for support.

As for Roosevelt and American imperialism, although he, too, is interested in American expansion (trade, raw materials, investments, etc.), his "good neighbor" policy stands out in sharp contrast to the brutal military imperialism of his predecessors. His policy, when consistently applied, is in conflict with the imperialist excesses of Yankee monopolies in Latin

America, and, moreover, it gives to these weaker American nations greater leeway in furthering their own democratic, independent development. His program, with all its limitations, is in this field also closer to a democratic front program.

At the Tenth Convention of the Communist Party, Earl Browder gave the following estimate of Roosevelt and the New Deal:

“The New Deal wing of the Democratic Party, created under the leadership of President Roosevelt, is supported by a great following, largely unorganized, of workers, farmers and city middle classes. It is with but few exceptions under the leadership and control of a party apparatus composed of professional politicians drawn from the middle classes and representing primarily middle class interests and aspirations. It responds to the interests and desires of the workers and farmers to the extent that, first, it finds this necessary to draw to it the support of the unorganized masses, and, second, that the workers and farmers are independently organized, vocal and clear in their demands. With all its weaknesses and inadequacies, its hesitations and confusions, this New Deal wing under Roosevelt’s leadership is an essential part of the developing democratic front against monopoly capital. Its role is not played out by the splitting away of the Right-wing Democrats to fuse with the Republicans. On the contrary, only with this split does the New Deal wing enter into its full development. It furnishes today the broadest framework, albeit a precarious and incomplete one, for the gathering of the full forces of the democratic front of the majority of the people. . . .” (*The Democratic Front*, p. 16.)

6.

Q. Has the policy of the democratic front any basis in American tradition?

A. Decidedly yes.

“... the movement which is today gathering its forces against the offensive of reaction and fascism is a movement of the *democratic forces* of the people rising to *preserve and extend*

democracy. And from this angle, *the present-day movement for democracy links up historically and traditionally with all our great movements for democracy in the past.*

“. . . One can point to such historic milestones as the revolutionary struggle for the unity and independence of the country in the epoch of 1776 which established the nation and its democracy. One can point further to the series of truly gigantic struggles which resulted in the conquest of the Bill of Rights. And, finally, one will point to the struggle against the counter-revolutionary war of the Southern slavocracy in the 1860's and to the period of Reconstruction.” (Alex Bittelman, “A Historic View of the Struggle for Democracy,” *The Communist*, August, 1938.)

“. . . under the fierce pressure of advancing monopoly capitalism, carrying with it terrific exploitation and suppression of the workers, farmers and lower middle class, these three classes, for a full half century (not to go further back into American political history), have made determined and repeated efforts to consolidate their struggle on the basis of the class forces which today constitute the people's front, as against their capitalist class enemy. The people's front has deep roots in American mass tradition. . . . The history of the Farmer-Labor movement in this country is the record of the early stages of the evolving American people's front.” (William Z. Foster, “American Origins of the People's Front,” *The Communist*, December, 1937.)

Thus the Bryan campaigns of the 1890's, the Non-Partisan League in the Dakotas during the post-war years, and the Conference for Progressive Political Action of 1922-25 were all joint movements of workers, farmers and middle classes, and all direct forerunners of the Roosevelt campaigns of 1932-36 and of the democratic front movement which is crystallizing under the specific conditions of the deepening crisis of today.

Q. Are not the interests of the farmers and workers as producers and buyers opposed to each other and, hence, is not political cooperation between these classes impossible in the democratic front?

A. The fact that the farmer is a producer of agricultural products and the worker of industrial products, and each the consumer of the products of the other, does not set up any real barriers to common action. All reactionary propoganda to the contrary notwithstanding, high wages for the workers and high prices for the farmers react beneficially on both groups.

Aside from the big farmers, who have the interests of capitalists and are bound up with reactionary forces generally, the vast bulk of the farmers in the period since the war have suffered heavily from the pressure of the big monopoly capitalist groups. Millions have been forced into bankruptcy, becoming mere tenants on land they formerly owned, or farm laborers for big capitalist farmers. Additional millions are hopelessly burdened with mortgages. Prices of farm products have been forced down far below the cost of production, while prices have soared for everything the farmers must buy. The meat packers, commission merchants, the railroad and utilities interests—all take turns in squeezing the farmers.

These facts are changing the outlook of rural America. They have made the farmers bitter enemies of the big monopoly capitalists, and therefore natural allies of the workers and the democratic forces. It is the common desire of both workers and farmers to resist further inroads by the monopolies, and this provides the basis for their collaboration in a democratic front, in a Farmer-Labor Party. They have a common interest in halting fascism, in maintaining democracy. They have a common interest in blocking the warmongers, in securing higher living standards.

Q. All attempts to organize a party based on farmer-labor support have failed in the past. What reason is there to believe, therefore, that the democratic front can succeed now in the United States?

A. First, it is not exact to say that "all attempts to organize a party based on farmer-labor support have failed." The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party exists as an outstanding example of success, with a permanence and stability that began as early as 1918. The Progressive Party of Wisconsin is a further example of the successful welding together of workers, farmers and middle class forces into a permanent party.

The causes for the failure to set up such an alliance on a national scale are to be found both in the general economic and political situation in the country and in the attitude of the labor and progressive forces themselves. As long as the country as a whole was generally prosperous there was less incentive for the formation of a common political front devoted to the interests of the workers, farmers and small business groups. The movement for a worker-farmer party has invariably sprung up with each economic crisis. It is sufficient to mention the Populists of the 90's and the rise of the farmer-labor movement in the Middle West in the immediate post-war years. Had the American trade union movement been ready in any of those periods to give national leadership and cohesion to this movement it could without doubt have united the workers and farmers in a new political party. However, the Gomperses, Greens and other leaders of that type served as the disorganizers and disrupters of independent farmer-labor political action.

Today both these factors are radically altered. Capitalism in the United States is involved now not simply in a passing depression from which it will soon recover, but in a general crisis of the system, with a standing army of unemployed numbering millions, with tenancy and bankruptcy a permanent curse on the rural areas, with monopoly capital ruthlessly pressing down on the mass of the people in a des-

perate effort to hold up its high monopoly prices, with fascism as a serious threat to our democracy and our liberties. All this the people are beginning to realize. In all sections of the country the movement for a new political alignment is gaining new headway.

There is the further factor that organized labor today is active politically. This applies to the C.I.O. in its entirety, to the railroad brotherhoods, and to the majority of the A. F. of L. Labor's Non-Partisan League, acting for organized labor, is gathering farmers, small business people and professionals around itself as allies of the workers, and is playing a decisive role in uniting the democratic forces.

The new developments in the economic life of the country make a realignment of political forces, a democratic front, necessary. The new leading role of labor makes this realizable. The new movement is in the process of birth. In these circumstances it will be permanent, the victor over fascism.

9.

Q. What is the colonial policy of the people's front?

A. At this time, with Germany, Italy and Japan on the offensive to redivide the world, therefore, for the people's front to cut loose its allies, the colonial peoples, from the democratic states would both weaken the democratic forces and worsen the conditions of the colonial peoples by throwing them under fascist tyranny. Maurice Thorez at the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of France stated as follows the characteristic people's front policy regarding the French colonies:

"Satisfaction must be granted the colonial peoples, first of all in the very interest of the unhappy populations of North Africa, Syria, Lebanon and Indo-China. . . . It must be done in the interest of France, so that fascism can no longer use the demagogic arguments by which it tries to arouse certain strata of the native populations against our country.

"For the workers: an increase in their wretched wages, complete enforcement of the social laws; for the fellahs, the un-

fortunate peasants, an immediate grant in food, tools and seed; then in Algeria, the redistribution of the land, . . . then the giving of *water* (irrigation) to all, to the colonists, to the French, *and to the natives*; the drafting of special measures to aid artisans who are so numerous in the large cities of North Africa. . . . The Native Code of laws must be abolished, natives must be permitted to hold public office. . . .

“The fundamental demand of our Communist Party concerning the colonial peoples remains the *right of self-determination, the right to independence.*

“Recalling the formulation of Lenin’s . . . that the *right to separation* does not signify the *obligation to separate.* If the decisive question of the moment is the victorious struggle against fascism, the interest of the colonial peoples lies *in their unity* with the French people and not in an attitude which could favor the projects of fascism and, for instance, place Algeria, Tunis and Morocco under the heel of Mussolini or Hitler, or make Indo-China a base for militaristic Japan.” (*France of the People’s Front*, pp. 98-99.)

10.

Q. *What is the relationship of the Chinese Communist Party to the Kuomintang government? Have the Communists abandoned their revolutionary program, as the capitalist daily press reports?*

A. “The Chinese Communists, like true sons of their people, take their stand on the front lines, in defense of China’s national existence and national independence, but this does not mean that the Chinese Communists have been transformed into bourgeois nationalists or that they have been dissolved in the ranks of the latter. . . . While we take a most decisive stand in defense of the national interests of our people, we remain true revolutionary internationalists. . . .

“While we declare ourselves, despite the differences in principle that exist between Communism and Sun Yat-sen-ism, advocates of the basic revolutionary slogans of Sun Yat-sen, of

the best revolutionary traditions of the Chinese people, we Communists never for an instant . . . cease to be true followers of the Marxist-Leninist teachings. . . .

"While we actively favor the creation of a united all-China democratic republic and the calling of an all-China parliament, under the specific historic conditions, we Chinese Communists are never, under any circumstances, even for an instant, transformed into bourgeois democrats and we do not cease to be consistent advocates of Soviet power and socialism." (Wang Ming, *China Can Win*, pp. 43-45.)

The Chinese Communist Party's resolute stand for a national anti-fascist front has been of decisive importance in uniting the Chinese people for their heroic stand against Japanese imperialism. It has infused the whole nation with a new spirit of progress, independence and democracy and made it invincible in the face of the fascist invaders.

11.

Q. What is the attitude of the Trotskyites internationally towards the people's front?

A. In every country the Trotskyites and Bukharinites are to be found acting as tools of fascist reaction seeking to sabotage the people's front. In the United States the Trotskyites everywhere, in the trade unions, in the several state Farmer-Labor parties, in the peace movement, etc., are busy, under pretenses of ultra-radicalism, trying to disrupt the growing anti-fascist unity of the toiling masses. At the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Manuilsky indicated the treacherous work of these international spies and disrupters as follows:

"In Poland, Italy, Japan and Germany the fascist secret agents are making wide use of Trotsky's vile services, are making wide use of Trotsky's vile literary effusions for the purpose of demoralizing imprisoned Communists. On the instructions of the fascist secret services, the Trotskyites worm their way

into organizations of the people's front and of the national liberation movements in order to disrupt them from within.

"In Japan the Trotskyites are known as 'the brain trust of the secret service.' They work in special spy schools organized by the police, in which they teach methods of struggle against the Communists and the working class movement. In China the Trotskyites act as Japanese military spies."

In Spain the Trotskyites served as intelligence agents for fascist Germany and Italy and collaborated with Franco's notorious Fifth Column for the defeat of the people's army. In France they are following a similar course of sowing chaos and demoralization among the ranks of the people's front forces.

In the Soviet Union the Trotskyite, Zinovievite and Bukharinite counter-revolutionary groups descended to the depths of sabotage, the wrecking of industries, assassination of workers and Communist leaders, and outright treason. They became the unashamed spies and agents of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy and militarist Japan, and were convicted before the Russian masses and all the world as traitors to their country, to the proletarian revolution and to the peace and civilization of the world.

12.

Q. Is not the policy of the people's front the same as the policy of the "lesser evil" which was followed with such disastrous results by German Social-Democracy?

A. No. German Social-Democracy was selling to the working class collaboration with (that is, subordination to) the capitalist class under the guise of the "lesser evil." The people's front policy has nothing in common with this. It is not the class collaboration policy of the German reformist Bernstein, but the class struggle policy of Lenin. It is a thrust straight at the heart of fascism, the main enemy of democracy and socialism.

"What was this (Social-Democratic) conception of the 'lesser

evil? The existing bourgeois dictatorship, even after the democratic forms had been flung aside, even under Hindenburg, Brüning, von Papen or von Schleicher, was declared to be a 'lesser evil' than the victory of fascism. Therefore, it should be supported, and every blow against the workers accepted without struggle. . . . Thus the line of the 'lesser evil' meant the passive acceptance of every stage of development to complete fascism. And even when Hitler came to power, his rule, on the grounds that he was 'legally' in power, was proclaimed a 'lesser evil' to an 'illegal' Nazi terror, and therefore not to be opposed. In this way the line of Social-Democracy insured the victory of fascism in Germany without a struggle." (R. Palme Dutt, *Fascism and Social-Democracy*, pp. 121-122.)

Contrary to the "lesser evil" policy, the people's front policy unites the workers, farmers and lower middle class to fight *against* the fascist big capitalists, not to collaborate with them. It is a battle every inch of the way to prevent the reactionary forces from gaining any ground whatsoever, a policy which opens the way for the decisive defeat of reaction and for the development of democracy onto a higher and more extended scale. The policy of the "lesser evil" led to Social-Democratic surrender to fascism in Germany and Austria, but the People's Front in Spain, China and France has developed the most resolute struggle against fascism. **The people's front, as Dimitroff says, is "a force . . . which can offer determined resistance to fascism, prevent it from coming to power in countries of bourgeois democracy and overthrow its barbarous rule where it is already established."** (G. Dimitroff, *The United Front*, p. 199.)

Q. *Is the people's front policy merely a defensive tactic against fascism, as Norman Thomas says? And what is the relationship between the struggle of the people's front to defend peace and democracy and the fight of the Communists to establish socialism?*

A. The central issue of the people's front is the defense of democracy and peace against fascism and war. Dimitroff says:

"Now the fascist counter-revolution is attacking bourgeois democracy in an effort to establish the most barbaric regime of exploitation and suppression of the toiling masses. Now the toiling masses in a number of capitalist countries are faced with the necessity of making a *definite* choice, and of making it today, not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and fascism." (G. Dimitroff, *The United Front*, p. 110.)

"The people's front . . . creates the most favorable conditions for the working class to accomplish its historic role, to head the struggle of their people against the small clique of financial magnates, big capitalists and landlords, to be in the vanguard in the uncompleted democratic revolution and in all movements for progress and culture. The class struggle between exploited and exploiters thus receives an immeasurably wider base and a mighty scope." (*Ibid.*, p. 199.)

Dimitroff's statement is fully borne out by the people's front in practice. Thus, in France, the workers in launching the people's front to head off the projected fascist uprising in 1934 added four million new members to the trade unions, greatly strengthened the Socialist and Communist Parties, etc.—all of which constitute positive achievements on the road to socialism. In Spain, the People's Front developed a tremendous struggle against fascism which would have been successful but for the betrayal by the English and French governments, through their "non-intervention" policy, and by the American government through its false "neutrality" policy. If the People's Front had won the war, the masses would not only have

held the fascists at bay but also have set up an advanced democratic state which would offer the possibility for a speedy advance to socialism.

In Mexico and Chile, likewise, the masses with their people's front governments are definitely on the offensive against their native capitalists and the foreign imperialists. In China the anti-fascist national united front government (an extension of the people's front) went to war to repel the Japanese invaders, but victory for it would not stop at simply defeating the Japanese; it would surely press on to the creation of a great Chinese democratic republic, standing in alliance with the Soviet Union and facilitating the whole world advance to socialism.

The struggle to defend democracy against fascist barbarism is the historic task of the revolutionary movement in this period. It is the fight to protect the lives, liberties, living standards and national independence of the world's toiling millions; it is the fight for progress, for socialism, for civilization itself.

14.

Q. Is the people's front policy of uniting the workers with other classes in a common struggle to defend democracy in harmony with the teachings of Marx and Lenin?

A. It is. The people's front and the democratic front are the application of the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as of Stalin, to the political conditions of today. As early as 1848, Marx and Engels in their joint work, *The Communist Manifesto*, said: "They (the Communists) labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries." The later writings of Marx and Engels are also full of this basic idea of the common defense of democracy as the pre-condition for the establishment of socialism. Lenin says:

"Can a class-conscious worker ignore the democratic strug-

gle for the sake of the socialist struggle, or ignore the latter for the sake of the former? No, a class-conscious worker calls himself a Social-Democrat [read Communist now] precisely because he understands the interrelations between the two struggles. He knows that there is no other road to socialism but the road through democracy, through political liberty. He therefore strives for the complete and consistent achievement of democracy for the sake of attaining the ultimate goal—socialism." (*Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 153.)

And again, Lenin says:

"It would be a fundamental mistake to suppose that the struggle for democracy can divert the proletariat from the socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc. On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy." (*Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 268.)

CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

15.

Q. What causes the war danger, and is war inevitable?

A. War is inherent in the capitalist system; it is the consequence of the ruthless capitalist exploitation of the masses—although its course can be halted by mass peace pressure. The soil out of which modern war grows is the imperative need of the imperialist capitalist states to secure more and more markets, raw materials and colonies in order to keep going their monstrous system of robbing the workers, farmers and other toilers. Added to this basic cause of war is the intensified, uneven development of capitalism in the various countries which constantly tends to upset the international relationship of forces between them and to throw the capitalist governments into violent struggles with each other over markets, materials, colonies, strategic positions, thus provoking imperialist wars for the redivision of the world.

The present world war crisis is due to the fact that fascist Germany, Italy and Japan, countries in which the general difficulties of capitalism are greater than in the democracies, are being plunged by their capitalist rulers into desperate imperialist war gambles in an attempt to solve their growing economic and political problems by the brutal subjugation and exploitation of other peoples, as well as by the increased robbery and fascist oppression of their own working masses. Already the second imperialist war, which was precipitated by the fascist dictatorships, is under way and has led to the fascist barbarians, overrunning a whole series of countries—Ethiopia, China, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Memel, Albania—and menacing many others by economic, political and

military terrorism. The monstrous war threatens daily to engulf the whole world.

The only way this frightful fascist threat of a devastating world war can be checked is through the democratic peoples of the world standing firmly together and thereby bringing the fascist aggressors to a halt. But the dread of war will be finally removed from the world only through the abolition of the capitalist system and the establishment of socialism—a system under which the nations, carrying on no mass exploitation, consequently will have no imperialist antagonisms and will live and work together in friendly cooperation.

16.

Q. What is meant by collective security?

A. In the present world situation, with fascist Germany, Italy and Japan out upon a war rampage, international collective security can only express itself effectively through an alliance of the non-aggressor states—especially Great Britain, France, and the U.S.A., in collaboration with the Socialist Soviet Union—to restrain the fascist war-making states and actively to assist their victims with food, money, munitions and all other needed help. The Soviet Union, with its resolute peace policy, will form the backbone of this anti-war movement.

