

**WILLIAM  
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FOSTER**



# The Twilight of World Capitalism

*The lessons of epochal changes which have transformed the world during Foster's life—the decline of capitalism and rise of socialism.*

*Other works by the same author*

PAGES FROM A WORKER'S LIFE

AMERICAN TRADE UNIONISM: PRINCIPLES AND ORGANIZATION,  
STRATEGY AND TACTICS

THE NEW EUROPE

# The Twilight of World Capitalism

*by William Z. Foster*



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*To My Great-Grandson Joseph Manley Kolko  
Who Will Live in a Communist United States*

## I. The Decay of World Capitalism

The decline of the capitalist system that set in at the end of the nineteenth century was of the most profound importance. This tremendous fact, the growing decay of the long-dominant regime of world capitalism, is manifesting itself in far-reaching changes in every phase of our life: economic, political, scientific, religious, intellectual, artistic, social. The ever-speeding decline of international capitalism, together with its great concomitant fact, the rise of world socialism, is the all-decisive development in the general period in which we are living.

When I was born, on February 25, 1881, in the manufacturing town of Taunton, Massachusetts (where the first rebel flag, a red one, by the way, was raised during the Revolution of 1776), capitalism, on a world scale, seemed indeed to have a long and flourishing future ahead of it. No wonder then that those who profited most from this organized method of robbing the toilers considered their system heaven-sent, possessed of eternal life, and the perfect arrangement by which mankind should work and live. Those students who concerned themselves with such things knew, of course, that the history of capitalism was a dark and bloody one. During the four hundred or so years of its existence, its course had been marked by violent revolutions in many countries; its frequently recurring wars had deluged the various countries with blood; it was savagely robbing and subjugating native peoples all over the world; and its factories and workshops everywhere were the scenes of the most barbarous exploitation the world had ever known.

In our own country we have had no less than three bourgeois or capitalist revolutions, or, more correctly stated, we have had a three-phased capitalist revolution. This great fact our ruling class, in its desire to stifle all socialist ambitions in the working class, would now like to have us forget. They would have us believe that all need for revolution is now past; that, indeed, the people no longer possess the right of revolution. The first of the three American capitalist revolutions was the conquest of the continent from the Indians, which constituted the revolutionary overthrow of their primitive tribal communalism by developing capi-

talism.\* The second revolution was the breaking away of the youthful, capitalist American colonies from semi-feudal England. And the third revolution was our Civil War, in which the rising young capitalist class broke the power of the dominant slave-holding class. Each of these revolutions was accompanied by long and bloody wars. Daughters of the American Revolution and the House Committee on Un-American Activities, please take notice.

But the supporters of capitalism a couple of generations ago airily swept aside all this violence, robbery, and suffering as merely the unavoidable birthpangs of the beneficent capitalist system. Although, indeed, one must deplore the countless millions of people brutally slaughtered on capitalism's battlefields and worked to death in its factories, nobody, and least of all the Communists, would deny that the establishment of the capitalist system, for all its needless misery and oppression, historically constituted a big step forward for the human race. Since the advent of capitalism, humanity has made greater progress than during the previous 2,000 years. The industrial revolution, which came with capitalism, multiplied many times man's productive powers. It was capitalism, too, that gave rise to bourgeois democracy by shattering the enslaving bonds of the feudal landlords and the Catholic Church. But this does not contradict the fact that capitalism, since its birth, has been a brutal and savage social system. The people have had to pay dearly for whatever historical advances they have made under capitalism, in misery, agony, and death. This is another of the innumerable tragedies of mankind's upward struggle through the ages. But the capitalists never take upon themselves any blame whatsoever for these hardships. They simply picture themselves as the unsullied benefactors of humanity.

To the employers of the time when I inadvertently happened upon the scene, the world picture presented by capitalism indeed looked alluring and convincing. Capitalism veritably was a paradise-on-earth for those who lived by grabbing the riches of the earth and by exploiting the toil of other people. The capitalist system flourished in all four corners of the earth. Great Britain, unchallenged mistress of the sea, held a vast and ever-expanding empire; the lusty United States, growing like a bay tree, had already, almost unnoticed, outstripped every

\* At the time of Columbus' arrival in 1492, there were from 10 to 25 million Indians throughout the western hemisphere. Their social organization ranged from that of the simplest nomads on the plains and in the jungles to the highly developed semi-civilizations of the Aztecs, Chibchas, and Incas. The European conquerors shattered this whole structure, slaughtering large numbers of Indians and reducing the rest to the status of slaves, serfs, peons, wage-workers, or even paupers.

other country in industrial development; Germany, after her victorious war over France in 1871, was booming ahead in the creation of a great industrial system; indeed, every country in Europe was alive with industrialization, and even far-off Japan, awakening from many centuries of feudal slumber, was beginning its spectacular course of transforming itself into a powerful capitalist empire. Reinforcing all these evidences of capitalist health, strength, and growth in 1881, the colonial peoples occupying rich areas of the earth, offered an apparently boundless supply of good markets, cheap labor power, and raw materials. For capitalism, seemingly, everything was lovely and the goose hung high.

Nevertheless, even in those halcyon days, there were some sinister flaws easily to be observed in the generally idyllic picture for the capitalists. For one thing, every few years the capitalist systems in the various countries were wracked by devastating economic crises which paralyzed the industries, ruined many capitalists, and brought starvation to millions of unemployed. But, as the capitalist economists hopefully noted at the time, these economic earthquakes, temporary in character, soon cured themselves and left capitalism higher than ever in its never-ending spiral upswing. Another bad feature was the occurrence of many wars, with terrific losses in life and property. Nevertheless, out of these national wars, as the capitalists readily signaled, came bigger, stronger, and more consolidated capitalist countries. And finally there was an obvious danger in the developing working class, with its strikes, political struggles, and revolutionary ideas—a danger that had been dramatically emphasized in 1848 by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in their immortal *Communist Manifesto*, and by the Paris Commune of 1871. But why should the exploiters be unduly frightened by this incipient threat of socialism, in the face of the basic fact of the irresistible conquest of the world by militant capitalism? The capitalist rulers of the earth in those days saw an endless perspective of growth and power for their dynamic social system.

What a vast change has taken place in the situation of world capitalism today, as against that which prevailed in the year of my birth. During the relatively short span of my lifetime the world capitalist system has passed its zenith and fallen a prey to a corroding decay. International capitalism, because of its many inner contradictions, has developed a general crisis, which constantly grows worse. The definite shaping up of this general capitalist crisis dates from the eve of World War I. Although the defenders of capitalism do not admit that their world system as a whole is going into decline, nevertheless they cannot help but be deeply alarmed at its increasingly difficult position and they

are frantically seeking remedies for its multiplying problems. But they don't know what the trouble is, so they blame everything upon the Communists. "The world is sick, and Moscow is the cause," shout the capitalist soothsayers, who dash around excitedly, like ants into whose heap someone has violently thrust a big stick.

Capitalism, as Lenin pointed out, has now passed into its final, imperialist, stage. Imperialism is characterized by a vast growth of monopoly, by the consolidation of bank and industrial capital, by the export of capital, by the division of the world's markets among the big powers, and by the dividing up of the territories of the world among the great capitalist empires. Imperialism sharpens and intensifies all the contradictions of the capitalist system and precipitates the present era of world wars and socialist revolutions.

The general crisis of capitalism is a highly complex matter, involving every phase of economics, politics, and the many other aspects of the capitalist system. Perhaps one can best explain the significance of this crisis by describing some of its major manifestations. In doing this we will see that the inner-capitalist contradictions which, a couple of generations ago, were only tiny cloudlets on the otherwise brilliantly blue sky of capitalism, have now become dense black storm clouds, threatening all the world with disaster.

1. There is the matter of cyclical economic crises. These crises in earlier and healthier periods of capitalism, while causing lots of havoc, nevertheless seemed to work themselves out after a few years of crisis and depression and to leave industry on a higher plane. But today, in the period of the general decline of capitalism, cyclical economic crises have become truly fearsome visitations. Thus, the recent great world economic crisis, which struck in this country like a tornado in October, 1929, left the whole capitalist world prostrate economically for several years. The capitalist colossus trembled and shook all over the earth. This crisis cost the United States 300 billion dollars in lost production, or as much as the material cost of World War II. Nor will matters improve regarding these cyclical economic crises. On the contrary, they will constantly grow worse. The next and inevitable economic collapse, which will center in the United States, will have its basis in the fact that war-swollen production in the United States has far outrun the consuming capacity of the lagging capitalist domestic and foreign markets. It will be much more terrible in its effects than the last crisis. All capitalism, particularly in this country, is already alarmed at the deadly prospect of the next economic crisis, sinister signs of which are now multiplying on every side. At this writing, May,

1949, there are an estimated 5,000,000 unemployed with 9,000,000 more working part time, and the industrial barometer continues to fall. This intensification of the cyclical crisis is one of the major signs of the general crisis of the world system of capitalism.

2. There are the contradictory economic and political interests of workers and capitalists. The capitalists, in their boundless greed, grab all they can of what the workers produce, and thereby create powerful worker resistance. By the time I was born, this basic antagonism between workers and capitalists, the foundation of the class struggle, was already giving rise to political struggles and strikes and was causing much concern to the capitalists. But now, being vastly intensified, this wage struggle has become a veritable nightmare to capitalists everywhere. The workers during all these years have built up gigantic trade unions and Communist parties in many parts of the world. They have also very largely taken on a revolutionary ideology and their trend everywhere is inexorably towards the Left. The great strength and militancy of the modern labor and political movement of the workers, despite the treacherous leadership of opportunist Social-Democratic and conservative trade union officialdom, has, in this period of deepening general capitalist crisis, become a threat to the very existence of the capitalist system. The class struggle has now become so intense that every capitalist sees the dire menace of it, even though, as in the United States, he may try to deny its existence.

3. There is the conflict between the imperialist countries and the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. This antagonism, a major aspect of the general crisis of capitalism, was also only a minor headache to the capitalists of a couple of generations ago. In those days the peoples of the less-developed countries were easy pickings for the all-conquering capitalists. They provided markets and resources and cheap labor galore. If here and there what were sneeringly called "the natives" ventured to make resistance against their enslavement and despoliation by imperialists, the capitalists' modern-armed forces easily shot their spear-and-arrow revolts to pieces, and that was all there was to it. During my youth the press was full of such colonial wars, or, more properly, imperialist butcheries. But now, what an utterly different picture. Today, the shoe is on the other foot. The peoples in the colonial and semi-colonial countries—China, India, Pakistan, Indo-China, Indonesia, Burma, Malay, Korea, as well as in various parts of Africa—are on the march to national independence, and all the power and trickery of the world capitalists cannot stop them. Spreading colonial revolts, especially during and after World War II, are pulling from under world capi-

talism one of its most vital foundations, the unbridled exploitation of the less developed peoples by the imperialist countries of Europe and America. The revolt of the colonial peoples is one of the heaviest blows being suffered by international capitalism during this whole period. It is one of the deepest reasons why Western Europe—with its colonial empires, Great Britain, France, Holland, Belgium, and Portugal—is finding it impossible to recover from the war, despite many billions of dollars of American aid.

4. A tremendous element in the general capitalist crisis is the antagonism among the capitalist countries themselves. Even now, although trying to make a common front against the U.S.S.R., they are bitterly fighting among themselves over markets, Middle East oil, and colonial controls. Such antagonisms culminate in wars that have grown from the relatively limited national wars of a half dozen decades ago into the mighty world struggles of our times. These antagonisms are ruining the capitalist system. Dominated by sordid gangs of monopoly capitalists and animated by the boundless greed for profit and power which is the very soul of capitalism everywhere, the great empires of today wage the most devastating wars against each other in their relentless imperialist quest for world domination. In consequence, the imperialist World War I did deadly damage to capitalism in its very fiber, incurably deepening the general crisis of the capitalist system, and World War II is having even more disastrous after-effects upon world capitalism. The most important of these contradictions today among rival capitalist states is the sharpening conflict between Great Britain and the United States in many parts of the world.

5. There is the antagonism between capitalism and socialism. Even at the time of my birth the question of socialism was causing the capitalists everywhere considerable concern, but the ruling class did not feel socialism to be too much of a menace, what with capitalism swiftly on the upgrade all over the world. Today, however, the very thought of socialism sends shivers of apprehension through the petty, weazened hearts of the capitalists. They see their social system sinking deeper and deeper into the swamp of its insoluble difficulties, while all about them is the rising tide of socialism. Hence, the capitalists of the world, under the leadership of American big business, want to try to solve, once and for all, the menacing question of socialism by attempting to drown it in blood, while they believe they still have the power to do so. They want to crush the U.S.S.R., the new European democracies, the militant labor movement, and the rebellious colonial peoples. But such an attempt would surely be the last fatal gamble for them, resulting in

irretrievable disaster to their decrepit system of wholesale robbery of the people. It would deepen the general capitalist crisis to the bursting point. The already sick international capitalism, whose emblem should be a monstrous hog, could not stand another world war.

The sharpening of these contradictions of capitalism, including the great intensification of the cyclical economic crisis, the more acute character of the class struggle between the workers and the employers, the deepening of the conflicts between the capitalist empires and the colonial peoples, the broadening wars among the capitalist empires themselves, and the continuous growth of the socialist world—all this amounts, in sum, to a profound worsening of the general crisis of the whole capitalist system. Only the politically blind can fail to see the fatal significance for capitalism in these great developments of our times, especially when one compares the present desperate situation of capitalism with its rosy position of only a couple of generations ago.

Upon all sides is to be seen the capitalist wreckage brought about by the operation of these contradictions of capitalism. Cities and industries lie in ruins in many parts of the world, international markets and monetary systems are hopelessly disrupted, and vast populations are impoverished and hungry. The British Empire, once so strong and proud, is now deeply stricken with internal weakness and it is not ashamed to remain on the American dole. Proud France has been humbled to the dust and, crimson-faced, obeys its orders from Washington. Germany, Japan, and Italy, once vigorously aggressive countries, are now war-defeated and pauper-prisoners of American imperialism. Only the United States, together with Canada and a few lesser powers, seem to have escaped the holocaust.

There are those defenders of capitalism who claim that Marx was wrong in stating that the development of capitalism was leading to a growing impoverishment of the working class and to the expropriation of the middle class by the capitalists. Let these false prophets get their answer in the desolation of the masses in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and other parts of the world.

Besides the foregoing, manifest signs of the decline of world capitalism, there are many other evidences of this decline which are not so obvious, but which are none the less deadly to capitalism. Thus, capitalism is losing the capacity to develop production and has become an obstacle to its further expansion. From now on only socialism can open the doors to a real development of industry. This great fact constitutes a funeral crepe hanging on the door of world capitalism. Besides this, capitalist science and general culture have lost much of their one-time

robust vigor and are now withering and shrinking—a sure indication of a decadent society. Also, capitalism gives no further direct impulse to democracy, as in earlier times, and now has become definitely anti-democratic and fascistic. The monopolists who dominate all capitalist countries, especially our Wall Street oligarchs, are fascists at heart and their whole tendency is to undermine democracy and to move towards a social system on the barbaric Hitler order. Democracy today grows not with the expansion of capitalism, as it once did, but in spite of capitalism and against it. Democracy's home now is under the banner of socialism.

Finally, as a further sign of the decay of capitalism, the capitalist classes of the various nations, which in the foundation period of capitalism led their peoples out of feudalism and organized them into independent, industrialized, democratic states, are now no longer the real leaders of their peoples. The workers and other toiling masses alone are qualified to speak in the name of their nations. The capitalists, who even in their most progressive years always held their class interests in first place, have now, in the imperialist period, become outright traitors to their respective nations. This was clearly seen during World War II, when the ruling capitalist classes all over Europe, cynically betraying the national independence and the general interests of their peoples, became the lickspittle tools of German imperialism. They hoped that Hitler would be able to beat back the incoming tide of socialism and that they would be able to share in his victory at the expense of their own as well as other peoples. And now these same traitor capitalists, in Asia and Latin America as well as in Europe, are again putting their class interests ahead of national interests and are becoming the puppets of aggressive American imperialism, at the expense of their respective peoples. The American capitalists, too, are pursuing their reckless course of imperialism, flatly against the interests of the American people. Obsolete capitalism is rotting in every fiber and the stench from it sickens the whole world. The workers and their allies are snatching the banners of leadership of the nations from the treason-soaked capitalists.

Those who hope that stricken world capitalism can overcome its general crisis and once again get upon a healthy basis have various conceptions as to how this miracle might be accomplished. Some think that European capitalism, with the help of temporary American aid, will recover and be as strong industrially and politically as ever. But this is a vain hope. Capitalism in Europe is unable to turn back the clock of history. The Marshall Plan cannot save the capitalist nations of Western Europe, as the latter are beginning to recognize by demanding that

the Marshall Plan be extended beyond 1952. Commenting from Paris on the lack of success of the Marshall Plan, William Lowe writes in the New York *Herald-Tribune*, Jan. 5, 1949:

"Present plans will not put Western Europe back on a paying basis within the life of the Marshall Plan, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation reported today. The four-year programs of the nineteen governments participating in the European Recovery Program are both inadequate and unrealistic as they now stand, the report says, and would leave Western Europe with a remaining debt of several billion dollars a year."

The prospect is to put Europe permanently on the American dole. But even such action could not bring prosperity again to Europe. The same disruptive forces within capitalism that brought Europe to its present sad plight will continue to operate and thus further encompass its capitalist ruin. European capitalism has less possibility of recovering because it now confronts several new major obstacles. These include (a) the suicidal cutting off, through the Marshall Plan, of vital markets in the U.S.S.R. and the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe; (b) the weakening of European capitalism's control over the vast colonial peoples of the Far East; (c) the economic competition of the big industries of the United States; and (d) the sinister dangers of fascism, a new economic crisis, and a world war, provoked by American imperialism. Small wonder, then, that, in view of Europe's dismal prospects under capitalism, many American capitalists are disposed to write off European capitalism altogether as a total loss, or to consider Europe simply as a potential military base for war against the Soviet Union.

Then, there are those who believe that world capitalism will receive a new lease on life through the capitalist industrialization of the Far East and other colonial countries, which are now breaking loose from imperialist enslavement and are embarking upon courses of national development. President Truman's proposals in his Inaugural Address to this effect have fed this belief. But such hopes are also illusory. The capitalist system which has received a deathblow in its birthplace, Europe, will never have a renaissance in Asia, Africa, or Latin America. These great undeveloped areas cannot follow the course of development into capitalism and imperialism as did the countries of Europe, particularly Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the Benelux countries. Born in struggle against the decaying capitalist empires, the new democratic countries of the Far East and of similar undeveloped areas will be compelled to take a different route of development than did

the old capitalist lands. Fundamental features of this new route will be nationalized basic industry (with privately owned small industry), elementary planned economy, national working class leadership, and co-operation with the socialist countries of the world. The course which China and others of these countries will take must be toward socialism, not toward a rejuvenated capitalism.

The basic contradiction between the expanding producing powers of capitalism and the restricted character of capitalist markets places a direct fetter upon the expansion of production. This is especially true in the undeveloped countries. This fact furnishes the economic key to an understanding of the tremendous revolutionary movements now developing in the colonial and semi-colonial lands in the Far East. These lands, which contain over a half of the world's two and a quarter billion peoples, cannot industrialize themselves under the restrictive economic and political pressures of capitalism. Hence, they are now explosively bursting their capitalist fetters and are fighting for industrialization against the resistance of the great imperialist powers and along lines that must bring them finally to socialism.

China, the real political leader of the whole Far East colonial world, with its agrarian reforms, anti-monopoly policies, and its goal of eventual socialism, is the authentic expression of the trend of the awakening colonial peoples. The United States tried desperately to save the capitalist-feudal regime in China by furnishing huge military and financial aid to Chiang Kai-shek and by trying to outmaneuver the Chinese Communists. General Marshall, during his visit to China a couple of years ago, tried to bring about a "coalition government," under which the People's Liberation Army would have been liquidated and the Communists given a small representation in the government, with the perspective of being driven out a year or two later, as was done to the Communists in France and Italy by American pressure. But all these schemes failed utterly. China is now marching along its new road to democracy and eventual socialism. World capitalism will not be saved by the colonies which it has so long and barbarously exploited. On the contrary, the freeing of these colonial countries is striking a further deadly blow at the tottering capitalist system.