In order to prevent the most frightful holocaust of blood and suffering in human history the people must clearly grasp the fact that the fascist powers have embarked upon a relentless imperialist campaign to redivide and to enslave the world for their own benefit, and all attempts to “appease” them as Chamberlain has done by throwing weaker countries into their maw, or to try to run away from them as American isolationists propose, only whet their insatiable appetites and spur them on to still greater and more outrageous aggressions. The only way these mass murderers can possibly be halted is by a show of superior force. An enormous superiority in men, money, arms, industry, materials and strategic position is possessed by the democratic peoples, and once they see fit to mo-

bilize their strength in full determination to use it if they must to stop the advancing hordes of fascism then these destructive forces will be brought to a standstill. A recent manifesto of the Communist International states the situation in a nutshell:

"Only through the medium of *an alliance of peoples conducting a self-sacrificing struggle for the cause of peace* is it possible to thwart the criminal plans of the war instigators. A defense cordon of armed peoples who have joined their forces with the great Soviet people will doom fascism to impotence and will hasten its defeat and inevitable ruin."

17.

Q. Do sanctions mean war? Would not the use of sanctions or the "quarantine" of the aggressors hasten the world war by forcing the hand of the fascists?

A. Just the reverse. If the fascist powers have been able to commit their many outrages of treaty-breaking and unprovoked invasions of weaker peoples it is precisely because they have been allowed a free hand by the heads of the capitalist democracies. As England, France and the United States have backed up step by step, surrendering one weak country after another to the fascist aggressors, the Soviet Union, advocating the need of a common anti-fascist stand, has constantly warned that the Chamberlain retreat could only encourage the fascists to fresh onslaughts, and now the whole democratic world must see that the U.S.S.R.'s warnings were true.

Georgi Dimitroff, General Secretary of the Communist International, recently said:

"The statement is made that the application of sanctions increases the war danger. . . . This is not true. Quite the contrary; *letting the aggressor go unpunished* increases the danger of war. The more resolutely sanctions of an economic and financial character are applied against a fascist aggressor (complete refusal to grant credit, the stoppage of trade and the supply of raw material), the less inclined will German [and

Italian and Japanese] fascism be to begin a war, because the greater the risk will be for it." (*The United Struggle for Peace*, p. 15.)

Chamberlain and Daladier, by their criminal sell-out of democracy at Munich, by their ruthless sacrifice of Spain, Ethiopia, China, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Albania, have made the restoration of world peace enormously more difficult. Their planned treachery has given the fascists a blood-lust for conquest and instilled in them a belief that the democracies are helpless. Hence it will now require a doubly-determined stand by the democratic peoples of the world, those of the United States included, to stop the fascist barbarians. But it can and must be done. Except for such an anti-fascist stand, calling for readiness to resist by arms if necessary, there is no other perspective for the world than wholesale slaughter and slavery.

18.

Q. State why the policy of isolationism for the United States won't work as an effective peace program.

A. War-making fascism is a world menace and must be halted upon a world basis. The United States cannot possibly isolate itself from the fascist threat; because, first, a decisive success for fascism in Europe would inevitably result in an enormous, if not overwhelming, stimulation of warmongering fascist reaction in the United States; and, second, the unchecked advance of world fascism would also soon result in strong fascist military bases being established in Latin America, with the consequence that every city in the United States would be brought within the range of fascist airplanes. The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are only illusory protections for American peace and democracy against fascist barbarism. Isolationism is surrender to fascism and the sure road to war.

The American people, to preserve their own peace and freedom, must actively support other democratic nations in their efforts to checkmate the fascist barbarians. An effective Ameri-

can peace policy requires, first, to stop the flow of munitions to Japan, Italy and Germany and to place a trade embargo against these aggressor states, while permitting food, credits and munitions to go freely to the peoples attacked by these powers; second, to proceed decisively with the Latin American countries and Canada for a joint defense against fascist penetration into this hemisphere; third, to join up with France, England and especially the Soviet Union, to put a halt to the war aggressions of Germany, Japan and Italy generally.

That the American people increasingly favor such an active peace policy has been made clear recently by a whole series of authoritative polls and other manifestations. The Gallup Poll of December 30, 1938, showed 76 per cent of the people sympathetic to Loyalist Spain, and various other polls have proved an overwhelming mass sentiment favoring embargoes against the fascist war aggressors. Likewise, an almost unanimous public opinion supports President Roosevelt's initiative in advocating a strong joint defense of this continent against fascist invasion. Also the Gallup Poll of December 25, 1938, showed 56.3 per cent of the people in favor of the United States taking a firm stand on a world scale with other democratic powers against Hitler and Mussolini. And that the masses of the people look upon the U.S.S.R. as a reliable ally was demonstrated recently by two remarkable polls, one a year ago, which showed 75 per cent of the American people sympathetic to the U.S.S.R. in the event of a Soviet-Japanese war, and the other, a Gallup Poll of December 12, 1938, which showed that 87 per cent of our people would favor the Soviet Union if war should develop between it and Nazi Germany.

19.

Q. How is the fact to be explained that the most rabid fascist elements in this country—Ford, Hearst, Coughlin, Fish, Dies, etc.—are the strongest advocates of isolation?

A. Such people, all violent enemies of democracy, realize fully that a fascist victory on a world scale would enormously

strengthen reaction in this country. And they further understand that the best way to insure such a world victory for fascism would be to paralyze the democratic resistance of the American people by isolating them from the struggles of other democratic nations. Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese militarists want nothing better than that the American people give them a free hand. Hence all their allies, agents and admirers in this country plump for a policy of isolationism. They betray their country for the sake of their reactionary class interests. Honest believers in isolationism as a peace program are unwitting dupes of fascist strategy.

20.

Q. Why did Chamberlain and Daladier give in to Hitler at Munich?

A. These reactionaries were moved by two general considerations in surrendering Czechoslovakia to Hitler at Munich. The most decisive of these was the desire of the English and French ruling classes to deflect Hitler's drive away from the West and towards the East. They would gladly bring the Soviet Union and Germany into war with each other, so that, as Joseph Stalin put it, the U.S.S.R. might pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. It would have been a master stroke of British imperialist strategy if Chamberlain could have precipitated a war between Germany and the Soviet Union, thereby giving Great Britain a free hand to extend its imperialist power throughout the world and eventually to lead a war against the weakened U.S.S.R.

Together with this basic reason there was another, dictated by the British and French Tories' fear of democracy. At Munich Hitler was in a dangerous crisis. The peoples of the Soviet Union, France and Great Britain, aroused by repeated fascist war aggressions, were determined to stop Hitler at all costs, and the American people were also highly sympathetic. The fascist powers, confronting far superior forces, faced the menace of a disastrous retreat or a hopeless war with revolution

at the end of it. The Tory Chamberlain, no less than the fascist Hitler, dreaded this perspective of a great victory for the democratic forces of the world if Hitler were forced to retreat. The British and French reactionaries wanted Hitler "as a European gendarme who strangles every democratic movement of the masses of the people," so they rushed to his support by criminally sacrificing Czechoslovakia. As Georgi Dimitroff says:

"... Out of fear of the growth of the working class movement in Europe, of the movement for national liberation in Asia, out of hatred for the land of socialism—[they] sacrificed to fascism... the interests of their own people." (G. Dimitroff, *After Munich*, p. 7.)

21.

Q. How can we speak of imperialist countries such as Great Britain and France as non-aggressor countries?

A. "At a time when particularly the fascist states... are openly striving for a new repartition of the world and a change in the frontiers of Europe, there is a tendency among a number of other countries to maintain the *status quo*. At the present time this tendency is represented on a world scale by the United States; in Europe primarily by France; the efforts of these two leading imperialist powers to maintain the *status quo* are supported by several smaller countries (the Little and Balkan Ententes, some of the Baltic states), whose independence is threatened by a new imperialist war." (*Resolutions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International*, pp. 41-42.)

Although Great Britain and France are not following actively aggressive war policies it must not be forgotten that the most reactionary sections of their ruling classes, which are controlling their governments, have a Munich policy of "appeasing" the fascist dictators, a course which leads directly to war. Munich has not brought peace, but a whole crop of outrageous fascist war aggressions, as the Communists all over the world said it would. The only guarantee of a true peace policy on the

part of England and France lies in constant pressure by the masses upon their governments and a struggle by these peoples to remove the reactionaries from power and to put their own representatives at the helm.

22.

Q. Isn't the policy of collective security dead since it has been betrayed so often by Chamberlain and others?

A. No. While undoubtedly the sell-out of Czechoslovakia, following so many other retreats of Chamberlain & Co. before the fascist dictators, has given fascism important military supplies and encouraged its insolence and aggressiveness, nevertheless, the democratic powers still retain an overwhelming superiority of potential strength. Moreover, their need to stand unitedly against the fascist bloc is more urgent now than ever. They face a case of either making a common stand or of being cut to pieces singly. But to finally guarantee the democratic peoples a firm policy of resistance to fascist aggression, they must drive the Chamberlains and Daladiers from control of their governments. In every situation, even while building anti-fascist blocs, such traitors will seize upon all opportunities to betray democracy and peace into the hands of native and foreign fascism.

Ever since Japan invaded Manchuria and got away with it, the cry has gone up that the policy of collective security is dead. Nevertheless, at each new fascist war outrage—the conquest of Ethiopia, the invasion of China, the intervention in Spain, the seizure of Austria, the partition of Czechoslovakia, the rape of Albania, the threat to Poland—the world demand of the democratic peoples for united resistance to the fascists grows greater and more insistent. And eventually, despite the repeated betrayals by reactionary political leaders, this collective security sentiment is bound to prevail and the democratic masses, including workers, farmers, middle classes and even sections of the capitalists, will array themselves against the forces of fascism and barbarism in a determined effort to restore the peace of the world.

Q. How do you explain the fact that reactionary capitalist writers and radio commentators so constantly play down the U.S.S.R. as a strong power and a factor for peace?

A. The answer is simple. If the advance of world fascism is to be facilitated, if Chamberlain's "appeasement" policy is to be put across, then it is necessary to sow pessimism among the democratic forces by shouting at the masses that the fascist powers are militarily vastly the stronger. Thus, as a justification for the Munich pact, we saw the reactionaries of the world (with Lindbergh playing an especially shameful part) putting afloat all sorts of fantastic tales of the gigantic military strength of Germany and the total unpreparedness of the democratic powers. A special angle of this defeatist propaganda is to spread a flood of lies against the Soviet Union to the effect that its army and airfleet have been sapped by the recent cleaning out of spies and wreckers, that it is contemplating an alliance with Hitler, etc. Capitalist liars, when enunciating such slanders, know quite well that the Soviet Union is the strongest military power in the world, that it is the most ardent defender of peace, that it is the most inveterate foe of fascism, and that it can be absolutely relied upon to stand firm in any united front of the democratic peoples to restrain the fascist aggressors and to defend world peace and democracy.

Q. Is there any real basis for cooperation between the socialist Soviet Union and the capitalist United States to restrain the fascist aggressors?

A. Most decidedly so. The American and Soviet peoples ardently desire peace; they have nothing to gain and everything to lose in the wholesale slaughter that the fascist war-makers are now preparing. Both peoples have urgent need to defend their popular liberties—in the Soviet Union, socialism, and in the United States, bourgeois democratic rights and national

interests—against the poisonous flood of fascist tyranny and violence now being set into motion by Germany, Italy and Japan. Both peoples are vitally interested in shielding world culture and civilization from the fascist barbarians.

The Russian and American peoples are traditionally friendly with each other, and now more than ever. This friendship is not hindered by any antagonisms between the two nations over questions of territories or markets. Moreover, the Soviet government has always been the great bulwark of world disarmament and peace, and the Roosevelt Administration is following a non-aggression policy of peace. Because the former is a socialist government and the latter a capitalist state is no reason whatever why they cannot and should not cooperate together loyally to preserve world peace. Those Leftists who pretend to be shocked at the idea that a socialist government should work with a capitalist government against fascist aggression should remember that the new and revolutionary American democracy, when it faced a war with Great Britain to establish its independence, showed the good sense and sound strategy to make an alliance with feudal France which was then big with the forces of progress.

The United States and Soviet governments not only should but must develop close working relations together to assure world peace. It is imperative that they form the heart of the international peace bloc. This is necessary not only because they are the two most powerful countries, but especially because they are the most firm advocates of peace. It is in the national interests of the United States to establish such close cooperation with the U.S.S.R. The present French and English governments, with the tory Chamberlains, Halifaxes, Daladiers and Bonnets at their heads, simply cannot be trusted to conduct a serious resistance against the fascist war-makers. On the contrary, we can be certain from the outset that these reactionaries will be ready at all times to betray democracy and peace into the hands of fascism. Their treachery can only be defeated by the pressure of the masses in England and France, and by the center of gravity of the international peace

front of nations resting between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

Hitler and Mussolini are very much opposed to peace cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union, and so are the Coughlins, Hearst, du Ponts, Girdlers, Fords, Hoovers and other reactionaries (plus their Trotskyite-Lovestoneite stooges) in this country. And all for the same reason—that they want the forces of fascism to prevail over those of peace and democracy. But in spite of these reactionaries, American-Soviet peace cooperation is rapidly coming into being. History categorically demands it, and more and more the great peoples of the United States and the Soviet Union and their governments are drawing closer together in common cause against the fascist enemies of humanity and civilization.

25.

Q. Should the "have-not" fascist countries be given colonies to appease them?

A. First of all, one walks into the fascist trap in considering the fascist powers as "have-not" nations seeking merely to get sufficient resources to live by. In reality they are super-militant imperialist capitalist powers insatiably trying to gobble up all they can of the world. The absurdity of "have-not" classification is shown by the fact that Japan, although it has seized about half of China, still calls itself a "have-not" nation.

"The granting of colonial concessions to the fascist powers would not even be a step of temporary appeasement towards peace, but would, on the contrary, hasten the advance to war. The appetite grows with eating. No sooner had Japan annexed Manchuria than it advanced into the rest of China. No sooner had Italy annexed Ethiopia than it began the attack on Spain. Each colonial gain would strengthen the war resources of the fascist powers, give them additional raw materials for war, colonial peoples to conscript, and strategic bases." (*Statement of the Communist Party of Great Britain.*)

"It is . . . not true that the cause of peace will gain from an attempt to raise at present the question of redistributing

the sources of raw material, the colonies and mandate territories, as the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders want to do. In reality, this is done with the aim of distracting the attention of the masses from a definite struggle against the warmongers. On the other hand, such proposals conceal the desire to give colonies to German fascism, which is bound to strengthen the military position of German fascism still more. It is no business of the proletariat to advocate any particular division of colonies and mandates among the imperialists. Its task is to support the struggle of the colonial peoples for their interests and their rights and their final liberation from the imperialist yoke." (G. Dimitroff, *The United Struggle for Peace*, p. 17.)

26.

Q. It is argued that the war of 1914-18 was fought "to make the world safe for democracy" yet it produced fascism, and that, therefore, the present-day collective security program must also lead to war and further fascism—is this true?

A. First, the World War of 1914-18 was not fought by the "Allied" governments to make the world safe for democracy, despite Wilson's famous slogan. It was a struggle between rival groups of imperialist capitalist powers for mastery and redivision of the world. Both sets of governments were on the offensive and both were more or less equally responsible for the war. Neither group, more than the other, was the friend or champion of democracy. Democracy was not on their agenda in the war.

Second, it is incorrect to state that the war produced fascism. Fascism grew directly out of the general crisis of capitalism. What actually happened in the war was that the great masses of the people, outraged by the slaughter and by capitalist exploitation, seized upon the situation created by the war and developed, in spite of the wishes of their capitalist governments and their Social-Democratic leaders who had dragged them into the war, the greatest outburst of democratic and revolutionary struggle in the whole history of capitalism. This

ranged from the rapid growth of trade unions, Socialist Parties and social legislation in England, France, the United States, etc., to revolutions in Germany, Austria and Russia. Fascism, the product of capitalist decay, came only after the reformist Social-Democrats of Italy, Austria and Germany had, by a whole cycle of betrayal, stifled the socialist revolution in their countries and put the obsolete capitalist system back on its feet again.

Third, the present-day situation is quite different from that of 1914-18. Today democracy most decidedly is on the agenda of the developing world situation. The fascist powers, violently on the offensive, are threatening the liberties and independence of all peoples. The only hope of stopping their war attacks is through the policy of concerted action by the democratic countries in defense of peace and popular freedom. Hence the question of democracy is the very heart of the present developing world war. In the great struggle of 1914-18 the huge outburst of democratic mass spirit came towards the conclusion of war, but in today's situation the mass upsurge begins at the outset. No sooner is a country sucked into the war by fascist aggression than it immediately begins an expansion of its democratic institutions, as we see graphically illustrated in the cases of Spain and China. Whether the present world struggle breaks into world war or assumes less violent forms, the people's fight remains a struggle for democracy and against fascist tyranny. (See article by William Z. Foster, "Isolationist Defeatism," in *The Communist*, January, 1939.)

27.

Q. *Isn't Roosevelt's policy regarding the Open Door in China dictated by the interests of American imperialism?*

A. "We are currently being presented with the most dramatic exposition of the sharp cleavage between imperialist and national interests, on the part of Great Britain and France [Munich]. . . . We see the beginnings of the same phenomenon

in the United States, where spokesmen of the most hard-boiled imperialist interests have become the champions of surrender of America's traditional policies of the 'Open Door' in the Far East and the 'Monroe Doctrine' in the Americas.

"Both the Monroe Doctrine and the Open Door originated in the resistance of American democracy to the monopolistic and aggressive policies of the older imperialist powers; during the twentieth century they were taken over and transformed into instruments of a matured American imperialism; in the present world situation we witness their transformation again, a process going on under our eyes, into instruments of democratic defense against the aggressions of world fascism." (Earl Browder, "Concerning American Revolutionary Traditions," *The Communist*, December, 1938.)

28.

Q. What, if anything, is the difference between the Monroe Doctrine and the Good Neighbor policy in Latin America, and what is the attitude of the Communist Party on this question?

A. The Monroe Doctrine, as originally formulated by President Monroe, undertook to unite the newly-formed republics of North, Central and South America, with the United States in the lead, against the colonizing attempts of reactionary European powers. It was a phase of the great democratic revolution which swept this hemisphere from end to end. But with the eventual growth of imperialism in the United States the Monroe Doctrine was gradually transformed into an instrument for subjugating and exploiting the Latin American peoples and repeatedly American troops were sent into these countries to dominate them. By means of the Monroe Doctrine American imperialism sought to fence in the whole hemisphere as its own special field of control.

The Good Neighbor policy of Roosevelt is the expression in Latin America of the New Deal and an effort to give to the U.S. policy a more democratic content. Although it by

no means abolishes American imperialism, it nevertheless departs from the brutal Hoover-Coolidge practices under the Monroe Doctrine, so cordially hated by the Latin American peoples. Instead of coercing these nations as actual or potential dependencies of the United States, the Good Neighbor policy proposes to unite them, on the basis of democracy and national independence, into a self-defensive cooperation to resist the assaults of fascist Germany, Italy and Japan. The Communist Party in general supports the Good Neighbor policy, with the provision that it give a clear recognition of the democratic rights and national independence of the Latin American nations and put a strong curb upon the activities of American imperialist corporations in these countries.

29.

Q. Why doesn't the Communist Party support the Ludlow Amendment to provide for a popular referendum before the United States government can declare war?