Finally, there are capitalist supporters who believe that world capitalism will escape destruction by the powerful United States taking hold of the whole ramshackle capitalist structure and reorganizing it into its own American image. But this, too, is just a dream of desperate exploiters, driven to the wall by the iron logic of world economic and political evolution. The only possible shape such an attempt at interna-

tional capitalist reorganization by the United States could take would be the erection of a great American fascist world empire, with industrialization concentrated chiefly in the United States and with the rest of the world subordinate to the will of America's big capitalists. But the attempt to put such a fantastic proposition into effect could only be provocative of world-wide economic dislocations, fierce resistance of the many peoples against being subjugated, and a whole new round of wars and revolutions. The general result would be to speed up the present tempo of the breakdown of the capitalist system and the oncoming of world socialism.

As Marx and Engels forecast a century ago, world capitalism is doomed. Once progressive, it has now become, because of its own inner contradictions, a reactionary social system, a cancer on the body of humanity. But capitalism is a tough old bird and it does not die easily. In its efforts to survive it is plunging the world into one great war after another, into spreading economic crises, and into swamps of fascist slavery. And now, with the deadly atom bomb in its claws, it threatens the very existence of civilization. But, fight as it may, capitalism is historically slated to go, and go it will, regardless of its desperate struggles to survive. The elimination of world capitalism and the establishment of socialism are the broad steps needed to enable humanity to pass on to higher levels of civilization. It will be a great day when mankind can finally write "The End" to the capitalist system. The peoples of the earth, with the workers in the lead, will not fail to accomplish this historic task.

## II. The Rise of World Socialism

In the past two generations world capitalism has passed its zenith and begun to sink into decline but, on the other side of the international picture, world socialism has grown into lusty youth. Indeed, so clearly has this double process of declining capitalism and rising socialism shown itself that there are now strong reasons to believe that socialism has already become the more powerful of the two systems on a world scale. Historians will probably record that the years immediately following World War II constituted the time when the world balance of forces were definitely tipped on the side of socialism.

Under socialism the decisive industries, the land, the banks, the transportation systems, and all other major means of production and distribution are in the hands of the people, and not of private capitalists. Production is carried on for social use instead of for private profit. The whole national economy is operated according to plan, not by chance, as under the competitive system of capitalism. The workers and their democratic allies, the farmers and professionals, control the government completely. This system of society, based upon science, abolishes the great contradictions with which capitalism is afflicted. There is no further exploitation of man by man. Without capitalists, democracy is assured and there can be no fascism. In this planned society, free of exploitation and capitalist chaos, there can be no cyclical crises and no unemployment. War, too, is unthinkable in a socialist world. Socialism is the preliminary stage to communism, the highest form of society. Under communism, the wages system and the state, both of which exist in special forms under socialism, will eventually disappear. In the Soviet Union the question of the evolution from the present-day socialism to communism has now become a matter of practical politics. Socialism and communism cast off the economic, political, and ideological fetters from man and open up before him a boundless prospect for human happiness, well-being, and development.

Socialism is the first phase of communism, and the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the transition between capitalism and socialism. This scientific Marxist term has been grossly misused and

distorted by enemies of socialism. Reduced to its simplest terms, it simply means the rule of the workers supported by their democratic allies. Under capitalism, in the United States as elsewhere, there exists the rule of the capitalists, or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The basic difference between these two systems is that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is exercised by the relatively small employing class to repress and exploit the working class, against the interests of society as a whole. The dictatorship of the proletariat is exercised in behalf of the overwhelming mass of the people, to prevent exploitation of man by man, and in the general interests of society.

The Communist Party is the leading force of the dictatorship of the proletariat; it is not the dictatorship itself, which is the rule of the working class. The proletarian dictatorship is the means by which the workers and their allies clear away the economic and political remnants of capitalism and lay the foundations of the new, free society.

The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, especially in this period of the decline of capitalism, is highly reactionary and its ultimate expression is brutal, tyrannical, imperialist, war-making fascism. The dictatorship of the proletariat, or the rule of the workers and their democratic allies, on the other hand, is the world standard bearer of democracy. As Lenin said, the dictatorship of the proletariat is a thousand times more democratic than any capitalist democracy. Its ultimate goal is communism, under which system classes will disappear and so, also, the state. The Soviet Union, with its one-party system, is a dictatorship of the proletariat. In the new democracies of Eastern and Central Europe—Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc.—the coalition governments are based upon the working class. The United States, too, will undoubtedly produce its own specific type of the rule of the working class when it eventually adopts socialism.

I was 36 years old and had already been a socialist 17 years when, like a lightning bolt, socialism scored its first decisive victory over capitalism in 1917. This was the great Russian Socialist Revolution. Prior to that time, indeed ever since its first clear, scientific formulation by Marx and Engels in 1848, socialism had been gradually developing its theory and ideology in many countries, building its organizations, perfecting its strategy and tactics, and testing its strength in growing battles, ranging from ordinary strikes and election struggles to the epoch-making Paris Commune in 1871 and the first Russian Revolution in 1905. This was a long and difficult period, with the genuine Marxists steeling themselves and clarifying their programs in struggle not only against the employers and the capitalist and feudal states, but

also against many petty-bourgeois, Anarchist, Syndicalist, and reformist Social-Democratic deviations in the working class movement itself.

The employers, during this long period, became much alarmed at the growing socialist movement; but, assured by their intellectual soothsayers, misnamed political economists, that socialism was ineffectual because it was contrary to human nature, very few of them, and especially those in the United States, believed that the socialist movement bore within itself the elements of a future order of world society. They were positive of the future of capitalism, a social system which, they loudly proclaimed, undoubtedly did conform to the requirements of so-called human nature. Then came the great Russian Revolution, which dealt world capitalism a shattering blow, one from which it has not yet recovered and never will. Joy came to the hearts of the oppressed throughout the world and fear to the hearts of the capitalists at this tremendous event.

When the big landowners of old Russia and their associate capitalists cold-bloodedly launched into the imperialist World War I in the fall of 1914, they cynically believed that the Russian people would allow themselves unresistingly to be butchered in the interests of their political masters, as they had so often done before. But this time the ruling classes badly miscalculated. Right in the middle of the war, they ran smack into the greatest revolution in the history of the world, one which completely wiped out their whole oppressive regime. This time the exploited caught up with the exploiters aplenty. And all the capitalist world and its Social-Democratic agents, watched in amazement and alarm the bewildering course of events. Actually, capitalism was taking a first-class licking from the workers and peasants. Unbelievable!

The Russian Revolution broke world capitalism at its weakest point. In Russia several co-related factors operated to bring about the revolution. First, the rotten tsarist aristocracy constituted one of the most barbarous and backward ruling classes in the world; next, the capitalist contradictions revealed themselves there in sharpest form, and, finally, Russia had a revolutionary working class and peasantry in a high state of ferment which the weak ruling class could not withstand. These revolutionary forces were led by the strongly organized Communist Party, at the head of which stood the greatest all-around political leader in the history of world capitalism, V. I. Lenin. The tremendous economic and political pressure generated by the war seriously weakened the rotten tsarist government, precipitated a grave political crisis, and finally exploded the revolutionary factors into action. The great Russian Revolution began its stormy course: Thus, a vast breach was made

in the wall of world capitalism. One-sixth of the world became lost to the capitalist exploiters. Germany and the rest of Central Europe would have followed the lead given by the Russian working class had it not been for the gross betrayal of the workers by the reformist Social-Democrats.

Ever since its beginning the Soviet Union has gone ahead strengthening itself, in the face of violent capitalist opposition and of gigantic tasks of socialist construction. In many fields the U.S.S.R. has had to blaze the trail through a veritable jungle of unique and baffling problems. During those trying times, after Lenin died, the Soviet people were fortunate to have as their leader Joseph Stalin, Lenin's co-worker, who is far and away the greatest Marxist and the most able political leader of our times. I always have to smile when the half-literate politicians and economists at the head of the government in this country declare that this great Marxist does not understand American and world conditions.

It was my good fortune to visit the U.S.S.R. numerous times before World War II. On my first visit I had no difficulty in recognizing in the great Revolution precisely what I had been fighting for so many years. I traveled far and wide over the country, visiting many localities, and becoming acquainted with the Russian people. I encountered the revolution's many and difficult problems at first hand, and I watched from year to year the progress made in their solution. I saw the revolution grow and flourish, and never for a moment have I ever doubted that it would succeed, notwithstanding its innumerable problems and powerful enemies. Further along I'll have more to say about many of these Soviet difficulties and how they were overcome.

The Russian people pioneered for socialism. They made the first breach in the capitalist system. For nearly thirty years the U.S.S.R. stood alone as the one socialist country, in a hostile capitalist world. The second great advance of world socialism over the ruins of a collapsing world capitalism did not come until the period following the end of World War II. This was in the establishment of the new democracies in Eastern and Central Europe—in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, Albania, and Yugoslavia. (Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania had already become reaffiliated with the U.S.S.R.). The new democracies, while not yet full-blown socialist regimes, are now (with the exception of Yugoslavia) nevertheless marching swiftly into socialism. They are peculiarly the socialist children of World War II, even as the U.S.S.R. was the offspring of World War I. I had the instructive pleasure of visiting most of these countries during the late winter of

1946 and early spring of 1947. Many of the leaders of the new governments I knew personally as old-time workers in the international labor movement.

World War II, out of which came the new democracies of Europe, was the result of much more than an attempt by Hitler and the Japanese militarists to rule the world. It started out as a conspiracy of a large section of finance capitalists of all the main capitalist countries, including the United States, to overthrow the Soviet Union and to establish a fascist world. The big monopolists had everywhere concluded, more or less consciously, that fascism offered them the only possibility for continuing their sickened capitalist system. The German and Japanese fascists were chosen to spearhead the great anti-Soviet attack and thus open the way for world fascism. That's why the big British, French, and American imperialists, in the years before World War II, elaborately appeased these reactionaries and looked with such a tolerant eye upon their increasing depredations against the independence of other countries—China, Spain, Ethiopia, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. Not only was the Cliveden set of Great Britain criminal appeasers of Hitler, but so also was the Wall Street set in the United States. Their acts of appeasement, these capitalists calculated, were only preliminaries to an eventual all-out capitalist attack that would smash the U.S.S.R. Then all would be fine for them in a fascist world, they figured. But this great fascist conspiracy did not turn out as they planned. It boomeranged against the plotters themselves, who were seeking to destroy world peace and democracy. The British, French, and American imperialists were unable to arrive at a satisfactory bargain with the greedy Nazis and Japanese fascists, who wanted to dominate the world by themselves. So, as the sequel showed, the war plot against the U.S.S.R. was transformed into a war among the imperialist powers themselves, with the U.S.S.R., for a time at least, out of the line of fire. And the capitalists responsible for this murderous outrage against humanity now have the crust to parade around in the western democracies, advertising themselves as paragons of political virtue, peace, and patriotism.

When Hitler made his fatal mistake of finally attacking the U.S.S.R., on June 22, 1941, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who for many years had been a fanatical Soviet-baiter and the organizer of intervention after the revolution, hastened to offer military co-operation to the Soviet Union. What Churchill really wanted, however, was to have the U.S.S.R. pull the war chestnuts out of the fire for Great Britain, whose armies had been driven helter-skelter out of the Continent into the sea at Dunkerque and which was then at almost the last gasp of

resistance against the "invincible" Nazis. Since those crucial days there has been a lot of talk to the effect that it was the British airmen, in the "Battle of Britain" during 1940, who saved not only their own island but the whole world from Nazi domination. This is plain nonsense. Hitler could have landed in Britain at any time he pleased. The British knew this quite well, as is shown by the fact that they hastily planned their first line of defense deep within their island. And what a shaky defense this would have been was illustrated by their frantic grabbing at hunting rifles and blunderbusses sent from this country. Hanson W. Baldwin (*New York Times*, May 14, 1945), says that "the British in the summer of 1940 had less than one fully equipped division able to meet German invaders." And the then British Ambassador, Lord Halifax, said (A.P., Jan. 25, 1942): "When history comes to be written Hitler will have been found to have lost the war in June 1940, when he failed to take advantage of the situation existing after the collapse of France," *i.e.*, by invading Britain.

Hitler's victory over Britain would have been at a very considerable cost, of course, but when he did not accept this cost and invade it was not because he was stopped by the gallant but numerically very weak British Royal Air Force. His main reason therefore was fear that the Russians would attack his rear if he invaded the British Isles. Hitler was in mortal dread of a two-front war, and later events showed that this fear was justified. All during the period of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact Hitler had kept at least two-thirds of his armed forces in the East, on guard against the Russians. The dread that Hitler had of the Red Army alone saved Britain from a conquering Nazi assault. It was also the Red Army that, in the course of the war, doing at least 90 per cent of the fighting of the allies in Europe, smashed Hitler's forces altogether and won the war.

In these days of anti-Soviet hysteria the British people would do well to recall how their country was saved by the Russians. In return for thus saving Great Britain, Churchill the red-baiter and pseudo-patriot, with the support of American reactionaries, cynically betrayed his Russian allies by deliberately sabotaging and preventing the launching of the Western Front for eighteen months, thereby causing the Red Army millions of unnecessary casualties. Churchill and his American supporters wanted to cripple the Red Army so badly that it would be no serious obstacle to their imperialist plans for world conquest in the post-war period. Hitler was never guilty of more contemptible treachery than this betrayal by the windy champion of British reaction.

Capitalism is now having to pay for causing the terrible World War

II. With the conclusion of the war in 1945, an anti-capitalist wave swept across Europe. From a world standpoint, it was the second great mass advance towards socialism. Millions of toilers had come to understand that the war, like the organized butchery that had preceded it a generation before, had been caused by that poisonous cancer of modern civilization, monopoly capital. Consequently, from one end of the Continent to the other, including Great Britain, a powerful, socialist-minded mass movement, growing out of the anti-Hitler resistance fighting, got under way. The peoples, with varying degrees of political clarity, demanded the nationalization of basic industry, the breaking up of large landed estates, and the introduction of a measure of economic planning.

All this constituted, after the long, bloody struggle against Hitler had been won, a vast, orderly, peaceful advance of the overwhelming majority of the population of Europe in the direction of socialism. From the tremendous scope of this movement it was clear that capitalism had lost decisively whatever remnants of prestige it had left among the workers, the peasantry, and the middle classes. As the post-war period has developed it has turned out that European big capital, receiving strong support and leadership from American imperialism, and with the active assistance of fascists, the Vatican clericals, and the right-wing Social-Democrats, and the whole aggregation buttressed by Marshall Plan billions, is desperately attempting to slow up this elemental socialist movement of the peoples of Western Europe. In the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, however, the new democracies in countries liberated by the Red Army and where the people have vividly before their eyes the socialist example of the U.S.S.R., have pressed on definitely toward socialism in spite of reckless capitalist attempts to stop them. The loss of these important countries to the capitalist sector of the world is a major part of the heavy price that world capitalism is being compelled to pay for inflicting the murderous World War II upon humanity.

In the U.S.S.R., the first great socialist land, there are now well on to 200 million people; in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, the second group of countries to begin the march toward socialism, there are about 100 million more people. These are tremendous blocs of humanity that are now either actually in socialism or about to enter that system. And now the overwhelming masses of China, 475 million strong, are also beginning to get under way. They have shattered the feudal regime of Chiang Kai-shek, despite all the economic, military, and political aid that has been shamelessly given to

it by the United States. With their own methods and at their own tempo, they are definitely starting a democratic advance that will inevitably lead them towards a socialist regime. The Chinese revolution is of stupendous importance to the world, and it is vastly strengthening socialism in all countries. But all this is by no means the end of the socialist story. We may rest assured that other vast sections of humanity, in Asia, in Latin America, in Europe, will soon be joining those peoples that already have established socialist systems or are proceeding to build them. The basic course of the whole world, including the United States (although here the trend is not so advanced), is toward socialism, with each country varying in the speed and manner of its socialist development.

The leader in this great world movement for socialism is the Soviet Union. It was this vast country that first shattered the shackles of capitalism and established a socialist republic. It was also because of the nearness and influence of the U.S.S.R. that the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe have been able to maintain themselves and to make progress towards socialism—otherwise Anglo-American imperialism would have made civil war battlegrounds of them, as it has done in Greece. And the very existence of the U.S.S.R., together with the strong right arm of the Chinese people, will be the best guarantee that the new republic now being born amid such travail in feudalistic China will survive and progress towards socialism. All over the world oppressed peoples see in the Soviet Union their best friend and democratic protector. The world democratic influence of the U.S.S.R. is very great. Everywhere it acts as a brake upon capitalist reactionaries. Thus, in Indonesia and other colonies, the imperialists constantly remind each other that if they proceed to the excesses which they would like to commit "the Russians will win the people." And in the United States one of the most powerful influences in favor of full rights for Negroes is the fear of the Soviet propaganda on a world scale against the monstrous Jim Crow system in this country. The Soviet Union is the great buttress of world democracy. Were the capitalists successful in overthrowing it, as they are now busily planning, the greatest, most decisive dike against fascism would be gone. World democracy would suffer overwhelming disaster.

The big monopolists in the United States and Western Europe have not stood by passively while this great world movement towards socialism has been taking shape, after World War I and after this latest war. Far from it. They have used every weapon in their arsenal to try to beat back democracy and socialism, both in their own and in foreign

countries. These very people who so hypocritically charge Communists with using chicanery and force and violence to advance their cause have had recourse to every form of demagoguery and terrorism in their own vain attempt to halt the irresistible spread of socialism. They are specialists and champions in this use of deception and violence in every form, and the world has never known their equal.

Capitalism makes a major use of lying propaganda in its desperate struggle against rising socialism. To this purpose it systematically utilizes its vast system of press, radio, schools, churches, and its many other means of influencing the people's minds. Never in the whole history of the world has there been such a widespread and well-organized campaign of lying as the present capitalist ideological struggle against socialism. The central target of this unprecedented misrepresentation and mud-slinging is the Soviet Union. Its democracy, which is a whole social stage higher than that of the United States or any other capitalist country, is falsely identified with Hitler totalitarianism; its foreign policy, which has world peace as its never-failing central objective, is denounced as rampant imperialism; and the vast peoples' movements of the world, including the gigantic upsurge in China, all of which movements are based upon the most urgent and fundamental needs of the masses, are crudely condemned as being the work of "Russian fifth columns."

Soviet-baiting has now become a major writing profession in all capitalist countries. In this contemptible activity Americans have the unquestioned leadership. All that one needs in order to make a fat living in this slander campaign is to ignore all facts about socialism and to let his anti-Soviet prejudices run riot. American newspaper foreign correspondents assigned to the U.S.S.R. and to its friendly neighbor countries have become, with but a few honorable exceptions, only so many spies and war-provocateurs against the Soviet Union. So far as reporting the news from such countries is concerned, this has long since become a forgotten art. American correspondents in these countries are but political garbage collectors, and their writings bear no relation to reality. The vast deluge of filthy anti-Soviet propaganda which these "gangsters of the pen" of capitalism have been pouring out so lavishly ever since the birth of the Russian Revolution confuses many people and makes them ready victims of the reactionaries and warmongers. This red-baiting is one of the most dangerous manifestations of our times, and it is the raw material for fascism and war.

Whenever it sees an opportunity, world capitalism, along with its campaign of propaganda lies, cold-bloodedly uses the weapon of hunger against developing world socialism. It is a notorious fact that in the

early days of the Russian Revolution, when the Soviet people, exhausted after several years of imperialist war, civil war, famine, and industrial collapse, were literally starving, the major capitalist countries, especially the United States, threw the so-called "*cordon sanitaire*," economic and political blockade around the U.S.S.R. and tried to starve that country into submission. Trade embargoes were so tight that not even medical supplies were allowed to enter. In consequence, for want of food, machinery, and medical supplies, with which the West was heavily overstocked, millions of people in the Soviet Union were forced to die. In that country, in 1921, I saw many hospital patients actually dying for want of major operations, which could not be carried through for lack of anesthetics. The Soviet government could not buy these vital necessities from the "Christian," "civilized" capitalist governments, although they had big surpluses of them. Similar starvation methods are now being used against socialism and democracy after World War II. One example was in the maldistribution of UNRRA supplies. The peoples in the Balkans, because they were obviously moving in the direction of socialism, were stinted or denied relief altogether, despite the fact that they had suffered incomparably more war devastation than the Western capitalist nations getting lots of relief. In China, too, only a tiny trickle of UNRRA supplies, two per cent all told, reached the devastated Communist areas, with about 30 per cent of China's total population, and where the people had so valiantly fought the Japanese. The vast bulk of UNRRA relief was sent to the Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries, who either sold it for their personal profit or hoarded it to be used as war supplies against the Communists in the already contemplated civil war.