A. The Ludlow Amendment, if enacted, would not give the American people protection against war. On the contrary, it would lull them into a false sense of security that would be a standing invitation to fascist dictators to attack them. With the present progressive administration in power, such an amendment would be unnecessary and a handicap in cooperating with other democratic peoples in curbing the warlike fascist powers, who make wars without declaring them. And with a reactionary administration in control, it would offer no safeguard, because such an administration, if determined upon war, could readily bring it about despite any popular referendum. By some incident or other, the war could easily be made to seem purely defensive and thus outside the terms of the proposed Ludlow Amendment. The futility of such an amendment was well illustrated by the ease with which Wilson brought the United States into the World War, although only a few months before he had been elected on the peace slogan "He kept us out of war."

Q. Why does the Communist Party oppose the present Neutrality Act?

A. Because the act is in no sense "neutral," but works definitely to the advantage of the fascist aggressors and to the detriment of their victims. Toward Spain its application resulted in the legally elected, democratic government being denied its international right to buy munitions, while the rebel fascist Franco government was furnished a steady supply of war materials from Germany and Italy, largely bought by these countries in the United States. Toward China the Neutrality Act has resulted in this country furnishing Japan huge supplies of munitions, while China, suffering from Japan's outrageous invasion, remains largely cut off.

It is necessary, therefore, that the Neutrality Act be fundamentally changed or repealed. The law should distinguish between aggressor governments and their victims. This means that the credits, markets and raw materials of the United States should be closed to the fascist treaty-breakers and war-makers and opened to the nations attacked by these mass butchers and international outlaws. Teeth must be put in President Roosevelt's famous slogan, "Quarantine the Aggressors." Such a course is not only in accord with this country's best democratic traditions, but is also absolutely necessary to preserve the peace, welfare and democratic liberties of the American people.

Q. Would the Communist Party support the United States government in a war provoked by the fascist powers?

A. The general policy of the Communist Party toward a fascist war against the United States is expressed in the following quotation:

"All of our proposals are directed toward creating such a relation of forces as to prevent war and to rectify wrongs without resort to war. If, in spite of all our efforts to this end, war between Japan and the United States arises out of the present world situation, it is our firm conviction that the cause of

progress and democracy everywhere would demand the defeat of Japan. We would support the American government in such a war to the extent that its policies and methods contributed toward the national independence of China, and the protection of democracy and progressive policies at home and abroad. We reject the slogan of 'defeating our own government' as the main orientation in the present world situation, in which the American government is clearly not aggressive nor moving to subject other peoples." (Earl Browder, *Concerted Action or Isolation*, p. 62.)

The same argumentation applies with regard to fascist Germany and Italy.

32.

Q. *What is the attitude of the Communists toward the big navy program and the rearmament of the United States generally?*

A. "Prior to the Munich Pact, we declared that a correct peace policy by the United States, which would organize the overwhelmingly preponderant peace forces of the world, could quickly halt and remove the menace of fascist aggression without the necessity of a big armaments program for our country. We opposed the Naval Bill on those grounds, and because it became a substitute for a correct peace policy, and an obstacle to the adoption of the correct policy. Now, the failure of the United States to adopt and follow energetically the policy we proposed has borne its fruits in the Munich Pact. Munich enormously increased the fascist menace and brought it to the American continents in an immediate sense.

"This argument on armament that was valid before Munich loses its force afterward. Munich is an accomplished fact, with all its awful consequences. We can no longer dismiss the armaments question with the old answer. We cannot deny the possibility, even the probability, that only American arms can preserve the Americas from conquest by the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo alliance. The Munich betrayal shattered not only the possibility that relatively unarmed United States, by material and moral aid, could organize the rest of the peace-loving

world to halt the fascist offensive, but also destroyed at one **blow the sheltered position of the Americas.** The Atlantic Ocean is **transformed** from a barrier to a broad highroad for the aggressor powers. The Pacific may soon be the same.

“An unarmed people stands today as helpless victims for fascist conquest.

“A fascist world can be prevented only, in the words of the Manifesto of the Communist International on November 7, *‘with the aid of such governments which are ready to use armed force in the defense of the liberty and independence of their peoples.’* Only on this basis *‘it will be possible for a firm front of the peoples to arise which will compel the fascist aggressors to respect frontiers and keep the peace.’*

“It will be necessary to clear away all remnants of the pacifist rubbish of opposing war by surrender to the war-makers. Because for so many years the revolutionary working class consistently opposed, and correctly so, all appropriations for armaments and military establishments of all sorts, we inevitably were associated with the pacifist elements in some common actions, the peace-at-any-price individuals and groups who have today become Hitler’s best allies. Some of their ideas seeped into and poisoned small circles of the labor movement for a time. The time has come to clear away all remnants of this degenerate influence. . . .

“Neither can we, however, meet the new situation with a simple affirmative. No matter how much the situation has changed, it still remains true—more true than ever—that armaments are no substitute for a positive peace policy, for a correct approach and active role in organizing the world against the war-makers and therefore for peace. The question is not: are we for armaments, yes or no; it is the more complicated question, ‘Armaments, for what?’ If it is for the defense of the liberty and independence of our own and other peoples, yes, emphatically yes! But the people must learn to make its ‘Yes’ a power for securing guarantees that the armaments will be for that purpose and for no other.” (Earl Browder, *Social and National Security*, pp. 37-38, 40.)

Q. What is the position of the Communist Party regarding the R.O.T.C., the National Guard and the C.C.C.?

A. The Communists are opposed to the spirit of militarism that glorifies war and trains the youth for the service of reaction. We are not, however, opposed in principle to the training of youth to defend democracy and peace and the national independence of our country. It is for these reasons that we make every effort to win greater democracy within the R.O.T.C. and the National Guard, to abolish their reactionary and compulsory features. We resolutely oppose the use of the armed forces during strikes and we do whatever possible to improve the wage, living, discipline, education and promotional conditions of the rank and file in all branches of the armed services. We do not subscribe to the practice of non-participation in these services, as this definitely tends to surrender them to the reactionaries.

Regarding the C.C.C., the Communist Party Election Platform of 1938 demands:

“Expand the C.C.C. program under civilian administration, with the inclusion of a democratic program of education and vocational training.

“Coordinate the National Youth Administration and C.C.C. and other youth aid programs under a single youth administration as proposed by the President’s Advisory Committee on Education.”

Q. In the present world situation, what is the application of Lenin’s slogan of transforming the imperialist war into civil war against the capitalist system?

A. “The Bolsheviks held that there are two kinds of war:

“(a) *Just wars*, wars that are not wars of conquest but wars of liberation, waged to defend the people from foreign attack and from attempts to enslave them, or to liberate the people from capitalist slavery, or, lastly, to liberate colonies and dependent countries from the yoke of imperialism; and

“(b) *Unjust* wars, wars of conquest, waged to conquer and enslave foreign countries and foreign nations.

“Wars of the first kind the Bolsheviks supported. As to wars of the second kind, the Bolsheviks maintained that a resolute struggle must be waged against them to the point of revolution and the overthrow of one’s own imperialist government.” (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, pp. 167-168.)

According to this analysis, which was formulated by Lenin, the World War of 1914-18 was an *unjust* war. Both groups of powers were equally aggressors, equally war incendiaries, and the war-making governments on both sides had to be resolutely fought against by all the power of the masses. But, from the standpoint of the people, a defensive war today against fascist aggression would be a *just* war and must be supported. During such a war, the people’s fight for freedom would have to be carried on two-sidedly—to preserve and extend democracy in the capitalist democracies (against the reactionary Chamberlains, Hoovers, etc.) and to establish democracy in the fascist countries. In the fascist countries, in accordance with Lenin’s slogan, the struggle for democracy would necessarily be a struggle against the war, for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorships, and for the establishment of a new democratic system—whether socialist or bourgeois, the relationship of class forces would determine.

35.

Q. *If, as many assert, a world war will produce a new series of proletarian revolutions, why, then, should not Communists favor the launching of such a war?*

A. “The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International most determinedly repudiates the slanderous contention that Communists desire war, expecting it to bring revolution. The leading role of the Communist Parties of all countries in the struggle for the preservation of peace, for the

triumph of the peace policy of the Soviet Union, proves that the Communists are striving with all their might to obstruct the preparations for and the unleashing of a new war." (*Resolutions*, Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, p. 47.)

The three great imperialist wars of France and Germany in 1871, Russia and Japan in 1905, and the World War of 1914, all produced revolutions, and another world war would probably also provoke serious breaks in the capitalist system. But the masses resolutely oppose the bloody path of imperialist slaughter. Conscious of their great numerical superiority, aware of their indispensable and strategic role in production, and awakening to the realization that they are the bearers of a higher order of civilization, the masses always naturally struggle for democracy and peace to achieve their cause. Now, above all, the people need peace to avert the frightful holocaust of modern war, to protect their democratic institutions and, in the case of the U.S.S.R., to build socialism.

The fight for peace is not a negative, passive policy; it is highly constructive and it makes directly toward socialism. Says Dimitroff:

"In present conditions . . . to maintain peace is a fight against *fascism*, a fight that is essentially *revolutionary*.

"The maintenance of peace constitutes a mortal danger for fascism, for, by increasing its internal difficulties, it leads to the undermining of the fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The maintenance of peace helps the forces of the proletariat, the forces of revolution to grow, helps to overcome the split in the ranks of the working class movement. It helps the proletariat to become the leading class in the struggle of all the toilers against capitalism. It undermines the foundations of the capitalist system and hastens the victory of socialism." (*The United Struggle for Peace*, pp. 20-21.)

If despite all efforts to prevent a world war such a war should occur, then the struggle of the masses to prevent it will be the best guarantee for the victory of the people as a result of the war.

CHAPTER III
ECONOMIC CRISES

36.

Q. *What is meant by the terms "cyclical crisis" and "general crisis" of capitalism?*

A. Cyclical crises occur periodically, every seven to ten years, when capitalism suffers a breakdown in its economy. These recurrent collapses are crises of overproduction and they are caused by the contradiction between the social character of production and the private ownership of the industries, which produces the disparity between the high productive power of the toilers and the low buying power of their wages, salaries and farm prices. Added to this factor is the anarchy, or planlessness, of capitalist production. The result is the classical paradox of capitalism—poverty amidst plenty, hungry people and overstocked warehouses. Normally, cyclical crises pass through several stages—crisis, depression, recovery and boom, the overproduction which causes the crises being temporarily overcome by the closing down of factories, the wasting of surplus commodities, the destruction of productive forces and the extension of the capitalist world markets. Historically, the capitalist system in all countries has passed through many such cyclical crises, and it is always in one phase or another of them. With the development of the general crisis of capitalism, however, the cyclical crises tend to become more frequent, deeper, more prolonged and more difficult to overcome.

The general crisis of capitalism set in with the outbreak of the World War in 1914. World capitalism had reached the highest stage of its development—of monopoly control by finance capitalism, of the imperialist division of the world. The contradictions of capitalism—the gulf between the producing and purchasing power of the masses, the anarchy of

production, the struggles between capital and labor, the conflicts between the various imperialist powers for colonies and markets—reached the exploding point and precipitated the World War for the redivision of the globe. This hastened the decay of capitalism on a world scale and deepened the general crisis of capitalism. As a result, in tsarist Russia the working class, in alliance with the peasantry and under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin and Stalin, wrested one-sixth of the earth from the power of capitalism and has established socialism.

Capitalism on a world scale sank deeper into decline. This expresses itself economically in a general crisis, the central feature of which is a vast productive capacity in excess of available markets, bringing about a chronic crisis of agriculture, more severe and frequent crises in industry, permanent mass unemployment, the disruption of the world capitalist markets, finances and exchange systems, and finally capitalism finds itself unable to solve the cyclical crises in the normal way with a return to new prosperity periods. Thus, as Stalin has pointed out, "the new crisis [beginning in 1937—*W. Z. F.*] did not begin after an industrial boom, as was the case in 1929, but after a depression and a certain revival, which, however, did not develop into a boom. This means that the present crisis will be more severe and more difficult to cope with than the previous crisis." (Joseph Stalin, *From Socialism to Communism in the Soviet Union*, p. 6.)

Today, the most reactionary finance capitalists are seeking a way out of capitalism's more and more severe economic crisis by means of fascist dictatorships and wars of conquest, thereby still further accentuating the general crisis of the whole capitalist system and preparing a new explosion of wars and revolutions far greater than that which began in 1914.

Q. What is the meaning of the phrase "the sit-down strike of big capital"?

A. The sit-down strike of big capital is economic sabotage carried on by Wall Street as part of its general campaign against New Deal reforms and the labor and progressive movements. The big capitalists make an already bad economic situation worse by refusals to rehabilitate their industries (example, railroads), by curtailing production and causing needless mass layoffs, by slashing wages and otherwise reducing the purchasing power of the masses, by stubbornly resisting the relief, public-work and other financial measures of the government designed to increase the purchasing power of the masses and to improve the economic situation. This sit-down strike is reactionary economic war against democracy and progress, and the big bankers and industrialists brazenly boast of it. Thus (to cite only one of many examples), the Public Utility Trust (Nov., 1938) coolly informed President Roosevelt that it has four billion dollars on ice, which it refuses to use for more plants and other investments unless the New Deal is scrapped, even if this endangers national defense.

"The monopolies carry on their sabotage because they want (1) to break the New Deal, to destroy Roosevelt, to stimulate further the offensive of reaction and make room for fascism in this country. Big business especially seeks to accomplish part of these objectives by terrorizing . . . Congress and preventing it from carrying through the program outlined by Roosevelt as well as the demands made by labor and by the farmers. Also, in this way to organize the big reactionary offensive for the Presidential elections of 1940; (2) to terrorize labor, to demoralize it, to stem the unionization of the workers and to stop the improvement of their conditions; (3) to confront the crystallizing unity of the trade union movement . . . with a heavy capitalist offensive in order to stop the further advance of labor . . . ; (4) to alienate the farmers and middle classes from labor by blaming labor for the recession created

by monopoly sabotage, and in this way obstruct the further advance and consolidation of the forces of the People's Front." (Alex Bittelman.)

38.

Q. Is there any precedent in American or European history for the sit-down strike of big capital?

A. Most assuredly. Great capitalists everywhere habitually use their economic as well as their political power in order to exploit and oppress the toiling masses. That they are willing to forego part of their profits temporarily in order to win larger objectives is shown by every strike. In many elections in this country they have sought to terrorize voters by shutting down their factories or threatening to do so. Likewise also, the oil trusts and other big combinations have frequently deliberately cut prices below cost and "lost" money temporarily in order to drive all competitors from a particular field, and then later on they have recouped many times their "losses" by maintaining monopoly prices. Today the great trusts, which made five billion dollars in 1937, could very well stand one or two lean years in carrying out their plot to destroy public confidence in the New Deal and the Roosevelt Administration and to elect a reactionary President and government in 1940.

As the general crisis of capitalism, with the sharpening of the class struggle, deepens and the workers, farmers and middle classes tend increasingly to set up labor, People's Front and Socialist governments in various countries, the great capitalists everywhere have more and more recourse to the use of the sit-down strike, which they are now employing so brazenly against the Roosevelt government. By such methods they seek to throw the given country into economic paralysis, to impoverish and confuse the masses, to discredit the progressive government as responsible for the economic breakdown, to make financially impossible its social reforms, and to drive the bewildered country into the arms of fascist reaction. The first

Labor Government of Great Britain was forced out of power by such methods and the People's Front of France had to confront organized capitalist economic sabotage from its inception. Also, at the time of the developing Russian Revolution in 1917 the capitalists tried in vain to head off and demoralize the growing movement for socialism by deliberately curtailing production through shutting down their plants and by generally seeking to precipitate economic chaos.

39.

Q. Can "pump-priming" and "make-work" projects of the New Deal type solve the recurrent economic crises?

A. No, but they can materially lessen their severity for the masses. The capitalists, faced by shrinking home and foreign markets, cannot find fields for adequate capital investment and this stalls the whole capitalist productive system, forcing shut-downs of industry, mass unemployment, etc. Society becomes gripped in a sort of vise which literally strangles it. This vise, basically economic, becomes political because of the dictatorial methods employed by the capitalists to compel the masses to accept the lower living standards produced by their shrinking economic system. All this is made worse by the deliberate refusal of big capital, in its war against the New Deal, to invest its capital in such fields—the rehabilitation of industry, etc.—as are imperatively demanding capital.

The failure (refusal) of the capitalists to invest sufficient capital to keep the wheels of industry turning renders it absolutely indispensable that the government make the necessary capital investments to put the people to work. This the Roosevelt government is doing to a certain extent through the W.P.A. and P.W.A. These measures have definitely alleviated the misery of the masses. But there still remain some 11,000,000 workers for whom the bankrupt capitalist industrial system cannot find employment.

In order to combat the spreading economic paralysis of the capitalist system and the sabotage of big capital it is im-

perative not only to greatly increase government work projects and especially to develop a great federal housing project, but also for the people to conquer the main financial and industrial strongholds of the economic royalists through nationalization (government ownership) of the banks, railroads and munitions industries. With these vital economic forces in the hands of an active progressive government real progress could be made at breaking the capitalist sit-down strike. The problem of industrial crisis will never be finally solved, however, until the people in their majority decide for socialism; that is, for the ending of capitalism, the establishment of socialism and the complete abolition of the exploitation of the toiling masses.

The fight of the progressive forces against reaction, although primarily political, has a fundamental economic base. Therefore, while the progressives struggle against the manifold repressive fascist political measures of the great capitalists—suppression of civil rights, destruction of popular mass organizations, red-baiting, anti-Semitism, etc.—they must at the same time smash through the shrinking economic iron band with which capitalism is stifling the life of society. To break this capitalist sit-down strike is no less a life-and-death question than to defeat reaction on the political field. Unless the progressives conduct a militant struggle in support of their economic demands and give the masses a hopeful perspective, then there is the danger that large if not decisive numbers of these masses will, in their desperation, harken to the demagogy of fascist reaction and follow its fatal leadership.

40.

Q. Can such projects as the Townsend Plan and the \$30-every-Thursday California pension plan solve the economic depression and put everybody back to work?

A. These well-known plans, while expressing legitimate mass aspirations and stimulating the important struggle for old-age pensions, cannot cure the sick capitalist economic system. Be-

sides their common weakness of placing the financial burden for the old-age pensions upon the already impoverished masses through sales and transactions taxes and monetary inflation, instead of upon the rich through heavily taxing their wealth and income, these two plans also ignore the necessity for a broad, many-sided political struggle by the masses. They fail to recognize the decisive fact that unless the capitalists, who own the great industries, natural resources, and means of publicity of the country, are faced by an active organized resistance on the whole economic and political front, on questions of wages, prices, taxes, etc., they will be able largely, if not wholly, to cancel out the gains made by the masses through such old-age pensions as these plans propose. The demand for old-age pensions is an extremely important one, but it cannot serve as a substitute for the broad program of present-day demands of the democratic front, much less that of an eventual socialism. The Communist Party understands the great importance of the old-age pension movements and strives to influence them toward taking their proper place, with practical programs, in the growing democratic front.

41.