It is quite in line with such deliberate starvation attempts against democracy and socialism that the reactionary policy in connection with the present-day Marshall Plan has made it impossible for the socialist and leftward-moving countries of Eastern Europe to secure American rehabilitation loans. This policy has also stifled trade between the western capitalist lands and these countries. At a time when American farm production is so large that, fearful of overproduction, our government is cutting the output of wheat, potatoes, etc., American foreign policy makers are refusing to ship farm machinery to various Eastern European countries. And as for trade between the United States and the U.S.S.R., this, on Washington's initiative, has already been cut to almost nothing. All these events are of the same pattern; their aim is to starve the socialist countries into submission. Now we have the asinine reactionaries who head the Executive Council of the American

Federation of Labor ramming through their 1948 convention a proposition to break off all trade relations with the U.S.S.R. until it knuckles down to Wall Street on the Berlin situation. This is suicide economics and politics.

Nor have the world capitalists, who blather so much about maintaining international peace, hesitated to make actual war against developing world socialism. It is a matter of common record that, in the years 1918-1921, many capitalist nations, fourteen to be exact, deliberately and without provocation, waged open warfare against the Soviet government in an attempt to drown the young socialist republic in blood. It is to our national shame that American troops played an active part in this futile attempt to shoot down socialism. The Hitler attack of 1941 was another such effort to murder Soviet socialism, but it had no better success than its predecessor of twenty years before. Now the capitalist world, under the leadership of Wall Street, and with Hitlerian slogans of an anti-Communist crusade, is trying to launch another war of annihilation against the U.S.S.R. The Anglo-American capitalists, aided by local reactionaries in the respective countries, also have persistently tried to break down the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe by armed violence.

The history of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and others of these countries since the end of World War II is replete with incidents of unsuccessful "putsches" and civil wars, organized by reactionaries who are financed by Wall Street, and who are determined to crush socialism at any cost. It is settled American policy to inflict upon these countries, whenever possible, tragic civil war situations such as it has precipitated in Greece. In China, too, Wall Street reaction, to the profound detriment of American democratic prestige and to the harm of the Chinese people, has criminally expended over five billion dollars of our nation's money in a vain effort to shoot the Chinese people's revolution to pieces. All this violence, this arbitrary interference in the Greek and Chinese civil wars, the attempts to foment counter-revolutions in Eastern Europe, are being committed by men who at the same time are filling the world with empty charges that the Soviet government is meddling in the internal affairs of other countries. All over the world the democratic impulses and reputation of our country are being dragged through the slime by profit-seeking agents of Wall Street.

Experience has amply proved that the desperate attacks of world capitalism against growing world democracy and socialism cannot succeed. Socialism is the inevitable and irresistible product of a capitalist system hopelessly in decay. The frightened capitalists may throw the

world into economic chaos and create the danger of fascism and war but they cannot halt the democratic progress of humanity. The present unparalleled propaganda barrage against socialism, conceived and organized by the most skillful liars in history, will never prevent the development of world democracy and socialism. Nor can socialism be starved to death by attempts of capitalist countries to strangle the socialist countries by cutting off trade relations with them. The same is true, too, of the use of armed force against socialist countries, or those that are obviously on the road to socialism. Such policies, in the long run, can only react against world capitalism and make its economic, political, and military situation all the worse. But these very failures render the capitalists desperate and ready for every reckless adventure. Inevitably, capitalism's vicious attacks upon growing socialism serve only to embitter the peoples, to steel their hearts and minds in their democratic course, and to make their victory all the more sweeping when it matures. This is what happened in the Soviet Union; it also happened in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, and in others of the new democracies; it is what is now taking place in China. Capitalist violence will have the same effect in all other countries fighting to free themselves from capitalist enslavement. The forward march of socialism is irresistible. For the world capitalist system the handwriting is on the wall.

### III. American Capitalism Grows Cannibalistic

What has been said in the preceding chapters about the decline of capitalism and the rise of socialism would not seem, at first glance, to apply to the United States proper. While during the span of my lifetime world capitalism in general has matured and begun to rot, American capitalism has gone on developing vigorously, aside from periodic economic crises. Capitalism here would, therefore, appear to be immune to the forces that are now so visibly disintegrating capitalism in other countries. The capitalist United States has at this time reached a national income of 250 billion dollars yearly and it turns out at least two-thirds of the industrial production of the whole capitalist world. Never has any country even remotely approached such an immense productive capacity and national income. And if capitalism is strong in the United States, the forces of socialism are correspondingly weak. The working class has not yet broken ideologically with capitalism, the workers have not even organized a mass labor party, and the Communist Party still remains but a small organization. Small wonder, then, that the spokesmen of American capitalism fill the air with boastings and shouts that capitalism in this country has found the secret of permanent growth and prosperity and that socialism can never come in the United States.

But these notions of American "exceptionalism" are ridiculous nonsense. They constitute the great American illusion. For American capitalism is fundamentally the same economic and political system as capitalism in other countries, and it is a prey to basically the same internal and external contradictions. If capitalism in this country still preserves the appearance and in some respects, the reality, of great strength, this is because it has grown and operated under far more favorable conditions than capitalism has done in any other part of the world. American capitalism occupies a vast continental stretch of territory, unbroken by the national boundary lines and tariffs that are such disastrous handicaps to capitalism in Europe; it also possesses an especially rich supply

of raw materials, has a favorable climate, a long ocean frontage and splendid harbors, as well as other necessary facilities for the building of a great industrial system. Besides, in the construction of our social system, American capitalism has been largely unhampered by the hangovers from feudalism that have been such a drag on capitalism in other parts of the world. A dynamic factor, too, was that there was in this country for many decades a chronic shortage of labor power (because capitalism has literally had to build the continent from the ground up), which fact greatly stimulated American technology and inventive genius in their never-ending quest for labor-saving devices. In addition America has drawn freely on European capital and skilled labor during that time for the building of its industries.

These American advantages, however, notwithstanding their great importance, can have only a partial and temporary effect on the capitalist system. They in no sense change the nature of American capitalism itself, which, like capitalism everywhere else, is based upon the private ownership of industry and the exploitation of the workers through the wages system. It is significant that these special advantages do not prevent this country from experiencing typical capitalist economic crises, which have periodically developed here during the past 300 years, or ever since the first one occurred in Jamestown in 1635. The latest of the big series of economic crises, that of 1929, beginning in the United States, was the worst in the history of world capitalism.

If American capitalism still continues to be strong in the midst of a decaying world capitalist system, this is especially because of the operation of another factor besides those just mentioned. It is because the United States, through its strategic geographical location, has been able to escape the war devastation that has so weakened European capitalism. This fact has favored American capitalism enormously. In fact, it has enabled this capitalist country to prosper on the very wars that were undermining world capitalism in general. American capitalism is like a sort of monster parasite, living on the body of the rest of world capitalism; it is cannibalistically devouring the other capitalist countries and growing fat upon their life substance.

One of the biggest illusions from which vast numbers of Americans suffer is their failure to realize that the United States is an imperialistic country—in fact, the most aggressive empire in the world. This country displays all the features characteristic of imperialist capitalism as analyzed by the great Lenin. It has produced a tremendous growth of monopoly, the fusion of bank and industrial capital, a huge export of capital, a grabbing for control of world markets, and a policy of dominating the

world politically. If so many Americans do not understand that this is an imperialist country, it is because the United States, except for Puerto Rico, has no colonial system. But this is explainable because the United States, a late comer in the realm of imperialism, found (1) that most of the undeveloped countries in the world had already been grabbed up by other imperialist powers, and (2) that, in the face of developing colonial liberation movements, it had become very difficult, if not impossible, to transform the remaining free but undeveloped countries into paying colonies. So the United States perforce had to develop its own system of economic and political controls, which actually are more effective in subordinating peoples than the earlier, cruder methods of British, French, and Dutch imperialism. By these pressures—financial, political, and military—the United States has already set up more or less of a general American leadership, *i.e.*, domination, over most of the capitalist world. And now, enriched and over-developed industrially by the war, it is seeking to extend this imperialist control over the entire world. This is an A B C political fact that our people must learn.

Few Americans realize to what a large extent, during the past generation, the capitalist economy in this country has fed upon the blood of war. When World War I broke out in the fall of 1914 the United States, then caught in an economic depression, as a result of the war overcame this depression and embarked upon a period of active production and industrial development. This war "boom," maintained by mountains of munitions orders, lasted not only through the four years of World War I, but it also, except for a small crisis in 1920-21, ran all through the 1920's. That is, from the end of the war in 1918 up until the great crash of October 1929, the industries of the United States had as their basis for the "prosperity" in these "boom" years the huge foreign exports of commodities used for the reconstruction of the war-devastated countries of Europe. Thus, in World War I, and also in the aftermath of that frightful slaughter, the American capitalist system, blood-fed, grew and prospered. As soon as this war rehabilitation work was completed, however, the American economy, which during the "booming" 1920's, even as now, was being glorified all over the capitalist world, as the perfect social system, promptly exploded into the worst economic crisis the world has ever known, throwing as many as 17,000,000 workers out of jobs at one time in the United

never less than 10,000,000 unemployed. The "perfect" capitalist system was paralyzed. Nor could all the "pump-priming" of Roosevelt's New Deal make it strong again. It was only when the deadly shadow of World War II crept over the horizon in 1939 that the American industries, nourished once more on boundless war orders, began to show life again. That was ten years ago, and ever since then the industrial system of this country has parasitically depended upon munitions orders, or upon vast exports to repair the monstrous damages done by the war. And now, at this writing, the capitalists in this country, fearing that their economic system will again collapse, despite all the vast rehabilitation exports under the Marshall Plan, are developing a huge war economy for the United States and Europe. They are now feeding their blood-hungry industries with munitions orders to the tune of some 20 billion dollars yearly, and the militarists are clamoring for a total of at least 25 billions. Without all this war stimulation during the past 30 years, American industry, now apparently so strong and vigorous, would be far less developed and much less robust than it is today. Indeed, it would be in the same boat with the rest of broken-down world capitalism. Capitalist industry in this country, bloated and swollen, has the strength of a gorged parasite.

One of the outstanding features of our recent presidential elections was the frequent claims made by President Truman and other Democrats that the "sound economic policies" of the present administration had brought prosperity, of a permanent variety, to the United States. This is a cynical distortion of reality. Even the least informed person should grasp the fact that the recent "boom" in our country was due to the war and to the aftermath of war repair. For the past ten years our capitalist-bound industries have fattened on the woes of the millions who died during World War II. Ours is a war-made prosperity, nothing more. The 87 billions of dollars in profits, grabbed during the five war years by the corporations, constitute just so much blood money. It is a monstrous imposition to palm off on the American people the lie that this war "prosperity" is due to a healthy economic system. This deception causes our people to live in a fool's paradise, and it will make the awakening all the more bitter for them when the present war-fed "prosperity" comes to its inevitable end, either in a terrible war or in a worse economic crash than that of 1929.

American capitalism now finds itself in an increasingly precarious condition. Its situation has become a grave danger, not only to the American people, but to the whole world. Swollen and bloated on war blood, its appetite has developed to an extreme danger point. The pro-

ductive power of American industry, which, on its artificial war diet, was blown up by 25 billion dollars' worth of plant capacity during the war (which is more than the whole pre-war industrial capacity of Germany), has now become so tremendous that there is no possibility of selling its mountains of commodities of all kinds through normal trade channels, either in this country or in the markets of the world. Before the 1929 crash world markets obviously could not absorb the big American commodity surpluses and now they are even less able to do so, what with American productive capacity vastly increased and so many nations impoverished by the war. Consequently, American capitalism is sinking into a grave economic crisis.

The big monopolists who own our country and our government are quite aware of this impossible marketing situation and they are full of alarm as to the economic future. They are therefore undertaking to avoid the coming crisis by taking very special measures against it. Through the Truman government, they are attempting to create what they call a "managed economy," through which, by manipulating various economic factors, they hope to avoid both extremes of inflation and deflation. Their basic problem is to "fill the gap" between over-developed production and the lagging purchasing power of the people of this and other countries. This they don't intend to try to do in any major sense in the manner that the liberal Keynesians propose, namely, through government works, raising the workers' living standards, establishing social security, and the like. They have their own reactionary version of Keynesism. They propose to fill the economic gap between production and consumption primarily by building up a big war economy, which will feed American industry with a score or two billions of dollars in munitions orders every year. This, in fact, is what they are now doing. But these attempts to set up a "managed economy" to avert the economic crisis are doomed beforehand to failure. The coming economic crisis, with accumulative explosive force, will burst through all such futile attempts to hold it back.

President Truman's proposals, outlined in his Inaugural Address of January 20, 1949, to cultivate the industrialization of the economically backward areas of the world, fit right in with the whole program of the "managed economy" and world conquest by Wall Street. This latest scheme is, in effect, to spread the Marshall Plan over the colonial and semi-colonial world. The general economic aim of these proposals is to help bolster up the shaky American economic system by cultivating heavy exports, to secure financial domination over the colonial and semi-colonial areas, and to build up more military allies for the planned

war against the U.S.S.R. It would be silly, of course, to suppose that American imperialism really intends to industrialize the backward areas of the world. For the capitalists know that the more these territories become industrialized the more difficult their own general marketing problem becomes. In this respect the long continued pressure of American imperialism to prevent the industrialization of Latin America, especially the deplorable situation of Puerto Rico, tells its own story.

It is reported that the undeveloped countries to be "industrialized" are India, Pakistan, Israel, Latin America, Africa, etc. China was in the plan, too, but now that land doesn't taste as good to imperialists as it once did. If in its desperate search for markets to keep its feverish economic system in operation, the United States should actually begin "industrialization" campaigns, either with private or public funds, or both, in backward areas, the "industries" that it would set up (mostly public utilities, railroads, and the like) would be non-competitive with those in the United States (*i.e.*, a colonial system) and designed to fit right in as pillars for Wall Street's ambitious world economic empire. Moreover, to "protect" its interests, the United States would aim all the more determinedly to subordinate these countries to its political control and to transform them into military bases against the U.S.S.R. The whole "industrialization" project boils down to just another phase of Wall Street's attempt to conquer the world on the basis of a gigantic war economy.

The most urgent economic danger in the world today arises from the war-swollen, over-developed industries of the United States. The economic threat of the United States is now a menace to all humanity. Even with the present war economy, which the big capitalists will transform into actual war if they are not prevented, the industries are moving into a devastating economic crisis that will shake the capitalist world. The only way the people can shield themselves from this holocaust is by a whole series of drastic economic measures, all of which will be violently resisted by the reactionaries. Among these are (a) a radical rise in the real wages of the workers; (b) a shortening of the work period to not more than the 6-hour day, 5-day week; (c) a huge extension in social insurance of all kinds; (d) the establishment of the right to work; (e) the development of gigantic housing plans and vast public works; (f) the making of extensive foreign loans, or gifts, probably through the United Nations, without any American controls whatsoever on such loans or financial returns from them; (g) unrestricted trade with the Soviet Union and the new democracies; (h) the nationalization, with democratic controls, of the banks and of various

key industries; (i) the building of a great independent coalition party of the people to fight for economic and political control of the United States. These and many other relief economic measures will have to be adopted on a scale far exceeding the emergency measures of Roosevelt's New Deal. The disposition of the products of war-swollen American industry has now become a serious world problem, and it must be taken out of the hands of the irresponsible Wall Street imperialists and their government agents. But all the foregoing specific measures are only palliatives at most; the problem can be definitely solved, and the danger of crisis and war be ended, only when the United States becomes a socialist country.

In addition to the economic motives behind it, the central political purpose of the huge war economy and military force that is being built up by these policies would be to make American imperialism the master of the world. The reactionaries' general aim is to establish a fascist-like world regime in which the United States would have a monopolist control of world industry, with all other countries compelled to adjust themselves to this decisive fact by reshaping their economies accordingly. Parasitic American industry would thus enslave the world so that its own life might be continued. It is to this end that the big Wall Street monopolists are conducting their present imperialist policy, with all its dangers of fascism and war.

Besides the imperative elementary economic compulsion to find markets at any cost and with every device, in order to keep their industrial system from falling apart, American big business imperialists are driven on to their expansionist program by other forms of fear and greed. Their capitalist appetites for conquest are whetted by the fact that on all sides they see many nations weakened and ruined by the war. Being dog-eat-dog capitalists, they cannot refrain from taking advantage of these countries' disasters by trying to establish their own economic and political control over the whole ramshackle situation of world capitalism. Then, there is also the driving force of the fear of socialism, particularly of the Soviet Union, an obsession which pursues the capitalists day and night. These are the powerful economic and political forces which combine to make Wall Street develop its present relentless campaign to dominate the world, even at the peril of a frightful world war. By this imperialist drive, American capitalism gives another decisive proof that it is cut from the same cloth as world capitalism generally.

From all this it is clear why Wall Street imperialism is definitely opposed to a peaceful understanding with the U.S.S.R. It needs the war scare at any cost. For, if the war scare were allowed to die down, then it would be impossible for the imperialists to delude the American

people into building up the gigantic military machine which the former must have in their insane attempt to conquer the world. Moreover, and this is even more urgent, if the carefully cultivated war scare were permitted to subside, then the capitalists would be deprived of many billions of dollars worth of government armaments orders, with the result that the industries (which are moving into crisis anyway) would be plunged overnight into a devastating collapse. In plain English, these are the basic reasons why world humanity is being kept frightened by Wall Street's agents with the dreadful prospect of another world war. American capitalism is in deadly fear of peaceful co-operation with the U.S.S.R. The U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. could and should live together harmoniously in this world, despite their different types of social systems, but Wall Street is opposed on principle to such harmony. This is a policy which, if not halted by the people, will lead to war.

It was not very difficult to foresee the present post-war American imperialist drive, and this the Communist Party did long ago. As far back as March, 1941, in a pamphlet entitled, *World Capitalism and World Socialism*, I wrote the following:

"Great Britain and the United States, on the other side of the war line-up, are also seeking to take firmly in hand the decaying capitalist system. They are building a great Anglo-American war alliance with which they seek to dominate the whole world to their joint sway. They hope that after the war has ended victoriously for them they will be able, with their great wealth and resources, to set everything right again in the interests of the fascist-minded bankers who control both great empires. American imperialism, with characteristic greed, is aiming to make Great Britain the junior partner in this world alliance."

American imperialism is like a monstrous, all-consuming spider. It has sucked up most of the available gold supplies of the capitalist world and hoarded them away at Fort Knox; it has made nearly every capitalist nation in the world its debtor; it is stripping the various capitalist nations of their foreign markets, of their economic strength, and of their national independence. It has set up a more or less definite political control over all the important capitalist countries in the world. Now it is stretching out its claws for the U.S.S.R., the European new democracies, and the colonial and semi-colonial countries, in the hope that it can overwhelm them and devour them at its leisure. This is the parasitic, cannibalistic role of American capitalism in the world today.

The United Nations is a casualty of American imperialism's drive for world empire. The United States started out, with a subsidy-fed majority of states under its control, to use the United Nations as an

imperialist weapon for forcing the U.S.S.R. into submission. But the U.S.S.R. checkmated this ruthless use of America's hard-boiled U.N. majority, by using its veto power to protect itself. Whereupon, the United States, unable to utilize the U.N. effectively for its power policy game, proceeded to bypass that organization altogether in many important matters. Among these were its infamous Truman Doctrine of fomenting civil war in Greece and other countries; its Marshall Plan to bring all the capitalist countries of Europe under its economic, political, and military control; its arbitrary dumping of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements; its cultivation of reactionary regimes in Germany and Japan in order to use these countries as military bases against the U.S.S.R.; its arbitrary interference in the Chinese civil war on the side of the feudalistic Chiang Kai-shek regime; its brutal subjugation and exploitation of the peoples of Latin America; and the formation of the military alliance, the North Atlantic Pact. The general result of all these American imperialist policies has been to undermine and seriously weaken the strength and general prestige of the United Nations. This deplorable situation emphasizes the folly of the current glib advocacy of a world government. Such a body, under capitalist conditions, could be nothing but a further instrument for American imperialism to try to impose its will upon the world.

All American policy, both foreign and domestic, is geared to Wall Street's plan of world domination. This is the basic meaning of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the Western European Union, and the North Atlantic Pact. The latter, a military alliance, is being formed for the specific purpose of making war against the U.S.S.R. Its signing has produced, as it was calculated to do, an intense sharpening of the tension between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and it has given birth to a dangerous wave of war hysteria in this country.

This aggressive imperialism explains why the United States is lined up with reaction in China, Greece, France, Italy, and everywhere else, in civil war policies against democracy and socialism. It is the end purpose of American atom-bomb diplomacy and iron-clad control of the United Nations. It is why this country is maintaining and building five hundred air-naval-military bases all around the world. It is why this country is so desperately trying to prop up and rearm the war-weakened European capitalist countries as war allies. It is the reason for the big drive towards militarization and fascism in the United States. It is why we now have peacetime conscription and a military budget fifteen times larger than that of 1940. To guarantee the profits of American big business, the American people are being prepared for

another wholesale slaughter. It is for this ignoble end that the atom-bomb fanatics are blithely trying to condition us for the death of "40,000,000 Americans" in a war against the U.S.S.R.

American imperialism has split the world into two hostile camps. The first—the reactionary, imperialist camp—is led by the big bankers of Wall Street, who, rejecting all the goals for which World War II was fought, are attempting to reduce the entire world to their sway. The second camp is made up of the democratic, anti-fascist, anti-war forces of the world, who, resisting the assaults of American imperialism, are trying to achieve the free and peaceful world for which so many millions laid down their lives during World War II.

The top men who are running our government, including President Truman, are tools of Wall Street. They don't want peace with the U.S.S.R.; their objective is world domination by the United States, which they are convinced they can accomplish by destroying the Soviet Union. The only kind of Soviet-American peace which they can conceive of is one that would concede them world mastery. Their present campaign to establish bases all over the world and to militarize the United States and Western Europe is aimed, above all, against the U.S.S.R. These bases also serve as a useful by-product, so to speak, to intimidate Great Britain and other capitalist countries which tend to resist more and more the controls of the new boss of the capitalist world.

President Roosevelt co-operated easily with the U.S.S.R. economically, politically, and militarily for the winning of the war. This was because he contemplated having post-war collaboration with the Russians, and treated the U.S.S.R. as an equal and as a country worth living with in the world. But the Anglo-American reactionaries, whose loudest-mouthed spokesman is Winston Churchill, do not want peace or co-operation with the U.S.S.R. Even during the war, they looked forward to a post-war struggle against that country. This was why they delayed the second front, needlessly, and otherwise sabotaged the war by throwing an undue share of the fighting upon the Russians. It is this treacherous strategy, of war against the U.S.S.R., openly voiced by Churchill and applauded by American big business, that is accepted American policy today. It constitutes a criminal betrayal of world peace and democracy.

The most amazing thing about the cold-blooded drive of American imperialism towards fascism and war is the crass demagoguery with which it is being put across. It is nauseating to listen to self-righteous big capitalists and their mouthpieces hypocritically blathering about their "moral leadership of the world." Goebbels, Hitler's right hand man,

was a novice compared with the war propagandists of the United States. The entire ideological machine of American capitalism—the press, radio, church, schools, and all the rest of it—is going full blast to convince the American people and the world of the political absurdities that the war-ravaged socialist U.S.S.R. wants war, and that rampant American imperialism, undamaged by the war, wants peace. American imperialism, which is the organization of the most ruthless gang of fascist-minded capitalists on earth, is insolently pictured by its orators and pen-pushers as the champion of democracy, the defender of world peace, the moral guardian of mankind.

One of the most cynical and sinister aspects of the war campaign of American imperialism is the duplicity with which it has handled the question of the atom bomb. The dropping of the bombs in the first place was not necessary for the defeat of Japan, but was done primarily to prevent the U.S.S.R. from having a real say in controlling defeated Japan (which it did) and also to advertise its future use in Wall Street's plan of dominating the post-war world. P. M. S. Blackett, noted British physicist and Nobel prize winner, in his authoritative book, *Fear, War, and the Bomb*, puts his finger on the very heart of the question, saying: "So we may conclude that the dropping of the atomic bombs was not so much the last military act of the second World War, as the first major operation of the cold diplomatic war with Russia now in progress" (p. 139).

The Baruch Plan of atomic energy control, which was cynically hailed all over the capitalist world as an ultra-generous offer by the United States to the U.S.S.R., was in fact a cold-blooded proposal, whose aim was, by the control of a majority of votes in the United Nations, to retain the bomb for itself and at the same time to secure virtual domination over the Soviet's economic life and military strength. In considering the stranglehold that the Baruch Plan would have given the United States over the production of atomic energy, Blackett says: "The Soviet leaders might well consider that the American Government, out of fear of the economic and political consequences of a possible rapid economic advance, would be most unwilling to permit the Soviet Union to develop atomic energy on a large scale, even if this was done without danger of diversion to bomb production" (p. 151). He objectively says further (page 157) that the adoption of the Baruch Plan "would have entailed an immediate weakening of the Russian military position and an eventual weakening of her economic position also." The present stalemate over the bomb is just what Wall Street planned. The supposedly altruistic Baruch Plan is an imperialist device.

One would think that the Greens, Murrays, Reuthers, Dubinskys, and other misleaders of labor, who are supposed to represent the interests of the workers and the American people, would gag when they, jointly with such reactionaries as Dulles, Marshall, Bullitt, Luce, Johnston, and Hearst, peddle such monstrous Wall Street lies to the workers. It is incredible that any workers can be so gullible as to swallow this brazen, jingoistic demagoguery. But the dangerous fact is that very many do just that. It would be folly to ignore the reality that big sections of the American people, including large numbers of workers, despite their earnest and often expressed desires for peace, are deceived by Wall Street's hypocritical and barefaced war propaganda. It was a historic service of Henry Wallace, during the 1948 elections, that he, in the face of fierce and slanderous red-baiting, courageously exposed this warmongering.

One wonders how long Wall Street imperialism will be able to keep up its present ridiculous pose as an unselfish force out to do good to the rest of the world. There are many robust imperialists chafing at the bit. They want to "let the eagle scream" in this situation, when the United States is making such an aggressive drive for world control. More and more one hears blatant talk about "American world leadership." In the *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, Dec. 9, 1948, Dr. Melchior Palyi, in the new spirit of flamboyant imperialism, gives out with this gem: "We will be the first nation in all history that makes not only grandiose gestures of financial leadership, but simultaneously drives at absolute military supremacy on land, on sea, and in the air." President Truman's Inaugural Address, January 20, 1949, also was nothing more than a shouting demand for American world supremacy, and the *U.S. News and World Report*, of April 1, 1949, yells out this front cover headline: "U.S. Defense Zone: Whole World."

American imperialists, while driven on to conquer the world in order to keep their bloated, parasitic economic system in operation, are at the same time madly dreaming visions of expansion such as have never been entertained by any ruling class in history. They foresee an empire which would dwarf that of Ghenghis Khan, that of Rome, of Great Britain, of Nazi Germany, and Japan. With American air bases dotting the whole globe and American airplanes dominating the world's air lanes, with the American navy controlling the seven seas, with the American army equipped with A-bombs and other super-lethal weapons and overrunning vast land areas, with American industry monopolizing world capitalist production, with the United States government telling the rest of the world just what to do, with all roads leading to Washing-

ton—what a paradise of profit and power this would be for the big capitalist world conquerors in Wall Street. It would constitute the perfect empire, the entire globe under one capitalist ruling class, the final realization of all the dreams of all the tyrants of world history.

But, alas, for the dreamers of the "American Century," their plans are but impossible fantasy. The peoples of the world are now far too much awake politically ever to allow themselves to be shackled by Wall Street. American big business can easily deceive itself by the present meek way with which many war-weakened countries, even once proud empires, are fawning at its feet, begging for its dollars and timidly doing its bidding. But let American big business once venture to launch the war which it is now so boldly organizing, let the A-bombs begin to fall and then what a difference there would be. Wall Street would be in for the surprise of its life when it ran full tilt into the peace and independence spirit of the world's peoples. The present fiascoes of American attempts to crush the freedom-loving peoples of China and Greece would be but minor setbacks in comparison with the overwhelming catastrophe that would befall American imperialism should it dare to launch its projected war against the U.S.S.R. and the other democratic peoples.

Wall Street's imperialist expansionism is directly antagonistic to the basic interests of the overwhelming majority of the American people, as well as to those of other peoples. The gigantic expenditures for the armaments program that this imperialism produces have sent the cost of living soaring. It sabotages, too, all efforts to establish better government insurance against unemployment, sickness, and old age. It is also undermining democracy in this country and is provoking the most serious danger of fascism. And then, in the midst of it all, looms the horrifying danger of an atomic-bacteriological war that would destroy hundreds of millions of the world's people. What true interest can our nation have in such a program of oppression, profit-grabbing, and butchery?

The American people are democratic and they want peace. Moreover, they have the power to insist successfully that peace be maintained. Their strong peace will is shown by the fact that although many of them are deceived by the propaganda of American imperialism, nevertheless the masses have often indicated their opposition to militarism and war. Thus, there were the dramatic and powerful bring-the-troops home movement at the close of the war, the mass opposition to military control of the atom bomb, the long-continued popular resistance to the introduction of universal military training and the

peacetime draft, and the obvious mass hostility of the people to brass hats playing such a big rôle in the Truman Administration. In the recent national election upset there was also manifested the widespread peace sentiment that prevails among the people. The election was an expression of the people's peace will, despite the fact that this mood was thwarted by the re-election, contradictorily enough, of Mr. Truman, whose policy has always been one of the most blatant jingoism and warmongering. In the New York *Herald-Tribune* (Sept. 22, 1948), Sumner Welles correctly characterized Truman as follows: "No President since General Grant had such childlike faith in the omniscience of the high brass as the present occupant of the White House." But of one thing we may be sure, the American people, like other peoples, will not tamely allow themselves to be made cannon fodder in an insane anti-Soviet war.

Will the existing tense international situation culminate in war? Who can tell? We Communists point out that wars are inevitable during capitalism. This means that capitalism inexorably breeds imperialism and war, but it does not mean that every international tension must develop armed hostilities. Especially, it does not mean that the present tension must culminate in war. The democratic forces of our country and the world are strong enough to bridle the warmongers, that is, the big capitalist imperialists, if they will but awaken and assert their irresistible peace will. They not only can delay war, they can abolish it altogether. One thing is clear—war will come unless the ways are found by the people to check the war-making expansionism of American imperialism. On the other hand, peace can be had and a friendly working together of the United States and the Soviet Union achieved, once the American people put a halt to the war program of the Wall Street monopolists which is being advanced by our government. A democratic and just peace with the U.S.S.R. can be had, once the American people hamstring the capitalist exploiters in our government who are trying to force our country into war.

The danger of war can be finally eliminated, however, only when monopoly capital is decisively defeated by the people, especially big capital here in the United States. This country, precisely because it is the chief center of monopoly capitalism, is at the same time the main fortress of world reaction and warmongering. Such a democratic government as the Progressive Party aimed at in the 1948 elections—a government based on a coalition of the workers, farmers, Negroes, professionals, and small business men—could lay important curbs upon the big monopolists, who are the Number One enemies of present-day peace and

democracy. But only with the establishment of socialism can the war-fascist danger be abolished outright. The great industries, the banks, the basic natural resources, and the political control of society must all be taken entirely out of the hands of the capitalists and placed in the hands of the people, with the working class playing the leading political role. This, and only this, will cut out reaction at the root. There is no other way to avoid the rising danger of devastating war, economic chaos, and the malignant cancer of fascism—all precipitated by rampant American imperialism.

During the nearly seven decades of my life there have been many striking advances in industrial technology, many of them of American origin. Economically, the United States is a very different country today than it was in the period when I was born, with its then horse cars, cobble-stoned streets, gaslit cities, link-and-pen railroads, and with telephone and electric lights still rare novelties. Great new industries have since sprung up, among them electrical, refrigeration, packing, rubber, oil, chemicals, plastics, canning, etc. Agriculture has also made large strides in mechanization, electrification, and general productive efficiency. Spectacular achievements in this period, too, were the modernization of the railroads, the building of gigantic power and flood-control dams, the construction of tremendous bridges and monster ships, the erection of great skyscrapers, and the evolution of all sorts of terrible war weapons. And then, there were, of course, the wonder inventions of the automobile, the motion picture, the airplane, the radio, and television, with all their far-reaching implications of mass production, new sales methods, trustification, and radical changes in American economic, political, and social life. And now we have the greatest technical advance of them all, the development of atomic energy. The population of our country, in this period of development, has grown from 50,155,000 in 1880 to 146,571,000 in 1948 and our industrial output has increased many times over.

It is in the very nature of capitalism that all these technological advances and industrial achievements have not lent stability to our economic system. On the contrary, the more complex and the more developed this system has become, the more unstable has it grown. The further technology advances, the sharper become the internal contradictions of capitalism. So that, today, the United States has at once become the most developed and the most unstable economic system in the world. We have also the most desperate and frightened capitalist class, the most disturbed and anxious nation. The future of capitalism looms dim and uncertain to our people, and there is a general feeling

that we are living on the edge of a volcano. Meanwhile, the capitalists are trying to solve their growing economic and political problems by pushing this country in the direction of world conquest, with all the mounting dangers of fascism and war. Only socialism, in the long run, can change this basic situation, by making technological advances a real blessing to humanity, instead of a matter of fear and foreboding. Only socialism can fully adapt the revolutionary discovery of atomic energy and apply it on the widest scale to peaceful purposes for the benefit of all society.

American socialism would do much more than merely put a stop to the reaction and danger of monopoly capital. It would open a new period of peace, democracy, and prosperity for our people. The tremendous productive apparatus of our country, instead of depending upon wars and a war economy to keep it in operation, would find, under conditions of production for use, a boundless outlet for its commodities among our people and the famished nations of the world. Instead of being the property of a small minority of capitalists and utilized primarily for their enrichment, which constitutes a monstrous anomaly, the industries would be owned by the people and operated for their benefit. Under socialist conditions, the United States would embark upon the development of the greatest prosperity and well-being its people have ever known.

The central meaning of the foregoing is that American capitalism is not basically different from capitalism in other countries. Its apparent vitality is due to the fact that, developing under particularly favorable circumstances, it has grown more powerful and dangerous. The capitalism of the United States is not the "new" capitalism, that Professor Thomas N. Carver called it during the lush "boom" period of the 1920's; it is not a "people's" or "participating" capitalism, as Eric Johnston now designates it; it is not "progressive" capitalism, as many Social-Democrats and liberals would have us believe; it cannot be used as a medium of industrializing and democratizing the world, as Earl Browder advocates. And its fundamental economic weakness, its cyclical crisis, cannot be cured, as the Keynesians believe, by government spending or "pump-priming." The American capitalist system is just the same old, incurably reactionary capitalism, only grown worse with the years and the growth of monopoly, a capitalism which is subject, in continually exaggerated forms, to all the major internal and external contradictions that are tearing to pieces the capitalist system in other parts of the world. Monopoly-ridden American capitalism, rotten at the heart, besides being periodically torn by devastating eco-

conomic crises, inevitably is imperialist, fascistic, and war-like.

American capitalism, as well as British, German, or Japanese capitalism, falls within the brilliant analyses of capitalism in general made by Marx and Lenin. Its own national peculiarities render it especially parasitic and cannibalistic. It is seeking, for its own worthless sustenance, to suck the life-blood out of all other nations, now even more than it has done in the past. American capitalism, representing predatory wealth with a power never before achieved in any other country, is now a serious menace to the peace and well-being of the world; it is the greatest obstacle confronting the peoples everywhere in their irresistible march upward and onward. Imperatively it must and will be supplanted by socialism.

## IV. The Growth of American Reaction

When I was born the United States had been recognized as a democratic leader for well over a hundred years; but now, some 68 years later, this situation has fundamentally changed. All through these nearly seven decades, capitalist reaction has gone ahead steadily intrrenching itself in this country economically, politically, militarily, and ideologically, until now this has become the world's most monopoly-controlled nation. During this same period the democratic masses, in bitter struggle against the big capitalists, have also made much progress. They have built a powerful trade union movement, established strong farmers' organizations, laid at least the foundations of the Communist Party, somewhat advanced the status of the shamefully oppressed Negro people, improved industrial working conditions, and written considerable democratic legislation into our body of law. But in this long struggle between the forces of American democracy and those of reaction, the general advantage has been on the side of reaction. Its forces have been so much strengthened that today the great monopolists, more powerful than ever, dominate our country as never before. More than that, they have become the center of world reaction and today are actually threatening our people and the world with fascism.

The capitalist rulers of the United States, in order to throw dust in the eyes of the people, are constantly making hypocritical boasts about the high quality of American democracy. "Equal opportunity for all," "the supremacy of the individual," "democratic justice for everybody," "equality before the law"—these are supposed to be basic principles of our "American way of life." Eric Johnston, a noted capitalist propagandist, in his book, *America Unlimited*, paints the following fantastic picture. "Capitalism," he says, "is a human institution, vibrant and evolutionary, capable of constantly adjusting itself to new conditions, a tool in the hands of the people to be used for the good of all. The goal is every man a capitalist." Mr. Johnston scoffs at the idea that there are classes and the class struggle in the United States. Also, he, like others of his kind, portrays capitalist America as a sort of Sir Galahad among the nations, whose idealistic purpose it is to establish freedom and prosperity throughout the world.

Such fantasies, however, have no connection with the actualities of life in the capitalist United States. In reality this country is virtually the property of a small minority of big capitalists and it is being run primarily for their benefit. These capitalists, who perform no useful social function whatever, not only own the industries but also control the government and almost every other key institution, all of which they exploit for their own purposes. These dominating monopolists are fundamentally undemocratic, even fascistic. Imperialism, in the United States as elsewhere, is now in its fascist phase, in that, whether they admit it or not, the big capitalists are fascist-minded. As a result American democracy, always fighting for its life against capitalist dictators, is still of a very limited and precarious character. The masses of the people enjoy only such degree of democracy as they have the power to wrest from the ruling class. There are many countries in the world today in which their people have more democracy than the United States. And even the skeleton democracy that we do have is now more threatened than ever. The drive of American imperialism for world control is dealing a deadly blow to democracy in this country, as well as elsewhere, and it is resurrecting the deadly menace of fascism throughout the capitalist world. The victory of fascism is, however, not inevitable.

American industry, the stronghold of American reaction, is carried on upon a typical dog-eat-dog, each-for-himself-and-the-devil-take-the-hindmost capitalist system. This is hypocritically called "free enterprise," although it is highly monopolized. Everybody grabs whatever he can. It is a jungle economy. The general result of this system's operation over a long period is that relatively a handful of rich capitalists have, by hook or crook (mostly crook) grabbed possession of the big industries, banks, railroads, and shipping lines, as well as most of the nation's natural resources, such as coal, oil, iron, copper, and lumber. These capitalists have organized themselves into great monopolies, the like of which the world has never seen before. Production is carried on not for social use, but primarily for the personal profit of these capitalist parasites. If market conditions are such that not enough profit is forthcoming to the employers the latter brazenly close down the industries and let the masses starve or get along any way they can. This monstrous thing has happened time and again in our national history. Masses of people have come to look upon such a proceeding as natural and unavoidable, but actually it is a crime against the nation.

Last year the capitalist exploiters wrung no less than twenty billion dollars in profit after taxation from the workers and other toilers. This

was twice their profits at the peak of the war, and four times their annual profits during the 1936-39 period. According to the August Monthly Letter of the National City Bank, 525 corporations showed net profits of 18.8 per cent for the first six months of 1948. And there is no limit to the capitalists' hoggish appetite for more. Even as I write these lines, slick bourgeois economists are telling Congress that present huge profits are not enough. The capitalist class squanders its vast profits in every direction. Several millions of these wealthy parasites are constantly to be found, cluttering up the fancy hotels and pleasure resorts of the country, wasting what they have robbed from the people, while millions of toilers haven't got enough to live on. Useless themselves from a productive standpoint, the capitalist parasites are also at the core of every reactionary movement in the United States. They are not only worthless, but highly dangerous.

Apologists for capitalism, who use every conceivable device to cover up this monstrous robbery of the people, claim that the vast capitalist profits from industry really go to the masses, especially to deserving "widows and orphans." But this is a deliberate lie. Only 5½ to 7 per cent of the people own any stock whatever in the corporations, and these stockholders obviously are not helpless widows and orphans. And of this tiny minority of the population, in 1937 barely one per cent, the ultra-wealthy, drew down 60 per cent of all the dividends. The inequality of wealth distribution in this country is indicated by the fact that 62,000 rich individuals hold as much bank savings as do 25,000,000 of the poorer families, 30 per cent of our people have no savings whatever, and 13,500,000 families, unable to keep up with the cost of living, are now going deeper and deeper into debt.