Q. Why do Communists fight against money reform? Doesn't this play into the hands of the international bankers?

A. The Communist Party does not fight against genuine "money reform." On the contrary, it proposes many far-reaching financial reforms that would cut deeply into the power and profits of the great bankers and redound to the benefit of the toiling masses. Accordingly, the Communist Party Election Platform of 1938 demanded:

"Ensure the right of small business, farmers, labor and cooperative organizations to have access to credit and banking facilities on equal terms with the monopolists. Take the credit system out of Wall Street control. Nationalize the entire banking system. Dissolve all holding companies and investment trusts so as to end their frauds upon small investors. Establish

stricter federal regulation of the insurance companies and of the stock exchange so as to curb speculation and manipulation."

The Communist Party does oppose, however, pseudo money reform panaceas which profess to solve all the people's ills by simply printing great amounts of paper money. Typical of these is Father Coughlin's plan of turning out ten billions of paper currency. Such inflation schemes, by sky-rocketing prices, operate against the interest of the workers, farmers and small business people. In the long run the only elements who profit from them are the debtor sections of the capitalists and those that have their major investments in stocks and commodities and therefore will benefit from a rise in prices.

42.

Q. Are high taxes on the rich in any way responsible for economic crises, as the reactionaries charge?

A. No. The reactionaries' argument has no economic truth in it. Increased taxes on the rich tend to lessen the effects of economic crises, not to deepen them. Big business uses its favorite contention against "high" taxes to feather its own nest. The economic royalists' cry of "high" taxes is designed to rally the small business people and farmers against Roosevelt and the New Deal.

Higher taxes on the rich and the trusts and less direct and indirect taxes on the property and on the articles consumed by the masses mean increasing the purchasing power of the unemployed, the toiling farmers and the middle classes. By giving more relief, by expanding W.P.A. and P.W.A., the economic situation can be definitely improved. A sharply graduated income tax on the higher brackets which will hit the "sixty wealthy families" will help direct the nation toward recovery. Higher income taxes, increases on capital gains and surplus profits, will make possible the financing of an adequate relief and public works program and a system of social insurance which will protect the people from actual want. Lower

taxes on the rich will further unbalance the budget and place the burden of the bad economic situation upon the people, who cannot bear it. By making the rich pay high taxes the volume of monopoly profits can be cut down and the general welfare and purchasing power of the mass of the population can be increased.

43.

Q. What is there to the common contention of reactionaries that high wages are the cause of economic crises?

A. Nothing. It is a false argument used by spokesmen for Wall Street as an excuse for cutting wages and maintaining and increasing profits. Contrary to it, one of the main reasons for the economic slump of 1937 was precisely that the real wages of the workers—what they can actually purchase with their pay—did not keep up with the rise in the cost of living. Higher wages have a lessening effect upon the crisis by increasing the purchasing power of the masses and enabling them to buy back a larger portion of what they have produced.

The industrialists deliberately mislead the workers when they claim that higher wages cause curtailment of production and the shutting down of factories. The big trusts increased the prices of their products far more than the small raises they were forced to give the workers. The steel trust, for example, after giving a small raise to its workers in 1937, boosted the price of steel by a margin ten times as much as the wage increase. Not high wages, but exorbitant monopoly prices were one of the main factors which brought on the crisis. High wages expand the market for commodities and make for industrial activity; low wages and high monopoly prices sharply reduce consumer demand and make for economic crises.

Q. Is the Communist Party in favor of subsidizing the railroads?

A. Decidedly not. The chief trouble with the railroads is that they are enormously overcapitalized, due to shameless financial juggling. Their overcapitalization is shown by the fact that while the total face value of all railroad securities is about twenty-five billion dollars their actual market value is but ten billion. The financial crisis of the railroads arises because the railroad companies are trying to force the workers, the shippers, the traveling public and the government to pay them top rates of profit on their oceans of watered securities.

The only way to meet this situation effectively is through the nationalization (government ownership) of the railroads. Nationalization, properly carried through, would cut the swollen railroad capitalization about in half, and also would reduce the interest rates from the present average of 6 per cent to the regular government bond rate of 2 or 3 per cent. This would enable the railroads, even with their present traffic and income, to improve the roads and service, to lower passenger and freight rates and to better their workers' conditions.

In the meantime, the government should develop a broad program to rehabilitate the railroads by modernizing their rolling stock, electrification, elimination of grade crossings, etc. This program should be financed by government loans and company appropriations. Loans made to the railroads should be utilized as first steps toward government ownership, (a) by constituting them as first liens on the railroad properties; (b) by using them to improve the roads and to provide work for the workers, not to pay dividends for stockholders; (c) by putting Interstate Commerce Commission representatives on the railroads' boards of directors and by generally tightening up the government control of the railroads and all other forms of commercial transportation.

Q. *How does the Communist Party fight the monopolies?*

A. "1. The cost of government, including the Works, Relief, and Social Security Programs, and all other labor and social legislation, shall be financed, and the budget balanced, by taxing the profits of the economic royalists. All tax legislation must be based on ability to pay. The main source of government revenue must be derived from a sharply graduated tax on all individual incomes over \$5,000 per year and all corporate incomes over \$25,000 per year; sharp increases in the taxation of capital gains, large gifts and inheritances, and undivided corporate profits.

"2. Repeal all sales taxes. Abolish tax exempt securities. End tax evasions by the rich and trusts. Enact the Patman Chain Store Tax Bill with amendments to extend it to all chain enterprises.

"3. Dissolve the bread and milk trusts. Establish strict government regulation of the meat packers to put an end to their robbery of farmers and consumers.

"4. Repeal the Miller-Tydings price-fixing act and institute prompt and vigorous prosecution of all price-fixing by the monopolists.

"5. Nationalize the railroad system of the country, which has proved its inability to operate under private ownership. Nationalize the munitions industry and take it out of the hands of the war-makers.

"6. Ensure the right of small business, farmers, labor and cooperative organizations to have access to credit and banking facilities on equal terms with the monopolists. Take the credit system out of Wall Street control. Nationalize the entire banking system. Dissolve all holding companies and investment trusts so as to end their frauds upon small investors. Establish stricter federal regulation of the insurance companies and of the stock exchange so as to curb speculation and manipulation.

"7. Guarantee that Reconstruction Finance Corporation

appropriations shall be expended primarily for low interest loans to small business people and to consumer and bona fide farm cooperatives. Prohibit government loans and subsidies to the large banks, to the railway bondholders and to those steamship companies and employers who violate the Wagner Act and other labor legislation." (*Communist Party Election Platform, 1938*, pp. 10-11.)

The foregoing are the immediate Communist proposals regarding the monopolies. Ultimately, the Party proposes, under socialism, that all the monopolies and trusts be socialized and operated directly for the benefit of all the people, and not, as now, for the profit of their capitalist owners.

46.

Q. *What is the Communist Party's position on crop control and cost of production for the farmers?*

A. "We flatly oppose acreage reduction while millions of people starve for want of food, but until the progressive movement can convince the New Deal to drop this feature of the A.A.A. we must also demand that acreage reduction be enforced only on large farms, and not on the family-sized farms. We oppose compulsory marketing quotas and penalties on crops sold in excess of quotas, especially on small farms. We propose limitation of benefit payments to a maximum of \$5,000 to one person or farm. We propose a large increase in soil conservation work on family-sized farms and increased payments for this work, because it is on family-sized farms that erosion and declining fertility have caused greatest damage. We propose stricter control of prices, to peg farm prices at the average cost-of-production level through an ever-normal granary and crop loan program to regulate marketing, with provisions to protect consumers from retaliation by the trusts." (Jerry Coleman, "Farmers Advance in the Movement for the People's Front," *The Communist*, Feb., 1938, p. 176.)

Q. How do Communists raise the demand for the right to work?

A. The Communists support the demand of organized labor for the right to work. Practically, this involves the government taking responsibility, when private industry cannot or refuses to provide jobs, to guarantee adequate relief and jobs for workers. This is why the Communists propose that, for instance, the government should maintain and extend W.P.A. and should launch a huge program of socially-needed public works, which will give employment to all able-bodied workers at trade union wages and working conditions, and will wipe out such public sorespots as slums and sub-standard living conditions in the rural areas. This is why the Communists further propose the immediate enactment of federal legislation providing for a five-day week, six-hour day in all industries and the establishment of a minimum annual wage guaranteeing an American standard of living. Similarly the Communists call for suitable amendments to the Social Security Act, which will create a unified national system of social insurance covering such hazards as unemployment, old age, maternity and sickness.

Q. What is the Communist stand regarding employers' share-the-work policies?

A. The Communist Party is opposed to employers' share-the-work plans, which in reality mean sharing the misery among the workers. Adequate relief and public works jobs should be furnished the unemployed. However, in certain seasonal industries, like the needle trades, the trade unions have developed a method called "equal division of work," a plan for sharing all available work during the slow seasons. This is an important demand and is supported by the Communists, because the peculiarities of these industries make equalization of work a practical necessity. Likewise, in the maritime industry,

the Communists support the proposals of the unions of the seamen and longshoremen for establishing a rotation system of employment under the supervision and control of the unions themselves.

49.

Q. How would the Communists reorganize industry to avoid industrial crises and unemployment?

A. Crises and unemployment are the inevitable by-products of capitalism, inherent within the system itself. Only through the socialist reorganization of society, through the people taking over the mines, mills and all other means of production and distribution will it be possible finally to eliminate these tragedies of the producing millions. This truth receives practical demonstration in the Soviet Union, where the workers and farmers own and operate all industry for their own benefit and not for the profit of a few wealthy parasites, and where, in consequence, there are no crises and no unemployment. Socialist planned economy, directed in the interests of the people by a workers' and farmers' government, is the only real and fundamental solution for capitalist crises.

Within the framework of capitalism, however, a progressive government based on the democratic front can alleviate many of the worst effects of capitalist crises through policies of adequate relief, extensive public works, minimum wage and hour laws, government ownership of key industries, aid to the farmers and small businessmen, regulation of monopoly prices, shifting of the tax burden onto the rich, etc.

50.

Q. What is the relation between economic crises and the war danger?

A. When a capitalist industrial country gets into a bad economic situation it inevitably intensifies its struggle to capture international markets which means today the redivision of the world by armed struggle, in order to find an outlet for the

mass of otherwise unsalable commodities that are paralyzing its industrial system. This drive for international markets brings the imperialist power in question into acute competition with other capitalist governments, all of which are pushed on by the same inexorable demand for markets. These bitter trade conflicts, added to the struggle for raw material supplies, strategic positions, etc., are among the most basic causes of modern warfare. All these conflicts become sharper and more prolific war breeders with the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism. In the fascist countries—Germany, Japan, Italy—the capitalist crisis is most acute, and it is precisely these powers that are the most warlike.

51.

Q. Does the birth of fascist dictatorships indicate that capitalism is growing stronger?

A. On the contrary, the development of fascism is a most definite expression of the decay of the capitalist system. It is the desperate effort of an obsolete social system to prolong its existence. While the rise to power of Hitler and Mussolini represents victories for the capitalists over the workers, caused by the surrender policies of the reformist Second International, behind it all exists a fundamental weakening of capitalism itself. In its early stages of growth capitalism was able to tolerate a measure of democracy in its domestic policies and of peace in its international relations; but now, driven on by its deepening general crisis, which is most marked in the fascist countries, it is increasingly forced to turn to methods of terrorism, demagoguery and war in order to perpetuate itself. Stalin stated the situation clearly at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as follows:

“. . . the victory of fascism in Germany must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class and as a result of the betrayal of the working class by Social-Democracy, which paved the way for fascism; it must also be regarded as a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, as a symptom

of the fact that the bourgeoisie is already unable to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, and as a consequence, is compelled in its home policy to resort to terroristic methods of administration—it must be taken as a symptom of the fact that it is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy, as a consequence of which it is compelled to resort to a policy of war.” (*Socialism Victorious*, pp. 11-12.)

The victories of German and Italian fascism, scored over weaker countries, are temporary. Summed up, they have increased the industrial difficulties of the fascist powers, cut into their foreign trade, and brought the whole capitalist world to the brink of disaster.

52.

Q. *Can capitalism perpetually work its way out of crises?*

A. Capitalism cannot solve the general crisis of its world system, which constantly becomes more acute and makes for more frequent and devastating cyclical crises and war. Fascism has not solved this crisis; it has sharpened it up enormously, both economically and politically. Nevertheless, there can be no automatic collapse of capitalism. In his famous statement at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920 Lenin made this fact clear:

“There is no such thing as absolutely inextricable positions. The bourgeoisie behaves like an arrogant brigand who has lost his head; it commits blunder after blunder, thus making the position more acute and hastening its own doom. All this is true. But it cannot be ‘proved’ that it is absolutely impossible for it to lull a certain minority of the exploited with certain concessions, for it to suppress a certain movement, or uprising, of a certain section of the oppressed and exploited. To try to ‘prove’ beforehand that a position is ‘absolutely’ inextricable would be sheer pedantry, or playing with concepts and catchwords.” (*Selected Works*, Vol. X, p. 192.)

Capitalism will not dig its own grave, as Marx pointed out; that job the proletariat must do for it. Until finally the bourgeoisie faces a united, conscious and revolutionary working class, supported by the great mass of farmers and other toilers, it will manage to scrape along somehow and maintain its rule by chicanery, tyranny and violence, no matter how severe are the sufferings of the masses or how reactionary capitalism's effect may be upon society generally. This is to be seen all too clearly in the fascist countries. The sole means by which capitalist robbery, war and social degeneration can be checked is for the masses of toilers—workers, farmers, professionals, lower middle classes—to unite themselves solidly into a broad democratic front upon the basis of their burning economic, political and social demands; and the only way this exploitation, tyranny and brutality can be abolished is for these million masses, with the proletariat in the lead and the Communist Party at its head, finally to put an end to the capitalist system and to establish socialism.

CHAPTER IV

TRADE UNIONISM

53.

Q. What part do Communists play in the trade unions? What is meant by Communist trade union work?

A. Workers organize into trade unions primarily in order to win higher wages, shorter hours and better working conditions. The Communist Party, as the political party of the working class, always supports the trade unions in their struggles. The Communist Party insists that its members join the unions of their respective industries or trades, that they be the most active fighters for the interests of the workers, that they give their untiring efforts to building and strengthening the unions, that they always protect the unity of the trade unions. Our Party educates and organizes the trade union workers into a broad democratic front with the farmers and other toilers in support of their common cause.

But the Communists also look beyond these daily struggles. We believe that a fundamental reorganization of society—socialism—is the only final solution of the workers' problems—unemployment, poverty, war. Not all members of the trade unions accept this socialist viewpoint of the Communist Party, which is based on a scientific analysis of capitalism and on the experience of the workers' struggles the world over. Because of their broad outlook, the Communists are able in every immediate struggle to champion most effectively the interests of the workers. Due to their Marxist-Leninist training, Communists are practical organizers of the workers, know how to estimate the forces of the enemy, and understand what tactics to apply in order to achieve the aims for which all workers are ready to fight at a given time.

We Communists naturally consider it our right to advocate our opinions and win to our viewpoint the workers in the unions. This viewpoint strengthens the fight of the workers today and prepares them for understanding the need for socialism—which can only be brought into existence when the majority of the workers become convinced of its necessity through their own experience.

54.

Q. Is it true that Communists provoke strikes for the purpose of creating unrest among the workers?

A. It is not true. Comrade Earl Browder, at the Ninth Convention of the Communist Party, gave an effective answer to this slander against our Party, when he stated:

“When American workers go on strike, it is not because Communists are stirring up trouble, but because in those places the forces of big business are denying these workers the right to organize and bargain collectively and denying it by force and violence. Workers do not lightly go on strike. A strike is a difficult struggle, requiring many sacrifices. Communists do not lightly advise workers to strike. To strike is a weapon of last resort, to which the workers turn only when the capitalists have blocked every other road of redress for their grievances. And when strikes occur—and when bloodshed takes place in connection with them—that is not the result of Communist policies or Communist activities. That is the work of reactionary capitalists and their agents who are directly responsible for the strike and for troubles that arise out of the strike.” (*Democracy or Fascism*, p. 46.)

55.

Q. Is it a fact, as is often charged, that Communists in the trade unions always set out to capture these organizations?

A. This is one of the many false accusations made against the Communist Party by the enemies of a militant and powerful

labor movement. The reality is that the Communists join with all other progressives in fighting against the unions being "captured" by any individuals or groups. We believe in democratic unions, organizations in which the membership determines policy, and we work for a broad leadership thoroughly representative of and responsive to the wishes of the rank and file. Communists fight against all clique control and dictatorial tendencies among union leaders, no matter from what direction it comes. As for ourselves, we ask no rights beyond those accorded all other workers. We accept the same responsibilities and duties that non-Communists do.

Communists expect to influence the policies of a labor organization and play a role in its leadership only to the extent that our Party members win the respect and support of the workers. We strive to merit this support by our devoted activities and educational work in the unions, not by acting as an organized group within them. Communists, whether rank and filers or elected officials of a union, have the duty and responsibility to build and improve the organization, work for the realization of its program, and to abide by the decision of the majority, arrived at democratically through the channels of the union. Communists who are elected into leadership of a union are responsible to the membership of that organization, and the Communist Party joins with all workers in calling to account any elected officials, Communist or otherwise, who fail to fulfill the responsibilities and duties entrusted to them by the membership of their trade unions.

56.

Q. Do Communists form fractions (organized Party groups) within the trade unions?

A. No. In the earlier years of the Communist Party the policy was sometimes followed of the Communist Party members in a given union meeting together to plan educational work in that organization. But this practice has been discontinued, as tending to create possible misunderstanding among the rank

and file of the unions. The Communists, like all other members, function through the regular democratic procedures and committees of the unions. We are resolute opponents of factional control of unions, whether by a conservative bureaucratic clique or by some special political group. The Communists have full reliance that the union membership at large, if given a free discussion of the issues before it and the right to decisive, democratic action upon them, will arrive at sound policies. For this reason Communists are everywhere and always the most consistent and determined fighters for trade union democracy.

57.

Q. It is often asserted that the Communists, as revolutionists, take a position of opposition on principle to the leaders of the A. F. of L. Is this correct?

A. Such assertions are not correct. The attitude of the Communists toward the leaders of the trade unions is not determined by their stand regarding socialism (which is not the present-day immediate issue before the people), but by whether or not these officials actually defend the everyday demands of the masses. The Communists support every struggle of the people for economic, political and social betterment, and this certainly includes cooperation with trade union leaders, even the most conservative, when such leaders take a stand in behalf of the masses' demands. Consequently, Communists are working fraternally all over the country with large numbers of non-Communist union leaders in both the A. F. of L. and C.I.O.

In accordance with this policy the Communists have more than once found themselves in agreement with the A. F. of L. Executive Council. Thus, characteristically, the Communist Party openly praised William Green's statement some time ago endorsing in a general way the proposal of collective peace action by the democratic powers to halt the fascist aggressors. But the Communist Party would be remiss in its duty to the working class and to the cause of progress generally if it did not criticize the Wolls, Greens and Hutchesons when they ex-

pel the C.I.O. unions from the A. F. of L. and split the labor movement, when they make war against the Wagner Act and other beneficial labor legislation, and when they endorse such reactionary political candidates for office as Senator Davis of Pennsylvania and Governor Merriam of California.