Since the end of the war real wages have declined 17 per cent, despite production increases. How the workers are faring in the long run under this boasted capitalist system is shown by figures compiled recently by the Labor Research Association. Taking into consideration wages, prices, and production, and using the prevailing standards of 1899 as 100, the L.R.A. shows that American workers' standards have now sunk to 69. That is, the workers at present are getting 31 per cent less of what they produce in comparison with their share of production half a century ago. The symbol of the American capitalists' idea of democracy is an employer who never did a useful day's work in his life, but who owns anywhere up to several hundred millions of dollars' worth of property, usually inherited from industrial bandit forebears, while his armies of workers, toiling hard at useful labor, have barely enough to live on. Roosevelt's famous statement that one-third

of the nation was ill-fed, ill-clad, and ill-housed should have read at least two-thirds; for no less than 80 per cent of our people are getting less than is called for in the well-known and widely endorsed sustenance budget of the Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics. To call the monstrous capitalist system of robbery and inequality democratic is a glaring prostitution of the term.

It is characteristic of brazen American capitalist ideologists to claim that the private ownership of the industries and other essential means of production is the basis of all freedom, that there can be no real democracy without such ownership. They even have the insolence to make the terms "capitalism" and "democracy" practically interchangeable. But this means to stand reality on its head. It is precisely because of capitalist private ownership, which has now grown into an all-embracing fascist-minded monopoly (blandly called "free enterprise" by capitalist boosters) that democracy is being gradually stifled in this country. Nor can this reactionary trend be checked until the trusts are sharply curbed, and finally socialized. The march of the American people into full democracy cannot be really gotten under way again until the great industries are owned by the people, until we have socialism in the United States. Private ownership of the social means of production, instead of being the basis of freedom, is the most dangerous and deadly enemy of democracy in all its forms.

The American capitalist political organization is as un-democratic as the industrial system, and for quite the same reasons. Capitalist soothsayers nowadays are giving forth a lot of talk to the effect that the United States government, in its local, state, and national forms, has become a "social welfare" state. That is to say, its basic purpose is now to look after the general economic and political welfare of the people. But this is only a typical capitalist rationalization in defense of the prevailing system of exploitation. Actually our government, now, as before, is what *The Communist Manifesto*, one hundred years ago, called capitalist governments in general: the executive committee of the capitalist class. The ruling capitalist class controls our government and it carefully sees to it that the government functions primarily in its class interest. From time to time the people, by powerful pressure movements, succeed in forcing some concessions from the ruling capitalists, but so far these concessions have not infringed upon the latter's dominant position, nor halted their advance. The capitalists continue to strengthen their grip upon the country. On July 26, 1948, the Federal Trade Commission, writing about the growth of American monopoly, stated: "If nothing is done to check the growth of concentration, either the giant corpora-

tions will ultimately take over the country, or the government will be compelled to step in and impose some regulation in the public interest." But the Commission is a bit late with its analysis, as the corporations have already taken over the country, and with it the government and all its repressive organs, including the courts, the armed forces, and the police.

The Wall Street monopolists are not content with controlling the government, so to speak, from a distance. They have moved right in, shoving their own trusted men into many high posts of the government and all its departments. They have their capitalists fresh from Wall Street, sitting in the President's Cabinet and in other strategic spots. They have planted flocks of reactionary generals and admirals in key government jobs, while also absorbing large numbers of this big brass directly into the management of industry. These trends constitute decisive manifestations of the linking of the state apparatus directly with monopoly capital. It is state-monopoly capitalism, one of the most sinister expressions of the trend of capitalism towards fascism in this country.

During the period of which I am writing, that of the 68 years of my life, the history of federal (also state and local) legislation in the United States has been one of prime protection of the interests of the capitalists. Without fail, one after another, the succeeding national administrations have shielded the monopolies. Some will immediately object, however, that this was not true during the period of Roosevelt's Presidency, from 1933 to 1945. But this exception is more apparent than real. When Roosevelt came into office in 1933, backed overwhelmingly by the workers and other toilers, capitalism in this country was in a serious crisis. In their boundless greed, the capitalists had robbed the people so mercilessly that the latter's purchasing power collapsed and the whole productive machine came to a standstill. During this period of capitalist confusion of the early Roosevelt regime, the workers were able to build up powerful labor unions and to secure the beginnings of social insurance legislation. Despite these important victories, however, the big monopolies nevertheless managed to strengthen their economic position all through the liberal Roosevelt regime. And, no sooner had Roosevelt died and the reactionary Truman administration come into office than they reasserted their economic and political strength with a vengeance.

The composition of the Congress of the United States, even after the "popular upheaval" of the recent Presidential elections, shows the undemocratic capitalist class character of the government. The U.S.

*News*, in its issue of November 26, 1948, analyzes the make-up of the new Eighty-first Congress as follows: Senate, 66 lawyers, 16 businessmen, 9 farmers, 5 others; House, 235 lawyers, 81 businessmen, 37 farmers, 21 newspapermen, 20 school teachers, 41 others. This is overwhelmingly a pro-capitalist set-up. A big majority of the lawyers, who make up a preponderance in both chambers, work for corporations, and have long since shown their careful solicitude for the capitalists' welfare. This multitude of lawyers, plus the 97 businessmen, assure a solid majority for the capitalists upon every issue that might concern their basic prerogatives. As for the workers, who make up nearly half of the country's voting population, their representation in Congress is so weak that the *U.S. News* does not bother even to list any members of either the Senate or House as being workers. Presumably the workers, if any, are included in the small minority of 46 "others." Then, as for women, who constitute over one-half of the adult population of this country, there are only nine of them in Congress; that is, eight in the House and one in the Senate, out of a total of 531 members in both chambers. The Negroes are grossly discriminated against from the standpoint of representatives. Although they comprise 10 per cent of the American people, they have only two members in the House and none in the Senate, whereas they should have about 53, were the representation in Congress established upon a truly democratic proportional basis. Youth is also virtually excluded from Congress, the average age of members of the Senate being 56 years and of the House 51 years. One has to do real violence to the term democracy to consider this capitalist, male, white, aged Congress as democratic. But this type of Congress serves well to protect the interests of the capitalist system and that is just what the ruling class of employers expects of it.

The parliaments of many countries, even in capitalist lands, are much more democratic in their make-up than is the American Congress. In composition the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. stands far in the lead. Of the 1,339 members in both of its houses there are: women, 278; workers, 511; peasants, 349; white collar and professional workers, 479. All the members of the Supreme Soviet are also members of the trade unions, except for the peasants, who belong to collective farm co-operatives. Forty-three percent of all the members are less than 40 years old. In the Soviet of Nationalities, one of the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet, all the many nationalities that make up the Soviet people have full and equal representation. No race, or sex, or age, or religious discrimination there.

One of the most crippling forces in the undemocratic formation of

our government is the systematic propagation by reactionary elements of prejudices and discrimination against certain religious and national minority groups. The Catholics are the targets of much of this anti-democratic barrage. It is an unwritten law in this white-Protestant country that no Catholic shall be allowed to become President. Other big political positions they may hold, but not that of Chief Executive. This rank discrimination has been rigidly enforced ever since the foundation of the republic. The same deadly rule is also enforced against the Jews, but with even more severity and breadth of application. The foreign-born in general are likewise victims of such harassments. And as for the Negroes, they are considered to be out of the running altogether for decisive governmental posts. It would indeed be a naive Negro mother who would take seriously that old American democratic tradition, according to which every American-born citizen has an equal chance to become President.

The poor are not represented in our Congress, but they certainly have a full representation in the jails and penitentiaries of the country. Equality before the law is only a high-sounding phrase in the United States. One would have to be a fool not to see that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor. The biggest crooks in the country are the big businessmen. They are the wholesale criminals, with batteries of slick lawyers to defend them, and it is almost impossible to send any of them to jail, no matter how flagrant their crookedness. But as to the workers and other poor (out of whose broad ranks come most of the petty criminals), raised under slum conditions and with no clever lawyers to defend them when they get into trouble with the law, it is an easy matter to railroad them to jail, especially if they are Negroes. It can be accepted as a social law under capitalism that the poorer the status of a class in our society, the greater will be its representation in prison, although the ratio of class criminality is just the reverse.

The shallowness of capitalist legal justice is, as I write this, being dramatically illustrated in the trial of the eleven Communist Party leaders in New York. The indictment against them, a charge of teaching the overthrow of the United States government by force and violence, is not only stupid in itself, but it is also a flagrant violation of their Constitutional right of free speech. The general atmosphere in which the trial is being conducted, with the country in the midst of a campaign of fanatical red-baiting, gravely injures their chances for a fair trial because of intimidation of the jury. The federal judge on the bench, obviously deeply prejudiced against the defendants, regularly

rules against the defense lawyers' motions, one after the other, in a routine manner, sometimes appearing not even to know the substance of the legal points that he is slapping down. And the prosecution, to bolster up its flimsy case, has mustered together as its witnesses a motley collection of professional red-baiters, spies, renegades, and perjurers from the political gutters and cesspools of the country. This whole trial is an example of the frame-up system, so long and bitterly known to the American working class. The only hope for a fair trial is through outside mass pressure.

To help maintain their wholesale robbery of the people the capitalists have secured control of every major means of shaping public opinion, as well as of many vital popular organizations. Freedom of speech, like all other capitalist "equalities," is more honored in the breach than in the observance. The whole vast system of thousands of daily, weekly, and monthly papers (except a few Communist, liberal, and labor papers) is controlled by the capitalists. Indeed, the papers themselves are huge capitalist organizations and two-thirds of their incomes come from advertisers—facts which ensure them a capitalist point of view. This vast battery of capitalist-minded papers constantly ding-dong capitalist propaganda (of course, they don't call it that) into the ears of the American people. The widespread systems of radio and the growing television networks, which are also supported by big advertising, are likewise safely in the hands of the capitalists. The capitalist-owned radio and television companies see to it that the presentation of the reactionary point of view altogether outweighs the liberal or labor view on their networks. The movies, too, themselves big business and also closely allied with outside monopoly interests, utilize their powerful medium constantly for planting reactionary capitalist ideas and convictions into the minds of their huge audiences. Almost the whole import of the trash now to be seen on our movie screens is a defense of the capitalist system and an attack upon everything progressive. The churches, controlled largely by rich parishioners, are similarly capitalist in their outlook, and they consistently bring strong religious influence to bear as a buttress for capitalism. They are also saturated with Jim Crowism. With the Negroes segregated in most churches, one wonders if there is also to be segregation in Heaven—or do Negroes go there? The schools, colleges, and universities, carefully controlled by the reactionary forces, are likewise veritable propaganda institutions, systematically distorting national traditions and current events to the glorification of the capitalist system. Their job is to create capitalist-minded citizens who never venture to criticize or challenge sacrosanct capitalism.

in the same way that the churches produce devotees of their own sects.

The capitalists have also established direct or indirect control over the American Legion and the other ex-servicemen's organizations, as well as over the vast fraternal orders, and many other types of mass movements. Even the trade unions have not escaped the wide pervading capitalist influence. The reactionary leaders of the A. F. of L., the C.I.O., the Miners Union, and the Railroad Brotherhoods are outright and very effective supporters of capitalism. They are essentially tools of big business in all that is really vital to monopoly capital. With these immense propaganda forces going full blast in support of the cause of capitalist reaction, in contrast to the relatively tiny propaganda resources possessed by the liberal and anti-capitalist forces, it is ridiculous to speak of democracy in this country in the vital matter of developing the people's general political outlook on society and in forming their opinions on specific questions of daily interest to them. This situation, with the people getting their heads stuffed with capitalist ideas from every direction, largely renders our elections farcical from the democratic standpoint.

The fundamentally undemocratic character of American capitalism is, however, perhaps most graphically illustrated by its shameful treatment of the Negro people. It is a matter of common knowledge that Jews, Mexicans, American Indians, Japanese, Puerto Ricans, Filipinos, and other national minority groups are flagrantly denied civil rights, but the Negroes are treated the worst of all. They are outrageously abused and insulted. Here are over 14,000,000 industrious, hard-working people who are systematically denied the most elementary human rights. The general idea seems to be to keep the Negro people as near as possible to slavery conditions. They are refused the right to vote, to work freely in the industries, to patronize hotels, restaurants, theaters, trolleys, buses, and planes. They cannot freely choose whomever they may wish to marry. They are the last to be hired and the first to be laid off, and every barrier is raised against their learning skilled trades. They are forced to live under the worst slum-ghetto conditions; they are denied equality in education, and they are subjected to many other forms of discrimination and persecution. But worst of all is the terrible scourge of lynching, the brutal hangings, shootings, and burnings of Negroes that have so often disgraced our nation. Also the Jim Crow system is by no means confined to the South; the North, too, although in somewhat less barbarous forms, is saturated with this anti-democratic poison. Washington, our nation's capital, is a sinkhole of Jim Crowism, and even in Congress the advocates of "white su-

premacny" dare to take the floor and spout their Hitlerian doctrines. American capitalism's criminal treatment of the Negro has long been a national disgrace, and now it is becoming a matter of international protest from many peoples. It exposes the hypocrisy of the shouters for bourgeois democracy as nothing else does. The Negro people's gallant fight against all these monstrous injustices is the greatest epic in our national history. The Communist Party is especially proud of the glorious record it has made in pioneering in the struggle for the complete economic, political, and social equality of the Negro people, and for their eventual right of self-determination as a distinct nation.

Many other developments may be cited to show the fundamentally undemocratic character of American capitalist society. One of the more important is that the capitalists, in their ruthless grabbing for profits, have shamelessly despoiled the people by wasting their national resources of coal, oil, iron, copper, lumber, and others. What could be more undemocratic than this? The exploiters have also defiled, doctored, and devitalized the people's food supply. They have with mechanization, standardization, and conservatism reduced American mass art and culture (literature, movies, radio, television, etc.), almost to a robot basis. They are now castrating science, particularly in the social fields, and robbing it of all vitality. With their jungle capitalist ethics, of grab what you can, they are especially ruining the American youth, giving them gangster ideals, causing wholesale juvenile delinquency, and filling the prisons with young boys and girls. The tensions of their barbarous capitalist society are undermining the mental health of the people, so that today insanity is rapidly on the increase in the United States and constitutes one of our most alarming national problems. In these days of acute housing shortage, too, the wealthy capitalists are holding hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of unoccupied rooms in their spacious apartments, town houses, and country manors, while vast numbers of veterans and other worthy citizens cannot find a roof with which to cover their heads. This is the capitalist idea of democracy. All these, and many other reactionary manifestations that are about us on all sides, are the sure signs of a sick and undemocratic society.

What decaying capitalism is doing to the American people is indicated by the following alarming facts: Over half of the patients in all the hospitals, 600,000, are being treated for mental disorders, and every year there are 150,000 new mental patients; 2,000,000 men were rejected from military service during the war for neuro-psychiatric disorders; from 250,000 to 400,000 children under 18 years are in

our juvenile courts each year. (See Oscar R. Ewing, Federal Security Administrator, *The Nation's Health*, Report to the President, September, 1948).

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (*New York Times*, March 14, 1949) a major crime occurred in the United States every 18.7 seconds in 1948. Murders took place at the rate of 36 per day, or 13,010 for the year. "During an average 24 hour period, 1032 places were burglarized, 463 automobiles were stolen in addition to 2672 miscellaneous larcenies. Aggravated assaults and rapes in larger communities reached peaks in 1948 of 68.7 per cent and 49.9 per cent respectively above the 1938-41 average. The 759,698 individuals arrested and fingerprinted in 1948 constituted a record. The predominant age was 21."

Capitalists in the United States for many years past have gone on steadily attacking and weakening our democratic heritage, save when the aroused masses have been able to stay their hand temporarily. This anti-democratic trend has taken a decided turn for the worse since the end of World War II, that is, since American imperialism has embarked upon its crusade to dominate the world. It is the very essence of Wall Street's world-conquering enterprise that it should require the cultivation of a spirit of reaction and of fascism everywhere. The imperialist United States has now become the main organizer of world fascism.

On the international scene this fascist trend is so obvious as to be notorious. In Germany, American bi-partisan policy is striving to rebuild that country as a war power against the U.S.S.R., and to this end the industries and the government in Western Germany are being given back to the Nazi big capitalists. In Japan, we are likewise cultivating reactionary and militaristic monopolists, also with the idea of making Japan into a huge, reactionary, anti-Soviet base. The January, 1949, Japanese elections resulted in a success for reaction. This was the result of MacArthur's politics, and he hailed it as a victory. In China, we have long been militarily supporting the rotten Chiang Kai-shek government made up of feudalistic reactionaries, and in Greece we are doing the same thing. All over the colonial world we are on the side of imperialist reaction and against the peoples fighting for freedom. Even as I write this, Dutch imperialist armies, financially sustained by the Marshall Plan and armed with American guns, are shooting down the Indonesian people. In France and Italy all the fascist groupings automatically rally around our State Department's standard, and we are the best friend of near-fascist Turkey and

of Franco Spain. In Palestine, we are seeking to make Israel a puppet of Wall Street and to establish American domination over the Arab lands, to get their oil deposits. And so it is everywhere else. In every country in the world the reactionary, fascist elements are drawn to American leadership like iron to a magnet. All this is no accident. For, inevitably, if the United States is to pursue an aggressive imperialist course, it is compelled to organize the forces of reaction against the democratic masses of the people, and it is doing precisely this all over the world. The United States imperialists picked up the fallen banner of Nazism, when they adopted its slogan of a world crusade against communism.

In the United States itself, big capital conducts a similar drive towards fascism. There is a necessary unity between its foreign and domestic policies. This is the meaning of such recent anti-democratic developments as the synthetic anti-Communist, anti-Soviet hysteria; the outrageous conduct of the House Committee on Un-American Activities; the passage of the Taft-Hartley slave labor act; the attempt to push through the Mundt-Nixon police state bill; the vicious anti-Negro and anti-Semitic campaigns; the setting up of loyalty tests for government, teachers, employees, college professors and newspaper men; the manufacture of lurid spy scares; the arrest and persecution of Communist leaders, the attempts to outlaw the Communist Party; the wholesale militarization of the American people, and the like.

The clear implication of all these co-related reactionary policies of American big business here and abroad is a general pressure in the direction of fascism. The most sinister feature of this whole reactionary offensive against the freedom of the American and other peoples is that it is being carried on under slogans of peace, defense, and democracy. There is none of the blatant propagation of anti-Semitism, of anti-parliamentarism, of anti-democracy, of glorification of the "master race," of the worship of violence on principle, of the rejuvenating effects of war which characterized the Hitler type of fascism, as such propaganda would all be obvious to the masses. The fact of its tricky ideology makes the fascism of American imperialism, bedecked as it is in the garments of peace and democracy, all the more subtle and dangerous. A decisive victory for American imperialism in its campaign of expansionism could undoubtedly lead to a fascist world. This is the grave danger that Americans and the peoples of the world must come fully to understand.

Naturally these reactionary developments at home and abroad have provoked much alarm among the American people. The masses see with

grave forebodings the rising danger of a new war and the growth of reaction in this country. Upon many occasions they have expressed their resentment and opposition. In the recent Presidential elections they struck back again at these menacing evils. Resistance to war and fascism was the deepest significance of the Republican defeat in the elections. The elections, above all, showed that the American people are democratic and peace-loving. They want none of the war and fascism to which the bi-partisan imperialist policy is leading them.

But the people's blow in the election was indecisive. Still largely confused by the propaganda of American imperialism, which is deluged upon them from every direction, the great masses of the people were not yet prepared ideologically and organizationally to deal a direct blow to their arch enemy, monopoly capital, and all its political agents. They did not clearly repudiate the Marshall Plan and the whole bi-partisan foreign policy of imperialist expansion, militarism, fascism, and war; they did not break loose from the control of the two capitalist parties and build a big anti-monopoly party. They made the mistake of re-electing Harry S. Truman, a man who, by his whole course of policy since Roosevelt died, has shown that he's but a tool in the hands of the powerful capitalist interests which are driving our country and the world towards fascism and war. Organized labor will be taught bitter lessons by this so-called lesser-evil President before his term of office is finished.

To this dangerous situation, with its looming threat of fascism and war, has the United States and the world been brought by the strengthening of American capitalist reaction which, at varying tempos, has been going on all through my lifetime. To halt this reactionary trend, to put an end to the menace of aggressive American monopoly capital, is the supreme task of our people and the whole of humanity.

## V. American Labor Marches Onward

The modern American trade union movement, arising out of the big industrial expansion and labor struggles that increasingly developed after the Civil War, was organized nationally the same year that I was born, the A. F. of L. having been formed in Pittsburgh on November 15, 1881. All my active life, in fact since I was 14, I have been deeply and closely connected with American labor unionism. At one time, from 1917 to 1920, I was head A. F. of L. organizer in the meat-packing and steel industries. We organized 200,000 workers in packing and 367,000 in steel, the first modern trustified, mass production industries ever organized by the American labor movement.

Under the Roosevelt regime, especially during the years 1930-40, the trade unions made a gigantic step forward by generally organizing the basic industries, which because of their unorganized condition, had long been a dagger in labor's side. For many years, the fact that the big trustified industries were without strong unions gave monopoly capital a tremendous advantage over the workers. The big capitalists were able to set what wages they saw fit for the many millions of workers in these unorganized industries, thus influencing negatively the wage standards of the entire working class. The employers also were enabled to check the organic growth of the whole labor movement and to cripple its political activities as well. Although these basic industries are now organized, nevertheless, because of the fact that the unions are generally controlled by conservative leaders, the monopolists have by no means fully lost control over their workers. Many of these top union leaders are very susceptible to capitalist inducements and pressures. Nevertheless, the organization of the basic industries places a very powerful weapon in the hands of the working class which, in all due season, it will learn how to use effectively. Potentially, the American labor movement is now of gigantic strength.

The great expansion of the trade unions has resulted in numerous important victories for the workers. Working conditions have improved, elementary safety conditions have been set up, rudimentary systems of social insurance begun, and seniority regulations established.

But the most important achievement of the workers in the past generation, next to the building of the unions themselves, has been the shortening of the work-day and work-week. Today the eight-hour day and five-day week have become widespread, which is a tremendous improvement over conditions when I was a worker in industry. For example, when I worked on the railroads (I had ten solid years of it) thirty-odd years ago, we worked 12 hours a day and every day in the month. And in the great steel strike of 1919-20, the major demand of the 367,000 striking workers, next to the recognition of their right to organize, was the abolition of the 12-hour day, 7-day week which was then universal throughout the steel industry. Of course, all these achievements are constantly jeopardized by the reactionary economic and political forces at work in capitalism.

Another vital democratic movement of recent years, closely connected with the tremendous growth in the trade unions, is the forward leap politically of the Negro people. This is one of the most striking aspects of the whole American political situation. The extraordinary political and cultural upsurge of the Negro masses, so recently freed from actual slavery, manifests itself in various ways. The Negro people, working co-operatively with white progressives, are playing an increasingly effective role in many fields. They have become a real factor in trade unionism, above all in the basic industries. They have also produced some of the most outstanding scientists in the country; they stand high in the ranks of American culture, notably in music and the theater; they are top leaders in the world of sports, and they are blasting into the Jim Crow system all over the country, especially in the feudalistic South. These advances of the Negro people, so bravely and intelligently won, have already made them the leaders of the most progressive sections of the whole American people. However, the discrimination from which they still suffer is strikingly grave. Inasmuch as the Negroes in industrial centers are so heavily proletarian, this political awakening is of supreme importance to organized labor.

The labor movement, ever since its birth, has had to develop in the face of the opposition of the most powerful capitalist class the world has ever known. During the course of this long, hard struggle, the labor movement has given much protection to the workers, but it has by no means reached full maturity in this respect. Its conservative leadership is far from fully utilizing trade unionism's powerful potentialities. Comparatively strong economically, the movement is still undeveloped in various basic respects—ideologically, organizationally, and politically. It is also very weak in the matter of its leadership. Consequently, the

broad labor movement, and the democratic coalition of which labor is the base, have not yet been able to make a decisive challenge to the capitalists, who remain the solidly entrenched ruling class of our country. The organized American working class has so far not achieved its historic mission of becoming the leader of the nation, nor has it even set this broad objective as its goal.

The first and most elementary shortcoming of the trade unions is their undeveloped ideology. The workers of this country, in the main, have not yet cut loose from the mental apron strings of capitalism. They have no concrete perspective of socialism, and they are still not class-conscious. Although they have a strong class instinct and a good proletarian fighting spirit, they nevertheless do not draw a sharp ideological line between themselves and the capitalist class. This ideological backwardness is a most serious drag upon the trade unions, which in their official programs and leadership reflect and emphasize all the confusion of the workers in this respect. It is a weakness that deeply injures the trade unions' struggles in every direction.

The basic cause of this lack of ideological development of the American workingman and woman is to be found in the relatively greater strength of the capitalist system in the United States than elsewhere. Large sections of the American working class, especially the more skilled, have long shared in the "prosperity" that has accompanied developing capitalism in this country, a "prosperity" which, as we have seen in preceding chapters, has, in the last generation, largely been based upon war and the repair of war's devastation. The workers' wages, over a long period, have been higher than almost anywhere else in the world. Many workers have also enjoyed extra opportunities to pass into the ranks of classes financially better off than the working class. At the present time, for example, many workers in this country are undoubtedly sharing in the "good times" of American capitalism, based on the war disasters of other peoples in World War II. To these facts might be added various others that have tended to hinder the ideological growth of American workers: the presence in this country of vast numbers of immigrant workers of many nationalities and with different political, religious, and social backgrounds. It is not surprising, therefore, that class-consciousness makes relatively slow headway among the workers in the United States and that they do not yet understand the imperative need for socialism. The great masses of the workers learn, not primarily from Marxist books or propaganda, but from the daily conditions of their lives.

The bourgeois contentions that there are no classes and no class

struggle in the United States are, of course, silly. Here, as in other capitalist countries, are well-defined social classes and a constant struggle is going on among them over the division of the toilers' products and for political control. In this country we have a strong, clearly marked capitalist class, the wealthiest, strongest, and most arrogant in the world. We also have a vast, variegated middle class. There is likewise a farmer class, with several gradations from poor to rich. And finally there is the great class of workers, men and women, who toil all their lives in the industries, who were born in working class families and who fully expect to die as workers. Each of these classes has its own definite political viewpoint, and a more or less active struggle goes on among them constantly to improve their respective positions. This is the class struggle, and it is just as American as Plymouth Rock.

The very existence of the labor movement and its long history of hard-fought strikes are sufficient testimony to the fact that there are classes and a class struggle in this country. Indeed, few countries have had a more violent class struggle than the United States. The trouble is that American workers have not yet drawn the full ideological meaning out of the class war which they themselves are waging. The failure of the workers to realize their class position in American capitalist society is one of the very greatest assets of the employers. Fully conscious of this, they and their many mouthpieces, the most important of which are the conservative labor leaders, spare no time, money, and effort to prevent the workers from emerging from their present ideological confusion. One of the more stupid of the present attempts to convince the workers that there are no classes and no class struggle in the United States was the work of Philip Murray, president of the C.I.O. Mr. Murray writes in the *American Magazine* of June, 1948:

"In fact, we have no classes in this country; that's why the Marxist theory of the class struggle has gained so few adherents. We are *all* workers here. And in the final analysis the interests of farmers, factory hands, business and professional people, and white collar toilers prove to be the same. Even the division of industrial workers into 'management' and 'labor' turns out to be somewhat artificial. Management, as we have discovered, involves plenty of labor, and labor involves considerable management."

Nevertheless the American workers are by no means wedded irrevocably to the capitalistic illusions. They are definitely on the march ideologically. As American and world capitalism falls deeper into difficulties and as their own working and living conditions are threatened, the workers in this country are beginning to understand better their

class position and to realize the fundamental weaknesses of the capitalist system. During the great economic crisis of the thirties, and also during the Roosevelt period following it, the workers' faith in capitalism received numerous jolts. A very powerful teacher was the fact of 17 million unemployed in a collapsed economic system. The workers have learned that they can no longer depend upon capitalism to furnish them even reasonably steady work. They now have gained the conviction (based on Roosevelt's Keynesian program) that only by state intervention in industry and by the adoption of adequate systems of social insurance, can they enjoy even a temporary minimum of economic security.

This definite recognition of certain fundamental weaknesses in capitalism marks a long step ahead ideologically for the workers. In fact, it opens the gate of the road to their politicalization, to an ideological development which must in the long run lead to class-consciousness and a socialist perspective. The American workers are going through an evolution which, in some respects at least, is similar to that experienced by their British brothers. The time was, thirty years or so ago, when the British employers used to boast loudly that their workers were immune to socialism; that Marxism was a foreign "ism" and could never take root in Britain's irrevocably capitalist soil. But once the British Empire began to slip and could no longer favor the British skilled workers with high wages nor furnish the workers generally with steady work, the British workers began to recognize more clearly their class position and to turn en masse to socialism. Today, even though their Right Social-Democratic leaders are betraying them, the workers truly want socialism in Britain. This is essentially the general path that American workers are beginning to take. When American imperialism sinks into obvious difficulty then the American workers will swiftly acquire a socialist ideology.

The development of a socialist outlook by the American workers will give a tremendous spur to the growth of the labor movement. It will bring about a veritable labor renaissance in this country. And that it will take place on a rising scale we may safely assume as sure. American capitalism is not "exceptional," nor is American labor. Notwithstanding certain specific national characteristics, they both respond fundamentally to the same economic, political, and ideological laws here in the United States that capitalism and the workers do in other countries. American capitalism is inevitably moving toward an eventual crisis from which it will not recover. The final ideological goal of American labor, developed during the course of these events, will be a socialist perspective and for

the winning of working class leadership of the American people. The National Association of Manufacturers spokesmen may scoff at this dire prediction (for them), but they will nevertheless, in the due course of time, have to eat this particular crow.

A second major weakness of the American trade union movement—and this flows from the first and basic ideological weakness—lies in the inadequate quality and extent of labor's economic organization. Although the unions possess, all told, some 15,000,000 members, there are still about that many more eligibles outside of their ranks. These unorganized workers are a big handicap to the effectiveness of the unions. If they are not yet organized, this is mainly due to gross neglect by the conservative union leadership. Undoubtedly many more millions of workers could be brought into the unions if the bureaucratic officials would but bestir themselves from their swivel chairs and devote a little time to organizing work. Besides this needless numerical weakness, the trade unions, especially in the A. F. of L. and Railroad Brotherhoods, are split up into antiquated craft unions of the type of 1890 or earlier. This obsolete organizational form is retained primarily because a whole raft of well-paid union officials want to hold on to their useless jobs. Craft unionism is a serious weakness to labor, especially during hard-fought strikes, when by keeping some sections of workers on the job while the others are striking, time and again it has ended in disastrous defeats. Finally, organized labor is split right down the middle into the two hostile camps—the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. This division, which also does incalculable harm to the workers, and which was caused by the reactionary leaders of the A. F. of L., has no basis for its continuance except the jockeying of two rival sets of labor bureaucrats, primarily A. F. of L. leaders, who are striving to protect their own selfish group interests without regard for the welfare of the workers. Although it may seem to proceed at a snail's pace, American organized labor, like that of other countries, is nevertheless surely on its way to achieving a broadly extended movement, the industrial form of organization, and the establishment of one general national federation of labor.

A third grave shortcoming of organized labor lies in the field of politics. The American working class is the only working class of importance in the capitalist world that has not organized itself into a broad, mass political party. Labor in this country still goes along with the capitalist parties, being caught in the web of the two-party system. While the ideological undevelopment of the working class is basically responsible for this situation, the immediate cause is the hold-back atti-

tude of the reactionary trade union leadership. If the leaders were to strike out boldly for a new people's party with labor at its head, undoubtedly the workers would from the outset support it in such masses as to make it a decisive political force. But the leaders refuse to do this largely because they are all tied up with personal interests in the two big capitalist parties.

Such organizations as the Political Action Committee of the C.I.O. and Labor's League for Political Education of the A. F. of L. are entirely inadequate to the workers' political needs. They are like wind-mills in an age of atomic energy. There must be a new party formed, composed of workers, farmers, Negroes, intellectuals, and other democratic forces. The Progressive Party, led by Henry Wallace, is a step in the right direction. The time is over-ripe for such a party, and the workers are moving towards it, although at an exasperatingly slow pace, in the face of the combined opposition of their reactionary trade union leaders and the capitalist politicians.

The two-party system is the apple of the capitalists' eye, so far as maintaining their political control of the workers is concerned. They use every means to keep the masses tied to it. By this two-party device they constantly confront the workers with the so-called lesser evil choice. They put two sets of reactionary candidates in the field. If the workers rebel and refuse to vote for the reactionary who is named as the lesser evil, they are threatened with the bigger evil, that is, the election of a still worse reactionary. This is a fatal political trap. The effect of the two-party system is to lead the workers deeper and deeper into the swamp of reaction. In the recent national elections there was no real choice between Truman and Dewey, as the workers will soon learn from Truman's betrayal of his election promises. It was this "lesser evil" policy which led the German Social-Democrats, step by step, to support worse and worse reactionaries. They finally wound up by voting for Hindenburg, who promptly made Hitler his Reichschancellor and handed Germany over to fascism. The workers must boldly cut their way out of the vicious circle of the two-party, "lesser evil" policy by establishing their own independent coalition party. Otherwise, with monopoly capital controlling both major parties, and with these big capitalists steadily heading towards fascism, the "lesser evil" policy and two party system can only lead the American working class to one defeat after another. American labor's coming of age will be marked by the establishment of its own party. This will be a step of immense importance for the labor movement. Labor in this country will never be able to make real headway against the arrogant trusts, effectively to

defend the workers' interests, and to fulfill the responsibilities of national leadership that are being increasingly thrust upon it until it has such an independent political party.

A fourth major weakness of organized labor, another basic sign of its immaturity, is its lack of a genuinely working class economic and political policy. Official trade union policy today, despite its demand for reforms for the workers, is fundamentally capitalist class in character. This is true of the basic policy of the C.I.O. as well as that of the A. F. of L. and the independent unions. The unions do not challenge the right of the capitalists to wring profits from industry on the basically useless pretext that they furnish the capital. Even at its most recent convention, the C.I.O. expressed the reactionary concern to furnish the employers with what it called a "reasonable profit." Such conservative union policy is further based upon a supposed identity of interest of the workers with the capitalists, and it operates within the framework of the maintenance of the capitalist system. In practice this amounts to the subordination of the workers' interests to those of the capitalists on all major questions. In earlier periods, especially before the Roosevelt regime, conservative trade union leaders used to spout freely about the identity of interests of labor and capital. But nowadays, in the face of an awakening rank and file and of a developing Communist Party, these leaders usually take care to camouflage a bit their doctrines of class collaboration, with such occasional exceptions, of course, as the particularly foolish remarks on this matter by Philip Murray, quoted above. Generally the controlling labor bureaucrats conceal their identity-of-interest philosophy behind screens of shadow attacks upon big business and with charges of "unfair employers." But they immediately soften these attacks by their ardent support of "free enterprise" and the acknowledgement of "fair profits" for capitalists. Under their supposed defense of the workers' immediate interests, the reality of their pro-capitalist, anti-working class conception and policy remains.

The conservative trade union leadership, with its identity-of-interest conception as its guide, naturally defends, more or less actively, the maintenance of the trade unions, as they are the means whereby it gains its livelihood and power. Thus, the bureaucracy reacted sharply against the Taft-Hartley Law, which threatened the very existence of the labor movement. Its own "bread and butter" was at stake. The conservative union leadership also defends, although hesitatingly, enough of the workers' economic demands, for better wages, shorter hours, lower prices, social security, etc., so that the workers are not impelled to quit the unions in disgust or to turn to the Communists for leadership.

Often, however, the conservatives fall short on this vital point of their strategy, as many hard-fought rank and file revolts attest. On all major questions, however, those affecting the basic interests of the capitalists or the existence of the capitalist system, the labor bureaucrats servilely follow the line of big capital. The bulk of the workers, contrary to this, although they are by no means revolutionary, are not at all solicitous of the interests of the capitalists. They press for their own demands with their personal and class welfare in mind. The workers are often held back, however, by conservative trends in their thinking. It cannot be ignored, for example, that in plant elections often as many as 20 per cent, and sometimes even up to 60 per cent of the workers vote that they want "no union." The general picture today in the American labor movement, therefore, on the one hand, is that of a restless rank and file, urgent and essentially progressive in its demands, and, on the other hand, of a conservative top trade union leadership, full of a sense of responsibility to the capitalists and holding the workers back from going "too far" in their demands and action.

Throughout the history of the American labor movement, this pro-capitalist, class-collaborationist attitude of the dominant union leadership has been a grave handicap. It has led to refusals of the leaders to build the unions in the face of capitalist opposition, to their failures to fight for the workers' burning demands, to strikes broken through craft union betrayals, to attempts to suppress the effort of the workers developing class-consciousness, to persecution and expulsion of Left wing elements, in short, to the stagnation and weakening of the whole movement. Class collaboration, based on the bosses' theory of the identity of interest between labor and capital, is a traditional millstone about the necks of the American trade unions; it is a major source of the misleadership which has cursed organized labor for many years.

It could be said once that such destructive policies on the part of their leaders affected the American workers only. Nowadays, however, due to changed national and international conditions, policies based upon the identity-of-interests of capital and labor have become a real menace, not only to American organized labor but also to our whole people and to the entire world. The disastrous effects of such policies are clearly seen as the big monopolists develop a fascist and war drive to dominate the world. Class collaboration transforms the top union leadership into servile tools of this rampant imperialism. Let us take an outstanding example, the Marshall Plan. This is the policy of Wall Street capitalists; it is the main means by which they are now trying to mobilize world reaction under American leadership. Obedient to this basic policy of Ameri-

can capitalism, the top labor leaders characteristically have adopted the Marshall Plan as their own, with the result that the American trade union movement, save for its Left wing, now finds itself officially supporting a policy that could lead to world fascism and war. Indeed, the Greens and Murrays and Reuthers even outdo the employers in their red-baiting, militarist, and anti-Soviet hysteria in support of the imperialists' Marshall Plan. Carrying out this big brass, big business policy has also plunged A. F. of L. and C.I.O. leaders into the worst kind of union-splitting and strike-breaking in France, Italy, Latin America, and on a world scale. They are led to engage in such anti-labor policies in their efforts to ram the imperialist policy of Wall Street down the throats of the unwilling workers in various countries. This is why, through their class collaborationism, the top labor leaders in the United States are now doing the bosses' work by diligently trying to wreck the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Latin American Confederation of Labor.

Such capitalist policies, of course, are disastrous to labor and to the whole people. American organized labor urgently needs a real working class policy, one founded entirely upon the interests of the workers and the nation, both in the immediate and long-run sense. This, of course, to be effective, must be a policy based upon the principles of Marxism-Leninism. Such a change of policy is one of the most fundamental improvements necessary to bring the American labor movement to maturity and to enable it and its allies to cope with the fascist-breeding, war-making policies of American monopoly capital. All this, too, the not-too-distant future will bring.

A fifth major weakness of the American labor movement, one already considerably touched upon above, is the low grade leadership with which organized labor has been afflicted ever since the foundation of the A. F. of L. nearly 68 years ago. This bureaucratic leadership has acted as organized labor's old-man-of-the-sea through this whole, long period. For a full fifty years the trade unions in this country were run by the notorious Gompers clique. Trade union leaders in other countries used to express amazement at the anti-working class composition and policies of this incredibly reactionary bureaucracy. Many of the Gompers group of union leaders were plain thugs, gangsters, and crooks. They freely sold out strikes, peddled "strike insurance" to the bosses, robbed the workers directly through crooked financial devices, and bilked the union treasuries. Many of them kept no union financial records whatsoever. Some were outright stool-pigeons, kept in office by employer support. They suppressed democracy and ruled the unions by force,

and often sheer terrorism. Gun fights for union control were of constant occurrence between them. All these reactionaries were open advocates of capitalism and they were political tools of the bosses' parties. Many became rich, actual capitalists. They were inveterate enemies of honest union leaders and Left wingers of all kinds. The harm done through the years to the struggling young labor movement by this shameful gang of reactionaries is incalculable. One of the finest pages in the history of the Communist Party was its resolute fight against this bureaucracy, in the face of expulsions, sluggings, discharges from industry, and other forms of intimidation.

The main policies of the Gompers' bureaucracy were taken from the arsenal of the National Civic Federation and other employer groups. During the 1920's, for example, top A. F. of L. officials were the most ardent supporters of the employers' current policy of speeding up the workers, a policy which contributed greatly to precipitating the big economic crisis of 1929. As late as 1930, too, the A. F. of L. leaders were violent opponents of unemployment insurance, declaring, along with the employers and capitalist politicians, that such insurance was an insult to the workers, that it would destroy the trade unions, that it would overturn our government and that it would wipe out the "American way of life." Only when organized labor was faced with the fact of the outright catastrophe of the economic crisis with its vast armies of starving unemployed could these troglodyte leaders be induced to take even the slightest step forward. Their perspective for the workers was, and still is, to keep them in the status of more or less well-fed slaves under the ruling capitalists.