58.

Q. What is the attitude of the Communists toward unauthorized strikes and toward trade union discipline generally?

A. Communists believe in trade union discipline, based on majority rule arrived at through the democratic processes of the union. Unless there is such discipline the union will be destroyed. Communists are opposed to unauthorized strikes provoked by minorities. Such strikes almost always serve the interests of the employers, not the workers. They commonly result in violent internal conflict within the union, they antagonize middle class sympathizers, and they usually end in defeat. Where a union follows policies really in the interests of the workers and defends actively their grievances, and where trade union democracy prevails, there is no occasion for unauthorized strikes.

59.

Q. Is it true that Communists consider trade union agreements "mere scraps of paper" to be violated at will?

A. It is not true. Communists understand that in modern industry, with all its intricacies, it is necessary for employers and trade unions to put down on paper the complex terms of the workers' employment that they may agree upon. Such agreements, when entered into, should be adhered to by both sides. But Communists do not believe in the illusions of conservative trade unionists that trade union agreements bring about a suspension of the class struggle. The ever-present contest between employers and workers over the product of labor merely takes on new forms under such conditions, with the employers

using every trick to violate and chisel upon the agreements. Communists, therefore, are alert to see to it that the employers are compelled to live up to their agreements and that the agreements are interpreted in the interests of the workers. In general, Communists support short-term contracts, not to exceed two years or so. Under no circumstances do Communists consider trade union agreements as justifying one body of workers breaking the strike of another, such as has been done upon innumerable occasions in trade union history by conservative officials using the excuse of inviolable union contracts.

60.

Q. What is the Communist policy on the arbitration of labor disputes?

A. Communists strongly favor direct dealings between unions and employers in the adjustment of labor disputes, as employers with their money and influence have an unsavory record of winning to their side the "odd" man on arbitration boards. But we are not opposed on principle to the workers accepting arbitration (taking great care of the board's composition) when direct negotiations fail and when a strike is inadvisable. The workers' objective being the attainment of the maximum in living standards (wages, hours, working conditions, etc.), the Communists are willing to use not only direct negotiation, but also arbitration when other means do not get results. We are strongly opposed, however, to compulsory arbitration in whatever form it may take. Under compulsory arbitration the strike right is taken away from the workers and this places them at the mercy of the employers and their representatives.

61.

Q. What about seniority in industry? Do seniority clauses in union agreements constitute a good or bad practice?

A. The Communists endorse seniority provisions in trade union contracts as necessary in order to protect the older work-

ers and also to prevent the arbitrary discharge of militant workers for union activities. Seniority in industry takes on especially great importance now that there is huge, chronic mass unemployment. But while utilizing seniority practices the unions should also be on guard against serious abuses growing out of them. Thus, on the railroads, because of seniority claims, some workers work the equivalent of thirty or even forty days per month, while others get no work at all. And more serious yet, seniority practices sometimes operate to exclude the younger workers almost entirely from a given industry. This is both unjust and dangerous. The youth have the right to work and to establish a family, and if this right is denied them many may easily become the prey of reactionary demagogues and be used against the labor movement. In working out seniority systems, therefore, ways must be found to check possible abuses and to protect the place of the youth in industry.

62.

Q. What is the Communist policy on apprentices in industry?

A. The Communists are in favor of young workers being drawn freely into industry, including the skilled trades which require prolonged training. But we oppose the present policies of employers who use the apprentice system to weaken and undermine the unions. We advocate trade schools controlled by the trade unions. We also favor the unions controlling the drawing in and training of youth, jointly with committees of the youth themselves. The young workers should be admitted to membership in the unions upon the beginning of their "apprenticeship." Communists demand payment of fixed wages on the basis of "equal pay for equal work" for the type of work that the apprentice performs. We oppose all tendencies toward "job trust" unionism through undue restriction of apprentices, excessive initiation fees, etc.

Q. What is the Communist attitude toward sick and death benefits and other fraternal features in trade unions?

A. The Communists favor the adoption by unions of sick and death benefits and other benevolent provisions. They tend to stabilize the unions. But it is important that such undertakings be so organized and administered that the funds are properly protected, that the workers exercise full control, and that they get the maximum service at a minimum cost. Often it is advisable for a union to operate through an existing, well-recognized workers' fraternal organization, such as, for example, the International Workers Order. Care should be taken that union benefit funds are not used for ventures into labor banking or real estate speculation. The insurance service should be optional, so that workers who cannot afford it shall not be deprived of full union membership. Unions cannot meet this whole problem by themselves, however, and should, therefore, actively support old age, unemployment, sickness, accident and other forms of social insurance by the federal and state governments.

Q. I hear it often said: "Communists always bring politics into the unions." What's the answer?

A. "Politics is concentrated economics," said Lenin. Politics is always present in the trade union, but not always working class politics. Frequently, as we all know, conservative trade union leaders misuse the unions in the political interest of themselves and the bosses. Communists give a working class character to trade union politics. The nature of the struggle of the workers under the present conditions of capitalist development makes political action more and more necessary.

The unions are concerned with wages, hours and working conditions. These questions have all become political issues. Just to recall the Wages and Hours Law or the Wagner Act

makes this clear. Or take unemployment relief and insurance; these are also vital political matters. Likewise the workers are interested in the preservation of peace. This, too, is political. So is the fight against lynching, injunctions in labor disputes, use of police against workers, as well as the election of the city, state and national legislative bodies. All these are political issues of basic importance to labor; and all trade unions, including the A. F. of L. Executive Council and not only the C.I.O., are compelled to deal with them regularly. Even the old, outworn A. F. of L. policy of "reward your friends and punish your enemies," though harmful politics, is politics, nevertheless. The Communists put trade union politics on a working class basis and advocate the organization of the workers solidly, politically, in a broad democratic front with the farmers and professionals, thereby enabling them to defend themselves effectively on every field of the class struggle.

65.

Q. Who and what are responsible for the present split in the labor movement?

A. The split in the ranks of organized labor was caused directly by the reactionary leaders who undemocratically dominate the American Federation of Labor through control of its Executive Council—Green, Hutcheson, Frey, Woll, Wharton, etc. For many years these leaders and their reactionary forerunners in office, fearing to lose their privileged places in the trade unions, refused to allow the organization of the millions of workers in the basic mass production industries by giving up the paper jurisdictional claims of their craft unions over these workers and permitting the establishment of industrial unions. And worse yet—when several progressive unions—Miners, Clothing workers, Printers, etc., comprising 900,000 members—formed a committee in November, 1935—the C.I.O.—and began actual organization work under the leadership of John L. Lewis, as they were fully entitled to do according to the constitution of the A. F. of L., the Executive Council of

the A. F. of L., in autocratic disregard of that body's own laws as well as in violation of the most vital interests of the whole working class, illegally suspended and later arbitrarily expelled the C.I.O. unions, thereby splitting the labor movement.

Since then, the A. F. of L. reactionaries have spread the split into every field of labor activity, sabotaging C.I.O. organizing campaigns and strikes, opposing progressive legislation and political candidates that have C.I.O. endorsement, etc. Meanwhile, the C.I.O., by the great successes of its organizing campaigns, which have brought 3,000,000 workers of the basic industries into the trade unions, as well as by its generally progressive political development, has demonstrated beyond question that its course of action has been justified. History will place the entire responsibility for the present deplorable trade union split upon the shoulders of the Executive Council reactionaries.

66.

Q. Why do the Communists lay so much stress on the re-establishment of trade union unity?

A. Because the split is a menace to the labor movement generally and to the whole cause of progress in the United States. The war of the A. F. of L. reactionaries against the C.I.O.—for that is what the split actually amounts to—hurts the workers of both the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. It handicaps the organization of the unorganized, it jeopardizes labor legislation in state and national legislatures, it leads to the defeat of progressive candidates in elections, it alienates the support of the farmers and middle classes from labor, it is a millstone around the neck of the New Deal movement. To cure this split is a matter of national and international importance for the forces of progress. The only people who profit from the split are the bosses and reactionaries generally. It gives aid and comfort to the vigilantes, Black Legion and to all other enemies of the people. Furthermore, the split facilitates the dangerous alliance that the A. F. of L. reactionaries are concocting with the Republican Party. Unless the split is soon healed it may

threaten the success of the progressive forces in the 1940 elections. A split labor movement makes the danger of fascism in the United States very much more acute.

Then there is the positive side to the question. A united trade union movement, with about 8,000,000 members, would be an enormous factor for progress. Organizing work could be pushed with redoubled vigor, the whole trade union movement would be rejuvenated, necessary social legislation could be more easily secured and progressive candidates more readily elected, the farmers and middle class would be encouraged to rally shoulder to shoulder with the advancing working class, the building of the democratic front of all progressive groupings would be vastly accelerated, the prospects of the people's forces defeating the cohorts of reaction in the vitally important 1940 elections would be enormously improved. The most powerful blow the workers can now deliver against the gathering forces of reaction in this country will be to achieve a great united trade union movement of the A. F. of L., C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods.

67.

Q. How can trade union unity be brought about?

A. The principal task in healing the trade union split is to organize the masses of unionists in the A. F. of L. and C.I.O., who form the great majority of these organizations and who ardently want unity, to compel the handful of reactionary bureaucrats at the head of the A. F. of L., the real splitters, to re-establish labor unity. Valuable in this respect also is the influence of progressive political leaders, who are also vitally interested in trade union unity and who, through the persons of Roosevelt, La Guardia, Murphy, Wagner, Perkins, etc., have so expressed themselves. Concretely, the following general measures should be carried out:

A. Strengthen the C.I.O. unions through the organization of the unorganized in their respective fields, thereby at once consolidating this great progressive force and killing off the A. F.

of L. leaders' argument that the C.I.O. unions are only temporary in character and that trade union unity will come by their dying out.

B. Prevent the split from spreading further. Keep it from becoming the type of split in which the progressive unionists tend to gather chiefly in the C.I.O. while the more conservative unionists remain in the A. F. of L. Progressives should work not only in the C.I.O., but especially in the A. F. of L. Also keep the split, which is now principally between individual unions, from actually disrupting the various unions themselves. The A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions should not infringe upon each other's industries or raid one another's members.

C. Initiate cooperative actions, local, state and national, between A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions around various issues of common interest to labor, such as organizing campaigns, strikes, labor legislation and elections. These joint actions break down the spirit of factionalism, bring the two groups of unions closer together, and pave the way for eventual unity.

D. Carry on an incessant agitation in all unions and industries for trade union unity, calling upon the workers to adopt resolutions and to bring pressure upon their officials for unity, and looking toward the eventual holding of a great unity convention of the A. F. of L., C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods at which the solidarity of labor will be fully cemented.

68.

Q. Can craft unions exist as parts of a general progressive labor movement?

A. Yes. In many countries craft and industrial unions are to be found side by side, working peacefully and constructively in the same national trade union federation. While unquestionably the industrial form of unionism is the superior type, still in a number of industries in this country, especially railroads, building trades, printing trades and amusement trades, experience teaches us that craft unions can exist and defend the

interests of their members. These craft unions develop a measure of the necessary industrial solidarity through various types of federation (Railroad Employees Department, Building Trades Councils). But, on the other hand, in such industries as coal, steel, auto, textile, metal mining, electrical manufacturing, and generally where modern methods of mass production are in operation, the industrial form of unionism is necessary. There is no valid reason whatever why craft and industrial unions, each confining itself to its proper sphere, cannot live harmoniously together in one national federation.

CHAPTER V

THE NEGRO AND JEWISH PEOPLES

69.

Q. What has the democratic front to offer the Negro people, and what has socialism for them?

A. By an active participation in the struggle of the developing democratic front movement the Negro people have all to gain that the whites have—the right to organize in unions, improved wage, hour and working conditions, unemployment relief, farm relief, social insurance—plus the various democratic demands arising out of the special discrimination practised against the Negro people. Among the latter are the abolition of all Jim-Crow practices, the establishment of full social, civil and citizenship rights, the right to vote, to sit on juries and to hold public office, the right to work in all industries, enforcement of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments, passage of the Anti-Lynching Bill.

For many years the Republican Party has lavished sweet praises upon the Negro people, but no constructive efforts have been made by that party since Reconstruction days to solve any burning problem of the Negro people. Under the Roosevelt New Deal, however, the progressive forces of the Democratic Party, together with the trade unions, farmers' organizations, etc., which the Communist Party has supported, have brought about many badly-needed reforms in which the Negro people have largely shared. This growing democratic front has shown an understanding of the necessity to fight for the Negroes' rights—a fine example being the Negro-white cooperation developed in the recent Southern Conference for Human Welfare in Birmingham. In view of all this it is ob-

viously necessary on the part of the Negro people to give every possible support to the democrat front.

Answering the second part of the question as to what socialism offers the Negro people—socialism implies the abolition of capitalism and the taking over of the land, the banks, the transportation systems and the great industries by the people, to be operated in the masses' own interest and not, as now, for the profit of a small group of capitalist owners. The Negro people, like the white toilers, will participate fully in the great economic, political and social emancipation of the working masses that must ensue from this tremendous step forward. Indeed Negroes, being the most oppressed of all, have the most to gain by this fundamental social transformation.

Socialism will put a final end to the capitalist exploitation which is the root cause of the discrimination and injustices now practised against the Negroes. It will bring about their national liberation. It will wipe out the social degradation, discrimination, lynching, segregation, social ostracism and cultural backwardness of the Negro people. It will finally break the age-long fetters and achieve for the Negro people their rightful position of equal opportunity, equal standing and full justice with every other section of the population. This is amply proven by socialism in the Soviet Union, where all the national groups, including many dark peoples, live fraternally together in freedom, justice and equality, and where any practice of race or national prejudice is severely punished as a serious crime.

70.

Q. Why do the Communists present the Negro issue as a national question instead of simply as a class struggle question?

A. The reason is because the Negroes are exploited and persecuted not only in their status as wage workers and poor farmers but also on the basis of their being an oppressed people. Regarding the nationhood and suppression of the American Negro people, James S. Allen says:

“During the period of slavery, the Negroes who had been

transported from different social environments and from societies of varied stages of development were submitted to totally new but uniform conditions on the Southern slave plantations. The fact that the slave system was concentrated in the plantation area facilitated the development of the Negroes as a people because it made possible a common historical experience. Slavery contributed a common language, a common territory, a common historical background and the beginnings of a common ideology, characterized chiefly by aspirations for freedom. In the period of capitalist development, unhindered by chattel slavery, the conditions arose which made it possible for the Negro people to develop more fully along the lines of nationhood. The Negroes were drawn more directly within the processes of capitalism, thus evolving the class relationships characteristic of all modern nations. There were at hand the economic and class interconnections already established by the advanced development of capitalism in the country as a whole, and these relations arose among the Negroes although on a restricted and hampered scale. With the growth of the working and middle classes a more stable and lasting identity of culture was developed, expressed in literature, art, music, the Negro church, the press—a culture strongly influenced by, although containing many currents of revolt against, American bourgeois culture. The thorough segregation of the Negro prevented amalgamation with the white population, and forced the Negro to develop as a distinct entity. The hangovers of the chattel slave system, which resulted from the failure of the bourgeois democratic revolution to run its full course, retarded free development of the Negro people, and reduced them to the status of an oppressed nation.

“In the present phase of their development, the Negro people are still in the process of becoming a nation. Their struggle for liberation from all the forces which have prevented fuller and freer development and which have denied them equal rights is a struggle for nationhood. It is this national aspect of the Negro question which endows the Negro

people with tremendous power for progress and for¹ revolutionary change." (*Negro Liberation*, pp. 21-22.)

71.

Q. *What is meant by self-determination of the Negro people? Does the Communist Party give up the slogan of self-determination in promoting the democratic front?*

A. "The right of self-determination as applied to the Negro people in the United States means: that the Negro people in the Black Belt, where they have formed the majority of the population for many generations, have the right to set up a new political entity corresponding to the area in which they constitute the majority of the population; that in this new political entity the Negro people enjoy governmental authority, with full equal rights enjoyed also by the significant white minority in this area; and that the Negro people have the right to determine for themselves whether their new political state should be federated to the United States, upon a free and voluntary basis, or have complete political independence. The right of self-determination does not necessarily imply separation. It includes the right to choose between separation from or federation with the United States. . . .

"A point which has caused much misunderstanding is what Communists conceive to be the relationship between the demand for the right of self-determination and the present phase of the movement. It should be clearly understood by this time that Communists do not pose agreement with their ultimate program as a condition for their participation in any united front of democratic forces. It is clear that the political struggle in the country as a whole has not reached the level where the masses can be expected to rally either to socialism, or, specifically, to the principal slogan of Negro liberation. The Communists, however, are ready to cooperate with all those with whom they are in substantial agreement on the immediate problems facing the people.

"This, of course, does not mean that the Communist Party

has given up the perspective of the development of the movement for Negro liberation in the direction of the fulfillment of the right of self-determination. The Negro question in this country can be solved, whether under capitalism or under socialism, only by the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the South, the most important and culminating aspect of which is the guarantee of the right of self-determination for the Negro people." (James S. Allen, *Negro Liberation*, pp. 30, 34.)

72.

Q. *In demanding equality for the Negroes do the Communists also include social equality? Do they advocate intermarriage?*

A. "From the day the Communist Party was organized it has fought for equality of the Negro people with all other people of this country. We demand equal right to jobs, equal pay for equal work, the full right to organize, to vote, to serve on juries and to hold public office. We demand abolition of the poll tax.

"These rights are inseparable from the right of complete social equality, including the right of intermarriage. It is about time that a stop is put to the reactionaries who, with their Hitler-like theories of racial superiority, slander the dignity and standing of the Negroes by branding them as an inferior people. This insulting charge, which is repudiated by every serious scientist and which is flatly contradicted by the whole history of the Negro people, is the basis for social segregation, oppression and exploitation of the Negro. The Communist Party, from its inception, has placed the demand: for complete economic, political, and *social equality* for the Negro people. For this policy reactionaries have called the Communist Party 'the Party of the Negroes,' but we accept this title as an honorable one. The Communist Party could not carry out its role as the Party of white Americans unless it was at the same time the Party of the Negroes." (James W. Ford.)

Q. *Why do Communists so insistently demand the admission of Negroes into trade unions?*

A. First, because refusal to grant trade union membership to Negroes is a gross insult and serious injury to them, by tending to bar them from working in various industries and by depriving them of all organized protection in their wage, hour, seniority, promotion and working conditions. Free admission of Negroes into all trade unions, with full right to hold union office and to enjoy all union privileges, as is becoming the case with many unions, will go far toward smashing the whole shameful Jim-Crow system.

Second, because close working relations between Negro and white toilers is fundamentally necessary for the development of the democratic front of all progressive forces and the achievement of its demands; for the defense of American democracy against its reactionary foes. The question is, therefore, one of basic political significance. Karl Marx truly said, "Labor with a white skin cannot be free while labor with a black skin is branded." The degree of political understanding and power of the labor and progressive movement can be pretty accurately gauged by the extent to which it extends the hand of brotherly cooperation to the doubly-oppressed Negro people.