Since the advent of the Roosevelt regime in 1933 the depredations of this old gang of labor misleaders have been considerably lessened. This has been largely due to the influx of millions of unskilled and semi-skilled workers into the A. F. of L. craft unions, giving them a more democratic composition. Another big factor in bringing about the change was the rise of the C.I.O., which exercised a progressive, democratizing influence over the whole labor movement. Nevertheless, the A. F. of L. unions are still predominantly in the hands of bureaucratic remnants of the old Gompers clique. As for the A. F. of L. nationally, its conventions are made up almost exclusively of high-paid top officials and there is not a trace of democracy in their activities. The old evils of high salaries still poison the labor movement, and here and there we even find bureaucrats such as Joseph Ryan, president of the Longshoremen who had himself elected for life. All the conservative unions, including some C.I.O. unions, are run by chair-warming ma-

chines, organized to grab and to hang on to the rich official jobs. It always gives me a real pain to hear these autocratic bureaucrats prating about union democracy, and daring to criticize the truly democratic Left-led unions in this and other countries.

During the present post-war period, there has been a turn for the worse in the decisive matter of the leadership of the trade unions. This is because big business, in its drive for world conquest, is mobilizing all its forces, especially the conservative trade union leaders, into its imperialist service. These union leaders, who are what Daniel De Leon correctly called them half a century ago—labor lieutenants of the capitalist class—are responding to the imperialist call of their real master's voice, that of Wall Street big business. In their support of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Pact, and the whole line of American imperialism's foreign policy, they are exposing the fact that they have a united front with Wall Street. They are labor imperialists. They share imperialist conceptions similar to those of the capitalists, and they expect to participate in the imperialist loot, in their own special way as labor officials, which they hope will be won by the dominant imperialist country. Often, as I have pointed out earlier, conservative labor leaders outstrip even the capitalists themselves in their jingoistic warmongering and their pathological hatred of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party.

Such a rallying to the support of Wall Street is, of course, only to be expected in the case of labor leaders who enthusiastically believe in capitalism. When they fear that their beloved capitalist system is in danger, as they do now; or when they realize that their capitalist masters urgently need their support, as at present, they rally to the backing of American imperialism, regardless of the interests of the workers whom they are paid absurdly inflated salaries to represent. Who can doubt but that, were the occasion to present itself, large numbers of these so-called leaders of labor would follow big business, not only into war but also into fascism, even as their counterparts did in Hitler Germany.

In the C.I.O. the mobilizing of the trade union top officialdom around the imperialist banners of Wall Street is having a catastrophic effect on the former progressive character of that organization's policies. The Murray group of leaders, who previously had been following a mildly progressive line regarding the immediate demands of the workers, have now seen fit to split violently with the Left-wing forces over the basic question of Wall Street's foreign policy. As a result they have jumped right into the camp of the extreme Right-wing union sup-

porters of American imperialism. The significance of this break between the Center and the Left may be appreciated when it is realized that it was the Left-Center combination that built the C.I.O. and made it the progressive movement that it finally became. In the steel, auto, and other unions Philip Murray and other "progressive" leaders worked freely with scores of Communist organizers in the building of the organization—with the latter, by the way, doing most of the hard work. But now Mr. Murray, by trotting out to the support of American imperialism in its present difficult plight, has deliberately smashed this healthful Left-Center alliance. He and his Right-wing friends are attempting to cover up this blow against labor by a wild campaign of red-baiting, and union-busting raids upon the more Left unions. It needs no very astute student of labor history to understand that by doing all this disruptive work, Murray has stuck a knife into the heart of the progressive course of the C.I.O. With the result that, even as I write, the C.I.O. is rapidly drifting to the Right in its general policies. Indeed, in some respects—for example, in its rigid control over its local councils and its attempted prohibition of political rights to its affiliated unions—the C.I.O. has already become more reactionary than the A. F. of L. ever was. No A. F. of L. convention has surpassed the November, 1948, convention of the C.I.O. in wild, reckless red-baiting.

One of the most sinister results of Murray's precipitate flight to the right, into the welcoming arms of American imperialism, is that he has thereby greatly strengthened the position of the Social-Democrats—Reuther, Rieve, Green, *et al.*, in the leadership of the C.I.O. These people, who have their Dubinsky counterparts in the A. F. of L., are an especially sinister menace to the progress of the American labor movement. As capitalism all over the world sinks deeper and deeper into its crisis, it places its dependence more and more upon such Right-wing Social-Democrats to shield it from the attacks of the working class. When it comes to selling out the interests of the workers, the old-fashioned Greens, Wolls, Hutchesons, Murrays, Ryans, and Co., for all their class collaborationism and reactionary spirit, are only novices in comparison with the Right Social-Democrats.

Philip Murray, by his abandonment of progressive policy, has probably turned the C.I.O. leadership over to the Social-Democrat Reuther. It is doubtful even now whether, if it came to a showdown vote, Murray could mobilize a majority of the C.I.O. convention behind him in a fight against the would-be union autocrat. Reuther is a man of boundless ambitions and arrogance, and he doubtlessly looks upon Murray's fat job as just another rung in his climb upward. The wily

Walter will carefully pick his time for a decisive clash with Murray. In strengthening the hands of Walter Reuther, Philip Murray has done another ill turn to the working class.

American organized labor is now suffering from a severe crisis of leadership. This is one of the most serious manifestations of its immaturity. The men now standing at the head of the A. F. of L., C.I.O., and independent unions are quite incapable, either of understanding the workers' present complicated problems or of defending their interests in today's complex and difficult economic and political struggle against powerful American imperialism. Their present pro-imperialist policies in this tense world situation demonstrate the fact of their incompetence and their fundamental disloyalty to labor. Their capitalist ideology leads them inevitably to follow basically capitalist policies in all critical situations, precisely at those moments when the working class and the nation require intelligent, resolute, and patriotic proletarian leadership. When the next economic crisis hits this country and greatly sharpens the class struggle, they will fold up in their incapacity to lead the workers, even worse than they did in the great crisis of 1929.

The question of a radical improvement in the quality of American trade unionism is one that concerns vitally, not only the workers and people of this country, but is also a matter of grave international importance. Betrayals nowadays by American labor leaders, in view of the vital international role of American imperialism, let me repeat, have unavoidably become a most serious danger to the workers and peoples of the whole world. If American imperialism, in its drive for world domination, were compelled to confront a powerful opposition from the 15,000,000 trade unionists of the country, instead of getting, as it does, the support of the great bulk of the union leadership, the whole cause of world peace and democracy would be in a far better position.

But time, experience, and the sharpening of the class struggle will remedy all this. Everything in the world situation is making for stronger, more militant, more political, more socialist-minded trade unions, with a more Left leadership. The new trend is to be seen clearly in many countries of the world, where the union leadership has already passed into the hands of the Communists and their Left-wing Socialist and progressive allies. American organized labor, like American capitalism, is not "exceptional," and as it matures it will take a sure path leftward with ever increasing speed. The present Left elements and progressive unions, although still comparatively small in numbers and size, are the true heart of the American labor movement, and the future will justify them. Their strength will vastly increase, despite the

ferocious attacks they are now being subjected to from the combined forces of the dominant trade union bureaucracy, the Wall Street imperialists, and the reactionary Truman Administration. Let us hope that this betterment will be brought about by the workers before the present reactionary misleaders of labor, tailing after the would-be world conquerors of Wall Street, allow the world to be plunged into a new and still more terrible orgy of fascism and war.

## VI. The Degeneration of World Social-Democracy

One of the most vital world developments that has taken place during my experience has been the failure, degeneration, and growing decay of international Social-Democracy, with a resulting gradual shift of working class leadership to the Communists. At the time I was born Social-Democracy held the allegiance of the most advanced sectors of the workers everywhere, and the dynamic center of world socialism was the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. Marx and Engels were still alive, and it was they, with such able co-workers as Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel, who laid the foundations of the then great party. The party at that time was actively building the German trade union movement and it was also carrying on a strong struggle against Bismarck's attempt to outlaw the party and the trade unions through his infamous anti-Socialist laws—a fight which was soon to end with a complete victory for the party. All over the world, including the United States, wherever there were Marxists, they patterned their young and growing Socialist parties after the model Social-Democratic Party of Germany. During the next four decades Social-Democracy spread into all the industrial countries. It embraced millions of members and supporters, and it carried the ideals and hopes of the class-conscious international working class of freeing themselves from capitalism and for establishing socialism. The whole socialist movement was gathered into the Second International when I was still a child.

But this vast world movement, into the building of which boundless efforts of the workers were expended in many countries, has not achieved the historic goal of socialism that it set for itself. It has never established socialism anywhere. On the contrary, it has repeatedly betrayed the workers' fight for socialism, until now it has become a major support of the capitalist system which it was supposed to supplant, and a dangerous obstacle to socialism. All this has had the general consequence that the dynamic movement for socialism is now flowing through

other channels, through the Communist parties of the world, while the Social-Democratic parties are progressively losing their mass support and their leadership of the working class, nationally and internationally.

The decisive test of the Social-Democratic movement took place in the World War I period. For some 25 years before this great war opportunistic influences had been at work within the German Social-Democratic Party (with parallel developments in the Socialist parties of other countries). Petty-bourgeois intellectuals and opportunist trade union leaders, dominated by the revisionist theories and practices of Bernstein and Legien, had gradually secured control of the party. They were crass reformists, arguing that capitalism, by building up trusts and producing an ever-growing working class, was gradually transforming itself into socialism, and that, therefore, no revolution was necessary. In effect, these Right-wing elements were objectively agents of the German capitalists who, upon the basis of a rapidly developing capitalism, were already nursing policies of militant imperialist expansion. Lenin early perceived the dangerous character of this opportunist trend in the Social-Democracy and by the middle 1890's was already waging a polemical war against it. In old Russia he and his followers succeeded in defeating similar opportunists, and the Bolsheviks by 1903 constituted the leading majority in the Russian Social-Democratic Party.

When World War I broke out, the German Social-Democratic opportunists (Kautsky had by this time joined their ranks) promptly followed their capitalist masters into the war, and dragged after them the bulk of the still largely undeveloped German working class. Socialist parties in other warring countries did likewise. This gross betrayal of socialism was denounced by Lenin, who called upon the workers to transform the imperialist war into a civil war for the establishment of socialism. The Russian working class, in 1917, put Lenin's historic slogan into effect, with the result that Russia, embracing one-sixth of the land surface of the earth, became the world's first socialist republic.

The infamy of the Right-wing German Social-Democrats went even beyond betraying the German working class and nation into World War I. When the war ended in complete defeat for Germany, the German workers and soldiers, who had been profoundly influenced by the success of the Russian Revolution, revolted in November, 1918, overthrew the Kaiser's government, and set up councils of workers and soldiers all over Germany. Socialism was literally knocking at Germany's door. This revolutionary action of the workers and soldiers alarmed the Social-Democratic opportunists hardly less than it did the employers, because they had no faith in the workers' ability or need

to establish socialism. They were for reforming capitalism into what they called socialism. Therefore, giving their great party over to the counter-revolutionary service of the hard-pressed employers, these opportunists, through their Noskes and Scheidemanns, cold-bloodedly assassinated Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, shot down the revolutionary movement of the German workers, and turned the control of the country back to the capitalists with the setting up of the Weimar bourgeois republic. German Social-Democracy, whose leaders for sixty years past had been propagating socialism, thus became the saviors of German capitalism.

This double treason of German Social-Democracy—betraying the people into the war and betraying the revolution to the capitalists at the close of the war—dealt a disastrous blow to European and world socialism. For, had Germany gone socialist as Russia did, all the rest of Europe, excepting possibly Great Britain, would have soon followed suit, so great was the revolutionary ferment among the workers all over the continent after the victory of the Russian Revolution. The history of the world during this past generation would have been basically different. There would have been no fascism, no Hitler regime, no World War II. World capitalism would have had its back broken, and by now the bulk of the world undoubtedly would have become socialist. But, unfortunately, the treachery of the Social-Democratic leaders sentenced the peoples of the world to the bloody disasters of the past thirty years and, by the same token, also to the present threatening world situation.

The betrayal by the Social-Democratic opportunists, however, boomeranged against them. All over the world their parties were split by the resentment of the outraged workers, and in consequence these parties lost their most devoted, most developed, most revolutionary elements. Communist parties were organized in many countries. The Second International fell apart and in March, 1919, the Communist International was established. It continued to function until June 22, 1943, when it was dissolved mainly to facilitate the war solidarity of the anti-Hitler powers. The sum total of these great events was a serious weakening of the prestige and strength of the Social-Democratic Parties in various parts of the world. They started the transference of working class leadership to the Communists, a process which has gone on ever since at varying tempos.

In the period between the two world wars the reformist Social-Democrats in all countries, with the Germans setting the pace, continued to act as a main buttress of the crippled capitalist system. Their

whole purpose was to help undermined capitalism recover. This political line contributed directly to the development of fascism and to World War II. This was logical enough because, as defenders of sick capitalism, the Right Social-Democrats had to follow the main path taken by capitalism in its fight for self-preservation. The Social-Democrats of European countries, during this interim period, with few exceptions, generally refused to make anti-fascist united fronts with the Communists, nationally or internationally. They rejected also the Soviet Union's vital proposal during the middle 'thirties for an international peace front of the democratic peoples against the warlike German, Japanese, and Italian governments. Moreover, particularly in Germany, with their fatal "lesser evil" policy, they supported more and more reactionary electoral candidates, until finally they wound up by electing Von Hindenburg, who turned the government over to the Nazis. The opportunist Social-Democrats in the Reichstag even voted to support the Hitler government, as they claimed it had legally come to power. Later these people sabotaged the Spanish Republic to defeat, and they hailed the Munich betrayal of Czechoslovakia as a decisive victory for peace. And all this while, the Social-Democrats carried on a violent anti-Communist, anti-Soviet campaign which surpassed even the blatant shoutings of the notorious Goebbels, a vilification campaign which did much to poison the mind of the German working class and thus prepare the ground for Hitler's later attack upon the Western democracies and the U.S.S.R.

The sum total of these reactionary Social-Democratic policies was to demoralize the German working class, to split its ranks hopelessly, and generally to clear the way for Hitlerism and war. They also further undermined the socialist prestige of the Social-Democratic parties everywhere. During this inter-war period, for example, the American Socialist Party split and resplit. It declined to only one-twentieth of its pre-World War I membership, and it degenerated into a number of tiny groups. Its Thomases, Dubinskys, Bohns, Reuthers, *et al.*, fanatical red-baiters and warmongers, have duly become loyal supporters of every reactionary move of American imperialism.

During the Hitler occupation of many European countries, when the people's political parties had to undergo a veritable ordeal by fire, the opportunist Social-Democratic parties, like the other bourgeois-reformist parties, simply folded up, save for their proletarian, Left-wing elements. It fell mainly to the Communists, therefore, to organize the underground fight against the fascist war machine all over Europe. Hitler, appreciative of past services of the reformist Social-Democrats to wobbly capitalism, went easy on them during his heyday, while he

scourged the Communists with fire and sword. Of the French Communist Party alone 75,000 were killed during the heroic underground resistance movement, and other Communist parties suffered comparable losses.

The general effect of this political cowardice by the opportunist Social-Democrats, on the one hand, and heroism by the Communists, on the other, during the occupation period, manifested itself dramatically in the early post-war period. In the great democratic upheaval that took place as the war closed, the Communists became the outstanding leaders all over Europe. The Communist parties in France, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and many other countries grew until they far outstripped the respective Social-Democratic parties in size and mass political following. The Communists throughout the Continent also won the leadership of the revived, expanded, and unified trade union movements. It was the Communists, too, who led in the formation of the many post-war coalition governments on the Continent, with their progressive programs of the nationalization of the banks and basic industries, the break-up of big landed estates, the introduction of planned economy, and the rebuilding of the shattered economies of the various countries. The Communists also took the most active part in stimulating the formation of such great international mass movements as the World Federation of Trade Unions (76,000,000 members), the Women's International Democratic Federation (81,000,000 members), and the World Federation of Democratic Youth (46,000,000 members). In the expanded Socialist parties of this period, strong Left wings developed. These elements favored co-operation with the Communists and in Central and Eastern Europe they actually merged the Socialist parties with the Communist parties. Thus, during World War II and in the early post-war period, the reformist Social-Democratic parties, except for their Left wings, gave another dramatic demonstration of the fact that they were both unwilling and unable to lead the working class in its fight for democracy and socialism. Communist mass prestige in this period grew by leaps and bounds all over the Continent.

Another factor undermining the fiber and working class standing of the Social-Democratic parties has been the shameful policies of the reformist leaders towards the colonial and semi-colonial peoples over a long term of years. The European Right-wing socialist leaders, imperialists at heart, have always cunningly, behind Left phrases, lined up with their ruling classes against the peoples in the countries less developed industrially. The Second International was, therefore, almost exclusively a European organization. It built but few parties in the

colonies, and where such parties did exist they were almost invariably in conflict with their "sister" parties in the imperialist "homelands." At the present time Social-Democratic influence, and sometimes armed force, is being used against the national liberation movements in India, Pakistan, Palestine, China, Burma, Korea, Indonesia, Indo-China, and Malaya. The Communists, on the other hand, have always attached major importance to supporting the anti-imperialist struggles of the colonial peoples. As a result of these opposite lines of policy, betrayal by the Right Social-Democrats and active support by the Communists, the latter have come to play a powerful and often decisive role in the various big national liberation movements now going on in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The Communists are everywhere fighting on the side of the people against the imperialists, whom the Social-Democrats are everywhere supporting. In China, especially, the Communists have become the leaders of the Chinese nation in the vast revolutionary movement that is now shaking the whole world.

The Social-Democratic parties have also lost prestige because, although they have led governments in many countries, both before and after World War II, for example, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, France, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Holland, Austria, Australia, etc., nowhere have they established socialism or made any serious efforts to do so. In all such countries the general effect of official Social-Democratic policy has been to bolster up the sick capitalist system and to act as a buffer against the true socialist movements under the leadership of the Communists. Then, when the crisis has eased and the Social-Democrats have served their purpose, the capitalists usually proceed to kick them out and themselves take over direct control. Thus the opportunist Social-Democrats have repeatedly defeated socialism and discredited themselves in the process.

Great Britain, ruled by the Labor Government, is now providing a characteristic illustration of the treachery and futility of Social-Democratic policy. Even if the whole program upon which the Labor Party was elected by a huge majority were put into effect, 80 per cent of the British economy would still be in the hands of the capitalists. Those sections of the economy that have been nationalized—banks, coal mines, and general transport—have all been left in the practical control of their old-time capitalist managers, who are busily sabotaging and exploiting them. The army, the navy, the police force, the schools, and many other key institutions are still fully dominated by capitalist-minded bureaucrats. The diplomatic service personnel—ambassadors, consuls, etc.—is almost identically the same as it was under the Tory govern-

ment. And as for Bevin's foreign policy, it is no less reactionary than Churchill's, with its Soviet-baiting, imperialism, and warmongering. Meanwhile, the British capitalists are prospering very well under the Labor Government. Thus, "While total interest and profit rose from £2,851 millions in 1945 to £3,242 millions in 1947, the tax paid fell from £1,162 to £947 millions in the same period." (*Labor Research*, London, May 1948.) It is no wonder, therefore, that the Labor Government has lately lost so much prestige among the British masses who want socialism. Men like Attlee, Bevin, and Morrison are not Socialists any more than were their close co-workers, the renegades of some years back, MacDonald, Snowden, and Thomas. Such people are simply defenders of capitalism, masquerading under radical-sounding slogans, in order to deceive the socialist-minded workers. They get their reward in the shape of capitalist-provided good jobs in government and industry. Let us remember that even Hitler and Mussolini, who were avowed fascists, also used terms of socialism and revolution to fool the radical German workers. If the British working class is really to head towards socialism, it will have to make a drastic house-cleaning of its present opportunist Social-Democratic leadership and put Marxists-Leninists at its head.

Communists, contrary to Social-Democrats, always proceed to the establishment of socialism whenever and wherever they have the state power. The capitalists know this quite well, which is why they hate Communists so violently. Communists have made good with their socialist program in the Soviet Union, begun a generation ago, and they are now also establishing socialism in the new democracies of Eastern and Central Europe. It may be depended upon, too, that revolutionary China, with its own organizational forms and at its own tempo, will also march on to socialism. Advanced workers in many countries do not fail to draw the main lesson from this general situation, namely, that the Communist Party, not Social-Democracy, is the party of socialism.