Q. *Is Japan the defender of the darker peoples?*

A. "Emphatically not. Individuals who are spreading such propaganda among the Negro people are doing the work of reaction, trying to split the Negroes away from their natural allies and friends, the white workers and farmers, and to lead them into the fascist trap.

"The key to understanding the present world struggles cannot be found in the simple but dangerous formula of a fight between colored and white races for world supremacy.

There is no such struggle. The fundamental issue of the present world situation springs not from race division, but from deep-lying class and imperialist conflicts, which today find their chief expression in the death grapple between fascism and democracy. The fascist powers are out to crush and dominate the weaker peoples of the earth, regardless of their color; and Japan is equally guilty with Germany and Italy in this program of conquest and enslavement.

“A few facts should suffice to explode Japan’s claim to be the friend of the darker peoples: (a) Japan itself is ruled by a small clique of capitalists, landlords and militarists who keep the mass of the population in the most terrible poverty and tyranny; (b) Under the demagogic slogan of ‘Asia for the Asiatics,’ Japan has overrun Korea, Manchuria and large parts of China, murdering and enslaving their peoples; (c) Japan is the close ally of Italy and sanctioned Mussolini’s brutal rape of Ethiopia; (d) Japan is the warm friend and helper of Hitler, who constantly denounces Negroes and other dark peoples as mentally, morally and physically inferior beings; (e) Japan is now plotting to subjugate the Philippines and the countries of other dark peoples in the East, and it is supporting Hitler’s and Mussolini’s claims to extend their savage rule and exploitation over various Negro colonial peoples in Africa.

“From all these facts it is clear that the real enemy of the Negroes and other dark peoples is fascism, including imperialist Japan. Hence, it is the vital interest of these darker peoples to turn a deaf ear to insidious Japanese fascist propaganda and to line up solidly with the democratic forces, regardless of color, that are fighting against fascism, both in this country and on a world scale.” (James W. Ford.)

75.

Q. *What is the cause of anti-Semitism in Germany?*

A. Hitler, Mussolini and the fascists generally have a number of immediate purposes in mind when developing their anti-

Jewish pogroms. Among these are, first, by raising the false issues of Aryanism and anti-Semitism and making a scapegoat of the Jews, they hope to divert the growing resentment of the masses away from their real enemy, the big capitalist exploiters; second, they find in anti-Semitism a convenient monopolistic means to eliminate a group of competitors from commerce and industry; third, anti-Semitism provides the fascists with a ready excuse to confiscate the wealth of the Jewish people for the profit of the bankrupt fascist state finances. Anti-Semitism, especially when it is taken up as an active government policy as in the fascist countries, is a sure sign of the spreading decay in the very fabric of the capitalist system. The Coughlins and other American fascist anti-Semites must be combatted as sinister foes of all the democratic rights of the whole people.

76.

Q. What is the policy of the Soviet Union toward the Jews and other national minorities, and toward the refugee problem?

A. In the Soviet Union, alone of all nations, the question of national peoples has been solved. Russians, Jews, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Armenians and the scores of other nationalities that go to make up the great Soviet people are all living harmoniously together in their socialist country. All these nationalities have equal rights under the law, both with regard to citizenship generally and the cultivation of their national languages and culture. These rights are written into the Stalin Constitution. Anti-Semitism and other forms of national and race prejudice are condemned as crimes and severely punished. Tsarist Russia, with its terrible Jewish pogroms and national oppression, was called "the prison house of nations"; but the Soviet Union, with its free working together of many national minorities, stands as the model for the whole world in the solution of this problem, which is such a burning scandal in every capitalist country.

On the question of the U.S.S.R. and the refugees, Article 129 of the Soviet Constitution says: "The U.S.S.R. grants the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the toilers or for their scientific activities or for their struggle for national liberation." The Soviet Government has translated this principle of asylum into life by accepting within its borders scores of thousands of refugees from Germany, Poland, Austria, Spain and other countries.

Obviously, however, the problem of refugees is not one that can be solved by the U.S.S.R. simply throwing open its borders to the refugee masses. The question is far too great and complicated for that. Month by month, the fascist war-making powers are creating new hordes of starving, wandering people of every religious faith and in many lands, from China to Spain. Until this monstrous refugee-making process is halted no real solution can be had for the refugee question, which rapidly grows worse.

The refugee problem is, therefore, inseparably tied up with the whole issue of maintaining world peace and democracy. Immediate relief for the refugees, as well as the basic solution of this fascist outrage, can only be arrived at by international cooperation between the democratic powers. In such action the Soviet Union can make great contributions. But in the international conferences so far held on the refugee questions the U.S.S.R. has been carefully excluded. The Chamberlains and Daladiers, no less than the Hitlers and Mussolinis, know that the Soviet Union is fully prepared to work with the democratic forces of the world not only to solve the refugee problem, but also to put an end to the fascist war-making and existing terrorism that give it birth. These reactionaries realize that the Soviet Government would never concede the right of the fascists to tear loose huge masses of people from their homes, nor would it be a party to Chamberlain's and Daladier's criminally stupid schemes of transporting the stricken refugee masses to deadly jungle colonies in remote corners of the earth. The U.S.S.R., besides providing means for immediate refugee relief, would strike at the root cause of the evil, fascism.

CHAPTER VI
THE SOVIET UNION

77.

Q. Can it be said that socialism has already been established in the U.S.S.R.?

A. Yes. As Stalin put the question at the March, 1939, Congress of the Communist Party, the U.S.S.R., with its 170,126,000 people, has completed the building of socialism in the main and is now in the period of the beginning of the transition to communism. Soviet industry is now 99.97 per cent on a socialist basis and Soviet agriculture is 94 per cent collectivized. All exploiting classes have been completely eliminated and with them every vestige of the exploitation of man by man that is the curse of capitalism. The workers, peasants and intellectuals work and live together in friendly collaboration. A great, new democracy, incorporated in the Stalin Constitution, the most advanced in the world, has been built up, a democracy which guarantees the toiling masses full economic, political, religious and social freedom.

In the building of socialism in the Soviet Union an enormous extension of industry and agriculture has been brought about. The U.S.S.R., from the most backward industrial country in Europe, is now the foremost in that continent and within ten years it will overtake the United States. In his speech, summarized, Stalin stated that from the standpoint of the technique of production and the percentage of modern machinery, the industry of the U.S.S.R. holds first place in the world; that the U.S.S.R. has similarly outstripped the principal capitalist countries in the rate of industrial development, Soviet industrial output having increased more than nine-fold over what it was in the pre-war period; while the

industrial output of the principal capitalist countries continues to mark time at about only 20 to 30 per cent above the pre-war level. Stalin showed also that Soviet agriculture has made a no less spectacular advance; the erstwhile medieval Russian farming having now become the best organized and most mechanized of any in the world.

Soviet national income has gone up by leaps and bounds and during the next five years will further increase by 80 per cent. The prosperity and culture of the people have also advanced enormously. There is no unemployment. Wages are steadily on the rise, and the seven (and in many cases, six) hour day is universal. Health facilities have been improved many times over. Illiteracy has been practically extinguished, and history's greatest mass cultural movement is storming ahead. The most gigantic and comprehensive system of social insurance in the world has been built up. National and racial inequality have been abolished and the scores of national groups that go to make up the Soviet people live and work harmoniously together. And in defense of all these socialist achievements, a tremendous armed force has been constructed, a powerful dike to protect socialism and world peace, democracy and culture from the fascist barbarians.

These are vast socialist achievements, and they forecast the path along which humanity generally will travel in freeing itself from the obsolete and decaying capitalist system. They are also a complete refutation of the croakings of Trotsky and the other agents of fascism and capitalism who have been shouting all these years that socialism could not be built in the U.S.S.R.

78.

Q. How can the Soviet Union be called a democracy when it has only one legal party? Is not this the same one-party system as in the fascist countries?

A. The fact that there is only one party, the Communist Party, in the Soviet Union, has nothing in common with the one-party system in the fascist countries. Political parties are

formed to represent the interests of social classes, and if there is not a multiplicity of parties in the U.S.S.R., it is because there is no economic class base for them. With the industries and the land socialized the whole mass of the people have become useful producers, with interests in common. The former ruling classes of capitalists, landlords and nobility are economically, and politically liquidated and the remaining two great classes of workers and peasants, which constantly grow closer together, find a true expression of their common interests in their great Communist Party, which is based upon a broad people's democracy and which has brilliantly led the masses through the great revolution. As well demand that there should be dual trade unions within a given craft or industry in the United States as that there should be two or more political parties in the U.S.S.R. Additional parties in the Soviet Union could only be forces to fight against socialism and for the restoration of capitalism.

In the fascist countries, however, the one-party system has been developed not because society there has become classless, but because the ruling capitalist class has brutally repressed the toiling classes—the workers, farmers and lower middle classes—by breaking up their parties, trade unions, cooperatives, cultural organizations, etc., and by denying them all right of independent organization.

Thus the Nazi party of Germany, representing the interests of the great capitalists and landlords, exists and rules by crushing all democratic organizations of the toiling masses; whereas the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., representing the interests of the whole working people, is fully supported by the biggest trade unions, cooperatives, cultural, youth and other mass organizations in the world.

79.

Q. If a classless socialist society has been established in the Soviet Union, why is it still called the proletarian dictatorship?

A. Although the economic, political and social bases of the former ruling classes in Russia have been liquidated, it is not

yet completely a classless society. The present Soviet system remains a dictatorship of the proletariat because many individual members of the deposed classes are still present and are eager to commit sabotage, wrecking or espionage if given the chance. More important by far, however, is the fact that the Soviet Union is surrounded by a belt of hostile capitalist countries. This creates a grave danger of war and makes still necessary a strong government, the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the protection of socialism and the defense of the country.

The Soviet government, which is the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a workers' and farmers' government. It is an alliance of workers and farmers, led by the working class, the most revolutionary and clear-sighted class. In the early stages of the revolution the tremendous work of winning state power and directing the building of the new socialist society—with all its complicated problems of defense, industry, agriculture, education, etc.—necessarily fell almost entirely upon the working class, led by the Communist Party, inasmuch as the peasantry in the main were still carrying on an economy of private property. But during the past several years, especially since the collectivization of the farms, the peasantry have become socialist and accordingly are assuming a larger share of leadership in the building of socialism. The erstwhile differences in outlook between the two friendly classes of workers and peasants are rapidly wearing away.

80

Q. Is not the continued existence of the Soviet government a repudiation of the Marxian principle of "the withering away of the state"?

A. By no means. As we have seen in the answer to the previous question, the existence of the Soviet state is determined by the necessity of defending socialism from its internal and external enemies, especially the latter. Were it merely a case of controlling the anti-socialist elements within the Soviet

Union this would now be a relatively simple matter and would not require the existence of a powerful state with heavily armed forces; but there is the decisive fact to be considered that the U.S.S.R. is surrounded by a whole group of powerful and violently hostile fascist countries—Germany, Italy, Japan—eager to fall upon it at the first opportunity. This situation makes the continued existence of a strong, well-armed state a life and death question for the Soviet Union. “The withering away of the state,” for which the groundwork is now being laid internally in the U.S.S.R. by the growth of socialism, can finally take place only when, through the decisive victory of the toilers internationally, there is no longer the danger of armed invasion of the socialist country or countries from the capitalist enemy.

81.

Q. Is not the dictatorship of the proletariat in reality the dictatorship of the Communist Party, and is not Stalin a dictator?

A. The present-day form of Soviet society, the dictatorship of the proletariat, expressed in more familiar terms, means simply the rule of the workers and farmers under working class leadership. The Communist Party is the political leader of the dictatorship; it is not the dictatorship itself. The Party leads because it is made up of the most advanced sections of the toilers and because it entirely represents the interests of the vast masses. The Party grows out of the gigantic organizations of the people—the Soviets, trade unions, cooperatives, cultural organizations, etc. Stalin says:

“... There is the *Party* of the proletariat, its vanguard. The Party's strength lies in the fact that it draws into its ranks all the best elements of the proletariat from all the mass organizations of the proletariat. Its function is to *combine* the work of all the mass organizations of the proletariat, without exception and to *guide* their activities toward a single goal, that of the emancipation of the proletariat.” (Joseph Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, pp. 275-76.)

Regarding the second part of the question: Stalin is decidedly not a dictator; his leadership develops democratically from the whole Soviet system and is based entirely upon his outstandingly superior merit. He has been tried by fire in the tremendous problems of the Russian Revolution. The non-Communist Webbs, in their notable work, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* say (page 431):

“... Let it be noted that, unlike Mussolini, Hitler and other modern dictators, Stalin is not invested by law with any authority over his fellow-citizens, and not even over the members of the Party to which he belongs. He has not even the extensive power which the Congress of the United States has temporarily conferred upon President Roosevelt.”

Stalin enjoys immense prestige in the Soviet Union. This derives, however, not from any organized control by him, but from his outstandingly brilliant leadership. By forty years of revolutionary work he has demonstrated that he is the greatest living Marxian leader. He has performed tremendous services, both theoretical and practical, in working out the gigantic problems faced by the Russian Revolution, and the Soviet masses love and appreciate him for his work. He has become the world's outstanding leader of all oppressed peoples.

82.

Q. What is there to the charge that the Soviet system regiments the individual and subjects him to state tyranny on the same basis that fascism does?

A. The fascist regime and socialism are poles apart in their treatment of the individual. The fascist state suppresses, regiments and exploits the huge mass of the people—workers, farmers, petty bourgeoisie—for the benefit of a small minority of capitalists and landlords and their hangers-on. Its aim is to reduce the masses to robots and cannon fodder whose function in life is to labor and die to advance the prosperity and glory of the ruling capitalist class. The whole social and in-

tellectual life of the fascist community is prostituted to this ignoble end.

The central objective of the Soviet state, totally opposed to that of fascism, is to develop the greatest potentialities of the working masses—their prosperity as a whole and all their latent capacities as individuals. Unlike fascism, socialism under the Soviets does not restrict the joys and beauties of modern life to favored minorities but employs all its strength to open them wide before the whole people. The Soviets are now creating the highest type of individualism that the world has ever seen. Again quoting from the Webbs:

“What is there prized as the highest good is *the maximizing of opportunity, to act according to individual desire, of the entire aggregate of individuals in the community*. This effective enlargement or wider opening of the mental and cultural environment of the people, without discrimination of race or color, age or sex, income or position, is one main object of this deliberate planning of the good life in the U.S.S.R. The shifting of emphasis, from absence of restraint to presence of opportunity, as the condition of the good life, is, as we have already noted, characteristic of the changed view of the universe taken by modern science. It is coincident also with the transition from the ‘economics of scarcity’ to the ‘economics of plenty’ . . . is in harmony with the characteristic note of universalism that we have so often found in Soviet statesmanship, based on the assumption of the high value of social equality and the positive evil of sex or class or race privilege.”
(*Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?*, p. 1035.)

83.

Q. Charges of Red imperialism are often directed against the U.S.S.R.: if the Soviets are not planning to invade nearby countries why have they built up such powerful armed forces?

A. Imperialism is a manifestation of capitalism. It is an expression of the capitalist exploitation of the toilers in the capitalist countries and colonial lands. Imperialism can have no

place in a socialist society such as in the U.S.S.R., where capitalism has been abolished and the exploitation of the workers totally liquidated. The phrase "Red imperialism" is, therefore, a contradiction in terms, a characteristic anti-Soviet slander invented by reactionary enemies of the people, of democracy and of social progress.

The Soviet government has no designs upon neighboring peoples. It desires ardently to live in peace, so that it may develop its own country industrially, improve the material and cultural conditions of its people, and give the world a decisive demonstration of the workability of socialism. If the Soviet government has built up a great Red Army, Navy and Air Force, this has been only in self-protection, a measure entirely in defense of the U.S.S.R. and of world democracy and civilization from the attacks of the fascist barbarians of German, Italy and Japan. Time and again in the League of Nations and elsewhere, the Soviet Government has proposed partial or complete disarmament for all nations and has worked out elaborate non-aggression pacts. But the reactionaries and fascist imperialists, intent upon forcibly redividing the world, have rejected and scorned these peace proposals.

84.

Q. *The American Communist Party demands that the United States embargo fascist Germany, Italy and Japan—why, then, doesn't the Soviet Government stop trading with these powers?*

A. The Soviet Government has repeatedly expressed its willingness to join with the capitalist democracies in a joint policy of restraining the fascist war aggressor powers by applying economic sanctions against them. Even without such international cooperation, however, the U.S.S.R. has already enormously reduced its trade with the lawless fascist governments. The conservative London *Economist* on November 5, 1938, pointed out that during the first seven months of 1938, Soviet imports from Germany fell off 80 per cent, from Italy 99.8 per cent, and from Japan 99.1 per cent. This paper said:

"The most recent foreign trade figures of the U.S.S.R. provide small warrant for the apparent uncertainty about even the general lines of Soviet foreign policy. The curtailment of Soviet foreign trade with Japan, Germany and Italy during the first seven months of 1938 have been the most striking feature of recent Soviet economic policy abroad."

85.

Q. Why are there no industrial crises and no unemployment in the U.S.S.R.?

A. Economic crises occur in capitalist countries primarily because the capitalists and landlords, who own the industries and the land, extract from the workers and farmers, by one device or another, as interest, rent and profit, a huge mass of commodities above what they pay these toilers in wages and farm prices. The underpaid masses cannot buy back this vast surplus; the capitalists and their hangers-on cannot consume it; nor can it be sold abroad. This overproduction is intensified by the anarchic, unplanned system of production under capitalism. In consequence the markets become glutted and periodic industrial crises develop, with all their profound economic, political and social effects.

Under socialism in the U.S.S.R., however, there are no capitalists and landlords to rob the workers and farmers of the product of their labor; hence no unsalable surplus of commodities can develop to choke and paralyze industry. Moreover, all Soviet production is carefully planned. Reduced to simple terms, the Soviet economic system works as follows: The government economic organs, in consultation with trade unions, farm collectives and other mass organizations, plan the entire national production for the coming year or period of years. Of this total production respective portions are set aside to pay the workers and farmers, to cover the expenses of the government, to provide for the expansion of industry and agriculture, to furnish social insurance for the toiling masses, etc. There is no idle surplus remaining. Consequently, the

purchasing power of the masses not only keeps pace with but tends to run ahead of production and to stimulate it. There can be no crises, no mass unemployment. The broad effect of this system is a rapidly expanding industry and agriculture, steadily rising mass living standards and a general growth of mass prosperity and culture. This socialist system is what mankind must finally adopt in order to escape from the increasing horrors of industrial crises, mass unemployment, wholesale destitution, fascism and war that are unavoidably bred by the outworn and decaying world capitalist system.

86.

Q. Are there real trade unions in the Soviet Union and do the workers have the right to strike?

A. The Soviet trade unions, which are based on the industrial union principle of "one factory, one union," now number more than 23,000,000 members, or about 90 per cent of all employed workers. Under the prevailing socialist system, however, where there are no capitalists and no exploitation of the masses, the functions of the trade unions are far broader than those of unions in capitalist countries. The unions in the U.S.S.R. supervise the formulation of wage scales; they have practical charge of the application of the elaborate factory legislation; they are the sole managers of the tremendous social insurance funds of the government; they play a vital role in the management of industry; their voice is potent in all government councils; they carry on a huge mass education and general cultural work. Compared to the trade unions of the U.S.S.R., the labor unions of all other countries are only undeveloped, skeleton organizations.

Strikes are not forbidden in the Soviet Union, neither by law nor by the trade union constitutions, but they occur very seldom. This is because there are no grounds for strikes. What would be the sense of workers striking against a government and an industrial system which they fully control and which works entirely in the interest of themselves and the farmers?

In the early years of the revolution, however, when the new socialist institutions were young and did not always work smoothly, there were sometimes short strikes directed against bureaucratic or incompetent industrial officials; but with the general improvement of the whole Soviet economic machine such strikes have become now entirely unnecessary and are practically non-existent. Workers' complaints are readily settled through the elaborate adjustment committees.

87.

Q. *Is the existence of many different scales of wages in the Soviet Union a violation of socialist principles of equality?*

A. No. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and other great revolutionary socialist leaders have never advocated equalitarianism in wages, neither under capitalism, nor under socialism. Engels, for example, said: "The real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the abolition of classes. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that of necessity passes into absurdity."

Joseph Stalin, in his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1934, was in complete harmony with Marxist-Leninist teachings when he stated:

"By equality Marxism means, not equality in personal requirements and personal life, but the abolition of classes, *i.e.*, (a) the equal emancipation of all toilers from exploitation after the capitalists have been overthrown and expropriated, (b) the equal abolition for all of private property in the means of production after they have been transformed into the property of the whole of society, (c) the equal duty of all to work according to their ability and the equal right of all toilers to receive according to the amount of work they have done (*socialist society*), (d) the equal duty of all to work according to their ability and the equal right of all toilers to receive according to their requirements (*communist society*). And Marxism starts out with the assumption that people's tastes and requirements are not, and cannot be, equal in quality or

in quantity, either in the period of socialism, or in the period of communism.

“That is the Marxian conception of equality.

“Marxism has not recognized, nor does it recognize, any other equality.” (*Socialism Victorious*, pp. 68-69.)

From the standpoint of practice, Shvernik, head of the Soviet trade union movement, states that the variation of wage scales in the U.S.S.R. gives the workers the necessary urge to improve their skill and makes possible the steady growth in the welfare of the working masses and the growth in the tempo of socialist construction. He says, “Thus the wage policy of the Soviet trade unions creates the incentive for the organized influx of labor power into the key industries, for increased productivity, improves the material economic position of the working class and makes the workers materially interested in raising their productivity.” (*Trade Unions Under Socialism*.)

88.

Q. Inasmuch as the American trade union movement has always opposed the piecework system, how do you explain the widespread prevalence of piecework in the U.S.S.R.?

A. The effects of piecework are fundamentally different in capitalist countries from what they are in the Soviet Union. In capitalist countries piecework is a means to increase the exploitation of the workers for the profit of the employers and it works out to the profound detriment of the workers' wage and working conditions. In the Soviet Union, however, where there are no capitalists and no exploitation, the workers get the full benefits of the increased production that is brought about by piecework. All that we said in the answer to the previous question as to the advantages to the workers of varied wage scales in Soviet industry applies with equal force regarding the matter of piecework. Consequent upon the different results for the workers of piecework under capitalism and under socialism, there is no contradiction whatsoever in the

fact that whereas trade unions in capitalist countries generally oppose piecework those in the U.S.S.R. support it.

89.

Q. It is charged that the Stakhanovite movement in the U.S.-S.R. is a system of speeding up the workers, such as prevails in the United States, and that it creates a privileged class: is this true?

A. In order that the Soviet workers and farmers may enjoy higher standards of living and culture it is necessary that production be very much increased. The responsibility for bringing about this increase rests upon the toilers themselves. Among the many means adopted by them to this end (including the vast extension and modernization of industry, the piecework system, socialist competition, shock brigades, etc.) is Stakhanovism. With Stakhanovism the workers, by improving their discipline and working systems, have in many places greatly increased their output. Stakhanovism has nothing in common with the speed-up methods in American industries. Among other things, this is shown by the fact that whereas American speed-up systems are always schemed out by the bosses and forced upon the workers, Stakhanovism was developed by the Soviet workers and farmers themselves (not the engineers or plant managers) and by these toilers was spread far and wide in Soviet industry and agriculture.

Stakhanovism does not create a new privileged class, notwithstanding the slanders to this effect by Norman Thomas and other anti-Soviet elements. Stakhanovites, of course, draw wages in accordance with their increased production, but the same opportunity is open to all workers. Exploiting classes are impossible in a country such as the Soviet Union, where all the industries and the land are owned by the people. In the Soviet system there is no point at which exploiters can get even a toehold. The Stakhanovites, instead of being a privileged class, are the very best and most advanced socialist fight-

ers of the working class and the farmers. (See also answer to previous question on piecework.)

90.

Q. *Is there religious freedom in the U.S.S.R.? Is it true that the Soviet Government closes churches and persecutes the clergy?*

A. Article 124 of the Soviet Constitution provides: "In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda are recognized for all citizens."

From the outset of the Revolution the policy of the Soviet Government has been based upon these sound principles of freedom. The main action taken by the government regarding the church has been to sever it from the state and to cut off the huge subsidies the church received under tsarism. Sir Esmond Ovey, former British Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., says: "There is no religious persecution in Russia and no case has been discovered of a priest or anyone else being punished for the practice of religion." If, during the early phases of the Revolution, occasionally clericals came into conflict with the government this was because they engaged in counter-revolutionary political struggle against the people's new social system.

Corliss Lamont says in his *Soviet Russia and Religion*:

"Thus, while there is complete freedom of conscience and worship in the Soviet Union, the church no longer receives any financial support from the government. . . . Though parents can teach what they choose about religion to their children at home, religious instruction is not allowed in the public schools. Such instruction is legal, however, in special religious schools for persons over eighteen years of age. Religious rites are permitted for births, marriages and burials at the home, the church or the cemetery, according to the desires of the family concerned. . . . No mere majority vote of the people in a community leads to the shutting down of

a church—as long as there is a substantial number of persons, no matter how much in the minority, who wish to worship in a church, it is kept open.”

91.

Q. *Why did the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Bakunin conspiracy come to a head just when it did, after these elements had worked so many years in the Communist Party and the Soviet Government?*

A. Although Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin and others exposed in the recent Moscow trials worked for considerable periods in the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, their record was one of persistent opposition to central policies of the revolution. Time and again, when events repudiated their theories, they recanted their opposition and pretended to accept the line of the Party, only to continue with a covert resistance and, when they saw a favorable occasion, to develop renewed open struggle against the Party. The focus of the long-continued opposition of these several groups was Trotsky's counter-revolutionary theory that socialism could not be built in the U.S.S.R. alone but that there must first be a world revolution.

Two major factors combined to bring this whole anti-socialist opposition to the debacle of the Moscow treason trials. The first of these factors was that the brilliant success of the Soviet workers and peasants, led by Stalin at the head of the Communist Party, in building socialism, had utterly bankrupted politically all the theories of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin, *et al.*, and had made these people desperate and counter-revolutionary in their opposition. The second factor was that, with the rise of fascism and the acute sharpening of the war danger, Germany and Japan, preparing for armed assault against the Soviet Union, were able to gather up these decayed and demoralized elements, incorporate them into their espionage organization, and launch them upon the careers of

anti-Soviet sabotage, assassination and treason that were so fully exposed during the Moscow trials.

Every great revolution throws off a scum of traitors. This was true of the English, American and French revolutions, as well as of the Russian revolution. Often these traitors previously occupied the highest and most trusted positions; Benedict Arnold, for example, has been considered by many American writers as one of the most brilliant generals in the American revolution. The whole history of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin and their co-conspirators led them inexorably to play the sorry role of traitors and to bring them finally before the bar of the people's justice. Their betrayal of the revolution was no sudden development, but the inevitable climax of their entire political life.

ERRATUM

A printer's error occurs in the first line of Question No. 91, on page 104 (opposite). The first part of the question should read:

Q. Why did the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Bukharin conspiracy come to a head just when it did...

CHAPTER VII

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

92.

Q. Many reactionaries declare that fascism in Germany and communism in the Soviet Union are identical. What about this?

A. Fascism and communism are fundamentally different and opposed to each other—economically, politically, socially. Fascism—example, Nazi Germany—is capitalism, the rule of the most reactionary sections of monopoly capital, a desperate war effort to prolong the existence of the obsolete profit system; whereas communism, the first phase of which, socialism, now exists in the Soviet Union, is the beginning of the new world social order based upon production for use.

The economic systems are totally different under fascism and socialism. Thus in capitalist Nazi Germany the banks, industries, land, etc., are owned privately and exploited for personal profit; whereas in the socialist Soviet Union all these great social means of livelihood are nationalized, being owned by the people and operated for the benefit of all.

Likewise, the governments are the extreme opposites of each other. In Germany the government is completely dominated by the ruling class of reactionary finance capitalists, who wring millions in profits yearly from the masses and enforce their brutal rule by abolishing democratic government, breaking up the independent political parties of the masses, wrecking the trade unions and cooperatives. In the Soviet Union, on the contrary, where there are no bankers, no landlords, no exploiters of any kind, the government is entirely in the hands of the workers and peasants and it is supported by the most gigantic people's mass organizations in the world—trade

unions, cooperatives, cultural organizations. Fascism is opposed in principle to democracy, whereas communism develops the highest form of democracy.

The political and social consequences of fascism and socialism are also diametrically opposed. Nazi Germany, driven on by its gnawing internal capitalist crisis, is violently imperialistic; with its fascist allies it is striving to conquer and redivide the world and is now confronting humanity with the most terrible war in all history. The Soviet Union, however, being based upon the collectivization of the land and industry and production for use, has no internal economic crisis and no imperialistic urge to overrun other countries in the search for markets, raw materials and colonial peoples to exploit; its policy is one of peaceful cooperation with all countries and it stands as the greatest factor making for world peace.

Fascism—decaying, dying capitalism, brings about lower living and cultural standards of the masses, destroys science and sucks the life out of arts and literature, drags humanity back to pagan superstition and cultivates the worst forms of national chauvinism and race hatred. It is a retreat toward barbarism, the anti-cultural quality of which is indicated by its book burnings and anti-Jewish pogroms. In complete antagonism to all these monstrous fascist developments, socialism, the first stage of communism, is a growing, expanding social order which brings about, as we see in the U.S.S.R., a rapid expansion in production, the liquidation of unemployment and industrial crises, a steady rise in mass living and cultural levels, a great growth of science, art and literature, the liquidation of race and national hatreds, and generally the advancement of humanity to a higher stage of existence.

Attempts of reactionary writers and speakers to lump together communism and fascism are just so many lying efforts to discredit communism among the workers by smearing it with the filth of fascism.

Q. *Is it true that communism brings about fascism as a counter movement?*

A. It is not true. Fascism is produced by the developing crisis of the capitalist system. It is not provoked into existence by communism. The monopoly capitalists, no longer able to make their system of exploitation work by the old methods of democracy, proceed, where they have their way, to destroy democracy root and branch and to rule by naked terrorism and the wildest demagoguery; that is, by fascism. Fascism is violently intolerant of political liberalism, opportunist socialism, conservative trade unionism, independent religious organization and all other institutions of democracy, not only of communism; and when fascism secures the upper hand it suppresses them all ruthlessly, even though the Communist movement be a minor factor in the given situation. To blame communism for fascism is to help prepare the way for fascism by confusing the masses and driving a wedge between them and fascism's most relentless and effective foe, the Communist Party.

Says R. Palme Dutt, in his book on fascism:

"The growth of the working class revolution (Communism) and the growth of violent capitalist reaction [fascism—*W. Z. F.*] are in reality both equally the consequence and outcome and expression of this growing crisis and break-up of capitalism. They develop as parallel parts of the single process of the gathering revolutionary crisis. To find in one symptom the cause of the other symptom is worthy of the shallowest quack. In fact, the example of Austria, where the Communist Party was still very weak and where the Social-Democracy boasted of the completeness of its control of the working class, has shown how little the bourgeoisie has need of the pretext of Communism to advance to the fascist dictatorship." (*Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 88.)

Q. *What is the difference between socialism and communism?*

A. Socialism and communism are successive stages of the new world social order, based upon social ownership and production for use, that follows after the capitalist system of private ownership and production for profit has been abolished. Stalin shows the relationship of communism and socialism thus:

“Our Soviet society has succeeded in achieving socialism, in the main, and has created a socialist order, *i.e.*, has achieved what is otherwise called among Marxists the first or lower phase of communism, that is, socialism.

“It is known that the fundamental principle of this phase of communism is the formula: ‘From each according to his abilities; to each according to his deeds.’

“... for the U.S.S.R. socialism is something already achieved, already won.

“But Soviet society has not yet succeeded in bringing about the highest phase of communism, where the ruling principle will be the formula: ‘From each according to his abilities; to each according to his needs,’ although it sets itself the aim of achieving the materialization of this higher phase, full communism, in the future.” (*Stalin on the New Soviet Constitution*, pp. 11-12.)

At the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, March, 1939, Stalin declared that the U.S.S.R. is now in the beginning of the period of the transition to communism.

Q. *What is the Communist Party's attitude toward the nationalization of industry, and what is the difference between this and socialism?*

A. The Communist Party, in its program of immediate demands, advocates the nationalization (government ownership) of the banks, the railroads and munitions industries. The na-

tionalization of these basic economic factors is necessary in order to break the stronghold of the great bankers and monopolists in these vital sectors by giving the government control over them. Nationalization is an indispensable phase of the struggle of the masses to curb the monopolies, to bar the road to fascism, to fight for recovery, to preserve and extend democracy.

Nationalization under capitalism must not be confused with socialism, which requires the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government, led by the proletariat. Frederick Engels warns against this, saying: "If, however, the taking over of tobacco trade by the state was socialistic, Napoleon and Metternich would rank among the founders of socialism." (*Anti-Duehring*, p. 303 [footnote].)

The nationalization of an industry, under present-day American conditions, would still leave that industry under the control of a capitalist government and would transfer all or part of its load of interest-bearing securities to the general national debt. Under socialism, however, the industries would be directed by a government of workers and farmers entirely in the interest of the people and the former capitalist stocks and bonds of the great capitalists would be completely canceled, but with measures of protection for small holders.

96.

Q. The Communist Party declares that capitalism is bankrupt and should be replaced by a socialist society. Why, then, does the Communist Party urge the laboring masses to defend capitalist democracy?

A. At the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935, Dimitroff said:

"We are not Anarchists and it is not at all a matter of indifference to us what kind of political regime exists in any given [capitalist] country. . . . The proletariat of all countries has shed much of its blood to win bourgeois-democratic liber-

ties, and will naturally fight with all its strength to retain them." (*The United Front*, pp. 109-110.)

For two basic reasons Communists fight to defend and extend bourgeois democracy against the attacks of fascist reaction. First, because, obviously, the masses (of which the Communists are part and parcel) can far better shield themselves under a democratic system from the evils of capitalism (which the Communists feel as acutely as other toilers) than they can under the terrorism of a fascist dictatorship. And, second, because, no less obviously, there is more opportunity under a system of bourgeois democracy, where at least a measure of free speech and free organization prevails, to educate and organize the masses for the eventual establishment of socialism than there is under fascism, where every political right of the masses is ruthlessly suppressed. Communists have always been defenders of the democratic rights of the people, and now that these rights are threatened violently by the fascists it is logical and correct that the Communists should be found everywhere in the very front ranks of the defenders of democracy.

97.

Q. *What is the attitude of the Communist Party regarding the use of force and violence in the class struggle?*

A. On this question, Earl Browder outlines the Communist Party policy as follows:

"We Communists want to prevent a continuance of the violence that shames American life. Machine guns are not strangers to American streets, but it has never been the Communists that have brought them out. It is usually the strike-breaking agencies employed by the capitalists which have made machine guns and gas bombs commonplace experiences to large numbers of the American people. We would like to stop all that." (*The People's Front*, p. 200.)

"We of the Communist Party never did and never will hold to a program of forcible establishment of socialism against the

will of the people. While the majority of the people, and above all the working class, do not yet accept the program of socialism, our program of socialist reconstruction of society is a matter for educational work to win the majority, while our practical and immediate political work is to be in the forefront in the organization of the majority of the workers and of the people generally against the reactionary menace to their rights and interests, for a program of betterment and their lives, such as the majority is ready to accept and fight for now—the program of the People's Front.” (*Ibid.*, p. 266.)

“So long as the people can control their government there will be no necessity for a bloody revolution. If the capitalists would submit to the decisions of the American people the change to socialism would be bloodless.” (*Ibid.*, p. 199.)

Article IV, Section 1, of the Constitution of the Communist Party provides:

“The Communist Party of the U.S.A. upholds the democratic achievements of the American people. It opposes with all its power any clique, group, circle, faction or party which conspires or acts to subvert, undermine, weaken or overthrow any or all institutions of American democracy whereby the majority of the American people have obtained power to determine their own destiny in any degree. The Communist Party of the U.S.A., standing unqualifiedly for the right of the majority to direct the destinies of our country, will fight with all its strength against any and every effort, whether it comes from abroad or from within, to impose upon our people the arbitrary will of any selfish minority group or party or clique or conspiracy.”

98.

Q. *Does the Communist Party “take orders from Moscow,” as so many people, from Hearst to Norman Thomas, charge?*

A. “The assertion that the American Communists work under ‘orders from Moscow’ is absolutely untrue. There are no Communists in the world who would agree to work ‘under orders’ from outside against their own convictions and will and

contrary to the requirements of the situation. Even if there were such Communists they would not be worth a cent. Communists are bold and courageous, they are fighting against a host of enemies. The value of a Communist, among other things, lies in that he is able to defend his convictions. Therefore, it is strange to speak of American Communists as not having their own convictions and being capable only of working according to 'orders' from outside.

"The only part of the assertion that has any truth in it at all is that the American Communists are affiliated to an international Communist organization and from time to time consult with the central body of this organization on one question or another. But what is there bad about this? Are the American labor leaders opposed to an international workers' center? It is true they are not affiliated to Amsterdam, not because they are opposed to an international workers' center as such, however, but because they regard Amsterdam as being too radical. [The A. F. of L., under C.I.O. pressure, has since affiliated.—W. Z. F.]

"Why may the capitalists organize internationally and the working class, or part of it, not have its international organization? Is it not clear that Green and his friends in the American Federation of Labor slander the American Communists when they slavishly repeat the capitalist legends about 'orders from Moscow'?" (Published in the pamphlet, *An Interview with Stalin by the American Trade Union Delegation, 1927*, and in *Leninism*, Vol. I, by Joseph Stalin, pp. 383-84.)

99.

Q. How can Communists, standing as they do for socialism, be good Americans under the existing capitalist system? What is there to the charge that communism is an alien doctrine?

A. The Communist Party, with its immediate program of the defense of democracy and peace against fascism and war and its ultimate goal of socialism, not only represents the best interests now of the overwhelming masses of the American

people, but also thereby sums up and continues the democratic and revolutionary traditions of our nation. The Communist Party is, therefore, profoundly American, and its struggle is to preserve and develop all that is democratic and progressive in our civilization. Communism is no more alien to the United States than is science or religion or democracy or capitalism, all of which developments, some progressive, others reactionary, are at once both national and international phenomena growing directly out of the soil of our social system.

In his report to the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, Georgi Dimitroff put squarely the relationship of the workers' movement to the welfare of the nation as a whole:

"The interests of the class struggle of the proletariat against its native exploiters and oppressors are in no contradiction to the interests of a free and happy future for the nation. On the contrary, the socialist revolution will signify the *salvation of the nation* and will open up to it the road to loftier heights. By the *very fact* of building at the present time its class organizations and consolidating its positions, by the very fact of defending the democratic rights and liberties against fascism, by the very fact of fighting for the overthrow of capitalism, the working class is fighting for the future of the nation." (*The United Front*, pp. 80-81.)

100.

Q. *Does the American Communist Party's advocacy of the love of country contradict Marxian internationalism?*

A. By no means. Lenin, whose proletarian internationalism certainly cannot be questioned, wrote the following, many years ago:

"Are we enlightened Great-Russian proletarians impervious to the feeling of national pride? Certainly not. We love our language and our motherland; we, more than any other group, are working to raise its laboring masses (*i.e.*, nine-tenths of its population) to the level of intelligent democrats and socialists.

We, more than anybody, are grieved to see and feel to what violence, oppression and mockery our beautiful motherland is being subjected by the tsarist hangmen, the nobles and the capitalists. We are proud of the fact that those acts of violence met with resistance in our midst, in the midst of the Great-Russians; that we have given the world Radishchev, the Decembrists, the declassé revolutionaries of the 'seventies; that in 1905 the Great-Russian working class created a powerful revolutionary party of the masses. . . . We are filled with national pride because of the knowledge that the Great-Russian nation, too, has created a revolutionary class; that it, too, has proven capable of giving humanity great examples of struggle for freedom and for socialism; that its contribution is not confined solely to great pogroms, numerous scaffolds, torture chambers, great famines, and great servility before the priests, the tsars, the landowners and the capitalists." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, p. 100.)

101.

Q. *What is the attitude of the Communists towards the American flag and the Red flag?*

A. The American flag is the American toiling masses' national emblem of democracy and progress, the traditional symbol of their strivings for a freer and better life. Under its folds they have fought through two revolutions (1776 and 1861) and with it at their head they have battled through a century and a half of economic and political struggle against their capitalist and landlord oppressors. The fact that these same exploiters of the people continuously defile the flag and use it as a cloak for their villainies does not change its meaning for the broad freedom-loving masses of our people. The Communist Party reveres the American flag because of its democratic and revolutionary significance.

The Red flag is the international banner of liberty and social advance. It has been carried through many revolutions and battles for freedom throughout the world for centuries past. The first flag of the American Revolution was the Red

flag. Today the Red flag is the world standard of socialism. Beneath it hundreds of millions of workers and farmers are valiantly fighting to defend democracy and peace against the fascists; are struggling to put an end forever to the torment of capitalist exploitation and to build up a free socialist society. The Communist Party, together with innumerable other workers' parties, trade unions and farmers' organizations in many countries, honors and supports the Red flag, the historic world symbol of popular freedom.

102.

Q. In what general respects would socialism in the U.S.A. differ from socialism in the Soviet Union?

A. The basic features of future world socialism are clearly forecast by the present social system in the U.S.S.R.; with its political rule by the workers and farmers, Soviet form of government, socialization of industry and collectivization of land, planned production for use instead of for profit, political equality of national groups, broad extension of democracy, etc. Socialism in the United States, although no blueprint of it can be drawn beforehand, will probably depart only in minor respects from these fundamentals.

The principal difference between socialism in the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. lies rather in the greater speed and ease with which socialism will be built in our country once the workers and their allies secure political power. Tsarist Russia was a very backward and undeveloped country: it had but little industry, its agriculture was mediævally primitive, and it possessed relatively few skilled workers and engineers. This weak economic base laid tremendous obstacles in the way of the new socialist system, and the situation was worsened all along the line by the fact that ever since its inception the Soviet Government has been ringed about by hostile capitalist states which have used every means at their command—armed force, economic boycott, organized sabotage, assassination, etc.—to destroy the budding socialist society.

The general consequence of all this has been that the Soviet people faced incredible difficulties in building socialism. For years they had to go through great privations and hardships in order to construct their industries from the ground up, to revolutionize their primitive agriculture, to train large armies of skilled workers and technicians, to organize a great Red Army able to defend them from their capitalist world enemies. Their struggle has been history's greatest saga of struggle, heroism and achievement.

In the United States, however, the building of socialism will be vastly easier. Here we have a gigantic and modern system of industry and agriculture, and also a huge reservoir of skilled workers and technicians. This means that the material base for socialism in the United States is already created. Moreover, the American people will have the great socialist experience of the Soviet masses to draw upon. Also, with the powerful Soviet Union already in existence and the decay of world capitalism further advanced, the new American socialist society will not greatly (if at all) have to fear the hostile capitalist encirclement that has been such a serious handicap to the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. In short, once the American workers and farmers achieve the main task of winning political power they will advance with giant strides, far faster than the Russians did, in the construction of the new social order and in the unfolding of a mass prosperity, democracy and culture utterly unknown and impossible under capitalism.

103.

Q. What will become of the small business men and the small farmer under socialism?

A. Socialism will enrich the present-day pinched and poverty-stricken lives of the workers; it will also bring vast benefits to all other sections of the working population. The aim of socialism is to socialize eventually all branches of the basic means of production and distribution. Once the workers gain power

they will proceed to take over the banks, great industries, transportation systems, big land holdings, mineral deposits, etc. But as for the small businesses, handicrafts, small farms, etc., they will be only gradually reorganized on a socialist basis, as their proprietors come to understand the great advantage to them personally of such a step. The *Program of the Communist International* says on this point:

“Nationalization of production should not, as a rule, be applied to small and middle-sized enterprises (peasants, small artisans, handicraft, small and medium shops, small manufacturers, etc.). First, because the proletariat must draw a strict distinction between the property of the small commodity producer working for himself, who can and must be gradually brought into the groove of socialist construction, and the property of the capitalist exploiter, the liquidation of which is an indispensable prerequisite for socialist construction. . . . Any attempt to break up their economic system violently and to compel them to adopt collective methods by force will only lead to harmful results.” (pp. 44-45.)

104.

Q. What are the main reasons for the decline of the Socialist Party in the United States?

A. The Socialist Party today has but one-fifth as many members as it had when it was founded 38 years ago and only one-twenty-fifth of its peak membership total in 1912. Its mass influence has also fallen catastrophically.

The principal reason for this political debacle is that the Socialist Party, dominated from its inception until today by opportunist middle-class intellectuals, has never followed a consistent policy of class struggle. The Socialist Party leadership did not allow the party to come forward militantly as the champion of the masses in their daily struggles, but for many years took an equivocal position in such matters as the fight against the Gompers-Green machine, the struggle for industrial unionism and the Labor Party, the relation towards the

Soviet Union, etc., and during the past few years, infected with counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, the Socialist Party leaders have put themselves in opposition to almost every important issue the masses are fighting for. Moreover, the Socialist Party leadership, instead of educating its members and the party's mass following in the principles of Marx and Engels (and later Lenin and Stalin), without which no real Socialist Party could be built, waged war throughout its existence against the Marxian Left wing of the party, repressing it in every way and driving tens of thousands of good fighters out of the party in the splits of 1909, 1912 and 1919. The results of these anti-Socialist policies are evident in the bankrupt Socialist Party of today. (See *The Crisis in the Socialist Party*, by William Z. Foster.)

If the Communist Party, the Party of a new type—Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary, monolithic, disciplined—is now growing rapidly and extending its mass influence, while the Socialist Party shrinks into an empty sect, it is precisely because, possessing a sound proletarian leadership, our Party comes forward boldly with a militant program of immediate mass struggle, expressed by its policy of the democratic front, while at the same time it assiduously educates its members and mass supporters in the revolutionary teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. In short, the Communist Party is following a true policy of class struggle.

105.

Q. Hitler and his echo in the United States, Father Coughlin, claim that the Russian Communist Party at the time of the Revolution and the German Communist Party just before Hitler seized control were predominantly Jewish parties. Is this true?

A. It is not true in either case. Such statements are a phase of the fascist propaganda that all Communists (and progressives) are Jews and all Jews (and progressives) are Communists. It is just so much Jew-baiting and Red-baiting. In the *Nation* of

December 17, 1938, William C. Kernan gives figures which effectively dispose of the Hitler-Coughlin assertions. He says:

“... before the Nazis came to power the Communist voting strength in Germany was 6,000,000. And in all Germany there were only some 300,000 Jews who had the right to vote. Even if these 300,000 Jews had all voted Communist, a completely untenable assumption in itself [as they were largely employers and tradesmen—*W. Z. F.*] what would they have amounted to among 6,000,000?”

“From the statistics of the Petrograd Communist Party in 1918 we learn that of the Petrograd Communist Party in 1918, 74.3 per cent were Russians, 10.5 per cent Latvians, 6.3 per cent Poles, 3.7 Esthonians, 2.6 per cent Lithuanians and 2.6 per cent Jews.”

106.

Q. What function has the Communist Party in elections when you so often advise workers to vote for other parties?

A. The Communist Party has many other vital functions beside putting up election candidates, important though this is. The Party is a powerful educational and organizing force, constantly utilizing its press and membership to instruct the masses of the people in the principles of Marxism, that is, in the ways and means best fitted to defend their interests today and eventually to achieve socialism. On every front of the class struggle the Communists will be found in the front line shock troops. The Party is necessary as an organization to develop and direct all this mass educational and organizational work. If the Party often withdraws its election candidates and calls upon the workers to unite behind one progressive candidate for each election office, this is done to develop solidarity among the toilers and to ensure victory for the forces of democracy and peace. In election campaigns where it withdraws its candidates there still remains for the Communist Party the broad task of educating the masses about the issues involved and of organizing them to carry the elections.

Q. *Why do you call the Communist Party the vanguard of the working class?*

A. "The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement." (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, p. 22.)

"The Communist Party is a *section* of the working class, its most progressive, most class conscious, and, therefore, its most revolutionary section. A Communist Party is formed by the selection of the most class conscious, most courageous and most far-sighted workers. The Communist Party has no interests differing from the interests of the working class. A Communist Party differs from the rest of the mass of the workers in that it sees the whole of the historical path of the entire working class, and strives at all the turning points of this path to champion not individual groups, not individual trades, but the interests of the working class as a whole. The Communist Party is the organizational-political lever by the aid of which the most progressive section of the working class directs the mass of the proletariat and semi-proletariat along the right path." (V. I. Lenin, *On Organization*, pp. 37-38.)

Q. *Critics of the Communist Party charge that it has repeatedly changed its "line." Please explain this.*

A. The basic policy of the Communist Party remains as always—to defend to the utmost the everyday demands of the masses and to prepare these masses for the eventual establishment of

socialism. In a world, however, that is changing so rapidly, due to the breakdown of the capitalist system, our Party, necessarily, has to be flexible in the policies which it adopts for accomplishing its constant objectives.

Thus, when fascism develops and makes a desperate attempt to destroy world democracy it is only an evidence of common horse sense that the Communist Party should put forward more strongly than ever the question of defending that democracy. Or, when labor leaders who have for years followed a conservative policy, which the Communists sharply criticized, begin seriously to organize the workers in the basic industries, then naturally, our Party must assume a different attitude towards them. Or, when a broad progressive current develops within the Democratic Party, of course, then our Party has to modify its former position, which was valid when no such progressive trend existed.

The Communist Party is a living, fighting organization, functioning in a world in rapid flux. To win its way towards its clear-set goal it must and does modify its tactical policies, even though to shallow critics this may sometimes seem to contradict its previous position. Those who harp so much about the Communist Party changing its "line" are either mummified sectarians who learn nothing from the course of events, or enemies of the workers who dread the Leninist flexibility and adaptability of our Party to the exigencies of the class struggle.

109.

Q. *What is meant by "democratic centralism" and "Communist discipline"?*

A. The Communist Party democratically formulates its political policies and elects its leadership—National, State, City, Section and Branch—upon the basis of broad, representative conventions and membership meetings. The leaders are strictly responsible to the bodies that elected them and to the committees that may rank above them in the Party. Upon the foundation of this democratic system, plus a thorough-going

Marxist-Leninist education of its membership, the Party is able to develop the firm unity, resolute discipline and decisive action for which it is well known and which is so necessary to fight reaction and fascism successfully. Stalin thus characterizes Communist discipline:

“... Iron discipline in the Party is impossible without unity of will and without absolute and complete unity of action on the part of all members of the Party. This does not mean, of course, that the possibility of a struggle of opinions within the Party is thus excluded. On the contrary, iron discipline does not exclude, but presupposes, criticism and struggle of opinion within the Party. Least of all does it mean that this discipline must be ‘blind’ discipline. On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline can be truly iron discipline. But after the discussion has been closed, after criticism has run its course and a decision has been made, unity of will and unity of action of all Party members become indispensable conditions without which Party unity and iron discipline in the Party are inconceivable.” (*Leninism*, Vol. I, pp. 96-97.)

110.

Q. What is the attitude of the Communist Party towards a federal health program for the masses?

A. There is a vast amount of needless sickness among the great mass of the population, and fully half of the people lack necessary medical and dental care. As the basic approach to solving this urgent problem the Communist Party endorses the principle that “the health of the people is the concern of the government.” It supports the program adopted at the National Health Conference in Washington in July, 1938, and later incorporated in the Wagner National Health Bill (S. 1620). The Communist Party also endorses the demand for compulsory federal health insurance, and works for strengthening state and local health legislation, workmen’s compension, elimination of industrial hazards, pure food and

drug laws, etc. The Communist Party demands better hospitals and more clinics, health centers in the rural communities and congested city areas. It also has in mind the health of the masses in supporting all movements for slum clearance, more playgrounds, better wages and improved working conditions. At the same time that the Party demands a federal government health program it also insists that the employers are responsible for the health of the workers in their employ. It therefore urges that health clauses be written into trade union agreements and that the full cost of all factory medical, dental and hospital care shall be borne solely by the employers.

111.

Q. Why does the Communist Party oppose the equal rights (for women) amendment to the United States Constitution?

A. The "Equal Rights Amendment" sponsored by the Woman's Party, if carried, would play into the hands of the exploiters. Its proposal of formal equality between men and women workers is a delusion; it disregards the fact that women are under various handicaps in industry, because of child-bearing and adverse traditions, and that they therefore require special measures of protection. The "Equal Rights Amendment" would wipe out such vital present-day legislation as mothers' pensions and non-support laws, and prevent the enactment of further necessary legislation to protect working mothers. That is why, in common with trade unions, progressive women's organizations and many civic bodies, the Communist Party does not support this proposed amendment.

112.

Q. What is the Communist attitude towards birth control in the United States?

A. The Communists support the demand that scientific information on birth control be placed in the hands of the

masses so that they may regulate the size of their families according to their wishes and needs. This will help preserve the health of mothers and will give women a fuller opportunity to develop their personalities and their economic political and social interests. However, Communists combat vigorously all propaganda to the effect that birth control can solve any or all of the elementary social problems of the day, such as industrial crisis, unemployment, poverty, fascism and war. These issues cannot be settled by individual efforts at family limitation or regulation, but only by general political mass struggle of the toilers. In the Soviet Union, when the masses are gaining a steadily improving standard of living and security, there is naturally no general need for birth control.

113.

Q. Must a member of the Communist Party be an atheist?

A. "The Communists maintain that the religious beliefs of a person are his private concern in relation to the state and governmental policies. The state should not dictate religious beliefs. We Communists are completely opposed on principle to state coercion in regard to religious beliefs.

"Of course, Communists do not consider religion to be a private matter in so far as it concerns members of our revolutionary Party. We stand without any reservations for education that will root out beliefs in the supernatural, that will remove the religious prejudices which stand in the way of organizing the masses for socialism, that will withdraw the special privileges of religious institutions. But as far as religious workers go, the Party does not insist that they abandon their beliefs before they join the Party. Our test for such people is whether they represent and fight for the aspirations of the masses. If they do, we welcome them into our Party, and we exercise no coercion against their religious beliefs within our movement. We subject their religious beliefs to careful and systematic criticism, and we expect that they will not be

able to withstand this educational process. It is our experience that their work in the movement will bring them to see the correctness of our viewpoint on this question." (Earl Browder, *What Is Communism?* p. 146.)

Q. *On what grounds is it possible for the Communist Party, with its revolutionary program, to cooperate with Catholics and other religious workers?*

A. Communists cooperate generally with Catholics and other religious workers not on the basis that these workers adopt Communist views of religion (or we their opinions), nor of acceptance of the Communist Party's ultimate program of socialism, but upon the grounds of a common fight in defense of democracy and peace against the menace of fascism and war, which threatens all toilers alike, regardless of their religious convictions.

In *A Message to Catholics*, Earl Browder states the Communist Party position:

"Within the camp of democracy are included the great majority of the members of the Catholic Church. We Communists extend the hand of brotherly cooperation to them, and express our pleasure to find ourselves fighting shoulder to shoulder with them for the same economic and social aims.

"The Catholic community, comprising about one-sixth of the American population, shares fully all the hardships and aspirations for a better life of our whole people. . . .

"Fascism threatens not only the labor movement and the Communists. It threatens everything progressive and decent in human life. It threatens to destroy freedom of religion and the church, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish. Surely in the face of this terrible menace, which hovers over America, as well as Europe, we should all rise above differences to join hands for our common salvation, just as we would to meet some terrible natural calamity." (pp. 7 and 15.)

Q. *What are the membership qualifications for joining the Communist Party?*

A. This point is covered by Article III of the Communist Party Constitution, as follows:

"Section 1. Any person, eighteen years of age or more, regardless of race, sex, color, religious belief, or nationality, who is a citizen or who declares his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States, and whose loyalty to the working class is unquestioned, shall be eligible for membership.

"Section 2. A Party member is one who accepts the Party program, attends the regular meetings of the membership branch of his place of work or of his territory or trade, who pays dues regularly and is active in Party work.

"Section 3. An applicant for membership shall sign an application card which shall be endorsed by at least two members of the Communist Party. Applications are subject to discussion and decisions by the basic organization of the Party (shop, industrial, neighborhood branch) to which the application is presented. After the applicant is accepted by a majority vote of the membership of the branch present at a regular meeting he shall publicly pledge as follows:

"I pledge firm loyalty to the best interests of the working class and full devotion to all progressive movements of the people. I pledge to work actively for the preservation and extension of democracy and peace, for the defeat of fascism and all forms of national oppression, for equal rights to the Negro people and for the establishment of socialism. For this purpose, I solemnly pledge to remain true to the principles of the Communist Party, to maintain its unity of purpose and action and to work to the best of my ability to fulfil its program.'" (*The Constitution and By-Laws of the Communist Party of the U.S.A.*, pp. 7-8.)



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