In the present post-war period the Right Social-Democrats are adding another chapter to their long record of betrayal of socialism. The situation in Europe is such, with capitalist prestige at record low levels, that it would be a relatively simple matter for the Communist and Socialist parties, acting jointly, to establish socialism all over Europe. Joint Communist-Socialist action is actually what brought victory to the workers in Central and Eastern Europe, with the two parties finally amalgamating in several countries on a program of Marxism-Leninism.

But the reformist Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe,

following the lead of the British Labor Party and in tune with the interests of Anglo-American imperialism, will have nothing to do with a program of a joint Communist-Socialist building of socialism. Their line leads to quite an opposite destination, to attempted reestablishment of broken down capitalism in their countries. To this end, these so-called champions of socialism are working not with the Communists but with their own capitalists, with American imperialism, with the Catholic Church, and with the other reactionary forces that are now trying to put across the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the militaristic North-Atlantic, anti-Soviet pact in Europe, with all their implications of fascism and war. The European reformist Social-Democrats—the Bevins, Blums, Saragats, Schumachers, Renners, *et al.*—have become the very bellwethers of reaction, with their disruption of united trade unions, break-up of democratic coalition governments, opposition to Communist-Socialist unity, wild Soviet-baiting, and the like. Today opportunist Social-Democracy is the mainstay of capitalism in Europe. After World War II it is trying to save the capitalist system from the revolutionary peoples, even as it did after World War I.

Together with their betrayal of working class interests in the field of practical policy, the Right Social-Democrats have also degenerated ideologically and abandoned Marxism. Today they ignore or sneer at Marx and his brilliant exposition of dialectical materialism; they are now defenders of every form of bourgeois philosophic obscurantism. In this respect they have joined hands with capitalist scientists in trying to prove a harmony between religion and science. They have also long since rejected the principles of the class struggle and have become ardent class-collaborationists. They have abandoned Marxian economics and have adopted the Keynesian illusions now current in bourgeois economics. They have practically given up any serious advocacy of socialism, the essence of their propaganda being a pursuit of the will-o-the-wisp "progressive capitalism." Social-Democracy is far advanced in both political and ideological decay, and has become more and more, in word as well as in deed, the menial of capitalism.

The Social-Democratic political strategy is to make a pretense of standing between the fascist Right and the Communist Left. This is supposed to represent what political fools name "the happy medium." After World War I, the Social-Democrats called their in-between strategy "the middle course," and now after World War II, they designate it as "the third force." But "middle course" or "third force," it all comes to the same thing, namely, support of the hard-pressed capitalists against their rebellious peoples. In this period of deepening

crisis of capitalism this compromising, betraying course of Social-Democracy can only lead to demoralizing the fight of the workers, to strengthening the position of the imperialist employers, and thus greatly to enhancing the danger of fascism and war.

The capitalists of the European countries, a couple of generations ago, used to live in mortal fear of the Social-Democrats, taking at face value their glib talk about socialism. But the capitalists have long since recovered from such fears. They know now, following their experiences with the Right-wing Social-Democrats after World War I, during the inter-war period, and after World War II, that these people, for all their radical phrases, are nevertheless capitalism's solid allies. Time and again, when the masses have been moving against the capitalist system, the Social-Democrats have saved the day for the capitalists, and the latter are quite aware of this fact and all its implications. Of course, the capitalists would prefer to run the respective governments with their own avowedly capitalist parties and leaders, but when they get caught in a serious crisis and their mass prestige is largely gone, as after the two world wars, they are more than willing to rely upon their trusted friends, the Social-Democrats, to save them from the outraged peoples.

Even the wild and untamed capitalists of the United States have come to understand the reliable support that can be depended upon from the Social-Democrats wherever and whenever capitalism is in danger. Formerly accustomed to considering the New Deal and everything even slightly to the Left of it as "Communism," our buckaroo capitalists at first looked very askance at the British Labor Government and at other Social-Democratic regimes that took office in Europe and elsewhere after World War II. We still remember the strong opposition they developed against the first post-war loan of  $3\frac{3}{4}$  billion dollars to Great Britain, chiefly on the grounds that this loan would be subsidizing socialism in that country. If, today, some American imperialists still fear Great Britain, it is as a rival imperialist power, not as a socialist country.

American capitalists have definitely recovered from their initial naive fears of the Right-wing Social-Democrats. Now they, too, understand quite well that these opportunists are their major dike against the spread of socialism in Europe and the world. So that nowadays, the European Social-Democrats are freely included in the chosen ranks of the "decent and right-thinking people"—Wall Street standards. It was in this understanding spirit that our State Department declared, Jan. 15, 1948, that "the Socialists are consequently among the strongest bulwarks in Europe against Communism." But the hard-boiled American imperialists, at

the same time that they are coddling and using the Socialists in the present critical moment, are also, like their brother European capitalists, looking forward to the time when they will be able to throw them out and put ultra-reactionaries in as the capitalists have done before. They want eventually to shove into office all over Europe men more strictly of their own kidney, like Churchill in Great Britain and de Gaulle in France.

In the United States, too, the capitalists, in their dealings with the conservative trade union leaders, are displaying this new wisdom about Right-wing Social-Democracy. Of course, Green, Murray, Woll, Hutcheson, Robertson, Meany and other decisive leaders in the American trade unions are not Social-Democrats in the full sense of the word. It is true that they play the same role as Social-Democrats, by confusing the ideology of the workers, by paralyzing their mass movements, and by shielding the capitalist system from their blows, all under cover of labor slogans; but, owing to the relatively strong position of capitalism in this country and the non-socialist ideology of the workers, it has not yet become necessary for these misleaders of labor to disguise their anti-working class policies, as Social-Democrats do, with an elaborate camouflage of high-sounding chatter about socialism. The status of the top leaders of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. is that of a sort of primitive, undeveloped, politically illiterate Right-wing Social-Democracy.

Our "wised up" capitalists are now depending more and more upon American labor leaders to put across their imperialistic Marshall Plan, and all the rest of their policy of foreign expansionism. They have them busily engaged splitting the unions in France and Italy, and now Eric Johnston and others are saying that they should also be sent as regular United States ambassadors to various foreign countries. In this spirit, at the November, 1948 convention of the C.I.O., Supreme Court Justice Douglas stated that "Labor is peculiarly qualified to bridge a gap that has been growing between the United States and Europe." According to the learned judge, American trade union leaders, in high diplomatic posts, would be very effective in breaking down the anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist resistance of the European workers and ramming the Marshall Plan down their throats. In simpler terms, he would have these false leaders of labor act even more as political strike-breakers, which is precisely the role of reformist Social-Democrats everywhere, the American brand included. Such proposals from Mr. Johnston and Justice Douglas are forerunners of the time when American capitalism, caught in a deepening crisis, will even be willing to

accept in this country a "Labor Government" headed by such reactionaries in order to save itself from disaster.

The general effect of the long series of betrayals by Right Social-Democracy, on the one hand, and of the loyal and hard fight of the Communists for the working class, on the other, is that the Social-Democrats have lost heavily of their political influence on a world scale, while the influence of the Communists has increased many-fold. So that now, in most of the countries of the world, the Communist parties are the most influential leaders of the economic and political activities of the working class, especially in the trade union field. Thus, in all of Eastern and Central Europe, the Communists and their Left Socialist allies have the decisive leadership of the workers. In France and Italy, also, Communists and Left Socialists are far and away the strongest leading force in the labor unions. The same is true for almost all the unions in Asia, as well as in most of the countries of Latin America.

All this is not to say, however, that opportunist Social-Democracy is no longer strong and dangerous. Just the reverse is the case. A party that can politically head up the British Empire is obviously a powerful one. Besides Britain, opportunist Social-Democracy is also still very influential in a number of other countries—Germany, the Scandinavian lands, the Benelux countries, France, Japan, and, in special forms, the United States. It would, therefore, be a most serious error to underestimate the continuing disruptive power of opportunist Social-Democracy. Without the aid of the Attlees, Blums, and similar Social-Democrats, American and world reaction would be forced against the wall; but with their co-operation it is able to threaten the world with fascism and another terrible war.

The general shift in working class leadership, nationally and on a world scale, from Social-Democrats to Communists, is one of the profoundest and most meaningful political developments of this whole period. The opportunist Social-Democrats, wedded irrevocably to capitalism, are gradually going down with that doomed system. In fact, the degeneration of Social-Democracy is in itself one of the major signs of the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism. On the other hand, the Communists, the champions of democracy and Socialism, are naturally growing in strength, precisely as the new socialist world movement gradually comes into being.

This whole development of the decline of the opportunist Social-Democratic parties and the growth of the Communist parties will continue at an increasing tempo. The two-phased process will be intensified by the deepening of the general world capitalist crisis, including sharp-

ened cyclical economic crises, broader economic and political struggles, fresh threats of fascism and war, and victories for socialism in various countries. All these developments will progressively expose the futility of Right-wing Social-Democracy and show the effectiveness of the Communist parties. The workers, becoming ever more class-conscious in these broadening and deepening struggles, are bound to turn increasingly towards the Communists, the best defenders of their immediate interests and also the best fighters for their ultimate socialist goal. The Right Social-Democrats have been weighed in the scales of history and found wanting. The great problem is, however, whether their power will be finally clipped soon enough by the workers, before they, as the lackeys of Anglo-American imperialism, can put across one more great betrayal, the plunging of humanity into a World War III.

## VII. The Decline of Religion

A profound development in recent decades has been the accelerated decline of religion. This is all tied in with the developing decay of the world capitalist system. Primitive man found the source of his religion in his crude efforts to understand the world, to explain his own existence, and to work out a moral code to govern himself. Religion undertook to answer these deep questions for him with its metaphysical explanations. But as man's knowledge, eventually grown into science, advanced, his need for religion, with its "miracles" and "revelations," has progressively diminished. Consequently, his gods and devils, his heavens and hells have tended to retreat into the psychological distance, not without making a maximum resistance, however. They have sunk faster and faster into the vague, the generalized, and the remote. Man, from a religious standpoint, has passed through several general stages: through witchcraft, when in his profound ignorance religion was a vital aspect of every feature of his daily life; then through mythology, when the gods, in the face of his expanding knowledge, had begun to flee to the mountain tops (or were being driven there); and now, in our scientific era, when he is working his way out of Christianity, whose gods are now vaguer than ever before and are constantly growing more filmy and indistinct. Eventually, man, in his intellectual advance, will arrive at a fully scientific socialist world, in which he will have a good working knowledge of the universe and of himself, and then, accordingly, he will finally altogether dispense with his gods and their imaginary eternal rewards and punishments.

This historic retreat of mysticism and superstition before advancing knowledge, which Draper called the conflict between science and religion, has been going on especially rapidly during the past four hundred years. This period marked the beginning of the industrial revolution, and, with it, the renaissance of science, the growth of the capitalist state, and the development of Marxist dialectical materialism. These associated developments have struck hard at the heart of religion. This resulted in the gradual clearing up of many of the great mysteries of

man and nature, providing materialist explanations for them. This has correspondingly narrowed down the field of religion, which formerly used to furnish to man in an unchallenged manner, its own metaphysical answers to all these problems that he did not understand. Thus science, along with industrialization and the state, has given man rational explanations of his environment and himself. It has enabled him to understand the formerly profound mysteries of the starry skies, of the earth's place in the universe, of terrifying earthquakes, eclipses, and violent storms, of devastating pestilences, of the vagaries of the weather, of the "miracles" of plant and animal reproduction and growth, of the composition and operation of his own body, and of a thousand and one other phenomena which for countless centuries plagued the mind of man, and for which religion, from its beginnings in primitive witchcrafts down to modern times, has always dogmatically provided its own fanciful, and often dreadful, theories and solutions. As a result of this ever growing infringement of science upon the terrain once occupied exclusively by religion, the latter's gods and devils and heavens and hells have been largely reduced from the harsh realities they once were into mere moral categories, bereft of every real physical substance and nearness.

Life in modern industrial society, including capitalism, is basically destructive of religion. Compare, for example, life in our present-day regime with that of feudalism of a thousand years ago. At that time the masses of the people, overwhelmingly agricultural, lived in a world full of unknown wonders and terrors, with God and the devil present at every turn. Almost entirely illiterate, the people secured their living through the operation of natural forces—soil, air, rain, sun, etc.—all of which were highly mysterious to them and capable, apparently, only of religious explanations as the handiwork of God. More than that, these agricultural people were caught up in a double system of ferocious political and religious oppression, presumably ordained by heaven. They were ruled by kings who claimed to reign by divine right and by popes who said they were the direct earthly representatives of God. Small wonder, then, that the masses of the people were intensely religious in those far-off days, properly called the Dark Ages. Religion dominated the mind of man almost completely and the voice of science was very small and indistinct.

But how different is the situation today in our industrialized period. Now the natural mysteries that confounded the ignorant peoples of a millenium ago, and made them so naturally prone to religion, have been largely solved by science. Besides, the great masses of the people

are at present living in social environments, everywhere surrounded by an all-pervading industrial development which has brought them to understand, in a general way at least, the various natural forces at work in their lives and in the production of their livelihoods. Moreover, nowadays, people also largely control and operate these powerful forces mechanically themselves, instead of appealing in prayer for the favorable intervention of particular gods or demons in order to secure some desired effect. The people in industrialized countries have pretty generally arrived at the point where they are capable of a scientific, non-religious explanation of such a phenomenon as the outbreak of a deadly disease. They look naturally to science, not religion, for their answers. Also, whatever they may think of their political and religious leaders, very few believe them to be of heavenly commission, the claims of kings and popes not being as easily accepted as they used to be in this respect. Besides, from the national state the people are getting education and moral codes that used to come from the church. Only partial exceptions to the influence of this modernism are people who live in isolated agricultural areas where science and industry have only weakly penetrated. Such remote localities, where knowledge is at its lowest levels, are the natural strongholds of religion.

The general result of all these developments is that, unlike the peasants of former centuries, the peoples of industrial countries feel little or no need for religion to explain the basic facts of their daily life. As for the perspective of life after death, although most people still believe in this, mass belief grows sensibly dimmer and more vague with the passage of time. Consequently, in industrialized countries, religion gradually decays at the heart, no matter how much it seeks to adapt itself to the findings of science and industrialization both of which it fought hard against for centuries but could not halt. This religious decay is occurring in all capitalist lands, even where the ruling capitalist classes, for exploitative purposes of their own, are urgently using every disposable means for the cultivation and preservation of religion among the toiling masses.

During the relatively short period of my own life, this historical melting away of the foundation of religion has obviously gone on, and at an increasingly fast pace. Religious decline manifests itself, among other ways, by a lessening of the intensity of popular belief in religious dogma. Today, I venture to assert, the average person in this country, especially in the cities, does not believe anywhere near as literally in God, the devil, heaven, and hell as he did even at the period when I was born. Doctrinal questions in which the common man once interested himself

keenly now leave him pretty cold, save perhaps in the most backward rural regions. Even two generations ago modified versions of the sermons of a Jonathan Edwards or a Cotton Mather were still presented in churches, portraying vivid pictures of paradise and hell, and laying heavy stress on points of doctrine. But modern congregations, with their filmy ideas of religion generally, would never stand for such sermons. They would be bored to distraction by such dry, narrow, and uninteresting dissertations, which would offend their sense of reality. The city congregations of today, in the main, have to be diverted by political sermons and by interesting social functions of various kinds. If they don't get these things they stay away from the churches in ever greater numbers. The intense revivalist, evangelical spirit, as exhibited by various Protestant sects even fifty or sixty years ago, has now very obviously subsided in an appreciable degree. The Catholic Church, despite its rigid discipline and the stronger grip it has upon its adherents, is also suffering from this common decline in religious fervor among the masses. Of course, nowadays, there are many radio preachers and radio priests, who have large followings, recently developed; but their propaganda is mostly political and moral in character, rather than the old-fashioned expositions of religious doctrine.

Similar conditions of more or less rapid religious decline exist in varying degrees in all other capitalist countries, as well as in the United States. In Nazi Germany, for example, Hitler never would have been able to kick around the Christian churches as he did, even to the extent of establishing a quasi-official, pagan political religion, had it not been for a basic weakening of religious faith that had previously taken place among the masses from the subtle and all-embracing effects of science, industrialization, and the state. Only a few generations ago such an attack upon the churches would have provoked powerful resistance, with the sectarians violently defending their religion. Even in times so recent as a couple of generations ago, the Iron Chancellor, Bismarck, was roundly defeated politically in Germany for making what was a far milder attack than Hitler's upon religion.

The decline of religion has been greatly accelerated by the great movements of revolt, such as the Protestant Reformation and the English, American, French, Latin American, and Russian revolutions, each in varying ways and designs. These vast movements have set afoot profound ideological currents directly challenging the dogmas of religions. The shaping of the class struggle and the development of the revolutionary movement of the workers, guided by Marxist dialectical materialism, have weakened the grip of religion upon the people's minds.

So far has the general skepticism gone regarding religion that numerous religious dogmas, fanatically believed for many centuries, are now practically impossible for educated people in industrial countries to accept. People in our times are markedly less satisfied than they used to be when they are told by religious leaders that this or the other religious conception is outside the scope of human understanding and must be accepted on faith and not subjected to the test of reason. A few of the religious dogmas that might be listed as just about alien to modern acceptance intellectually are the absurd story of the creation in Genesis, the Biblical picture of a vengeful God, conceptions of an ecstatic heaven and an everlastingly frightful hell, original sin and infant damnation, claims of Papal infallibility, the many miracles in both Protestant and Catholic dogmas, notions that one sect or religion of the thousands existing has exclusive possession of the true Word, while all the rest of the people of the world, through no fault of their own, are condemned to eternal damnation, not to mention a host of similar impossibilities and hoary fantasies.

Such antiquated religious conceptions, once readily and generally accepted, even spontaneously generated and fiercely defended by mankind, are essentially foreign to the mind of man in modern, industrialized lands. They are not truly and deeply believed any more as they once were—with a blind faith. In practice they are largely ignored, glossed over, and shoved into the background of the consciousness even of people who, however, may still cling to generalized conceptions of religion. Church leaders understand this significant reality of the weakening of religious faith. This is the main reason why nowadays they habitually soft-pedal obsolete dogmas, avoid sectarian discussions, and keep to the foreground in their work phases of religion, and especially of morals and politics, that can be grasped by the modern mind. There are many exceptions to all this of course. There are still strong currents of fundamentalism. Fundamentalism, however, although it has obvious strength, is fighting a losing battle in every important Christian sect. And so is religious feeling in general. Modern industrial society, unlike primitive agricultural economies, does not generate religion spontaneously, but instead, tends to weaken and to liquidate it.

A striking manifestation of the weakening of the fiber of Christianity under the impact of science, industrialization, and the influence of the non-clerical state is the dying down of doctrinal quarrels among the numerous sects. Only a few decades ago in this country even minor points of disagreement were sufficient to throw the various sects at each other's throats in violent polemical controversies. But these sharp

doctrinal disputes are now conspicuous by their relative rarity and mildness. Now, instead of waging intense struggles against each other, many of the 256 American Protestant sects are slowly moving towards a general Church Union, a marked amalgamation tendency already being manifest among them. There is even a growing spirit of tolerance and co-operation of the Protestant churches with the Catholic and Jewish churches.

While there is undoubtedly in effect this main and irresistible tendency of science, industrialization, and the national state to weaken religious belief at its very base, there are also lesser counter forces at work which tend to strengthen religion. Thus, there is the fact that the capitalists, who very definitely need religion in order to undermine the class-consciousness and resolute fighting spirit of their workers, are systematically cultivating religion by giving it elaborate financial aid and other support. It was not always this way. In the early days of capitalism, when that system was waging a revolution against feudalism, it found it necessary to attack the Catholic Church which, itself a great landholder, was very closely knit with the feudal landlords generally. In fighting the Catholic Church, the early ideologists of capitalism somewhat overshot their mark, often sharply attacking religion itself. This accounts for the strong currents of agnosticism and atheism that prevailed among scientists, writers, and political leaders during the youth of capitalism. Such trends were especially in evidence during the English (1642), American (1776), and French (1789), revolutions. It explains why the American revolutionary fathers left out all mention of God in our Constitution, why they so rigidly separated the state from the church, and why they went in for public rather than church control of education. The great American patriot, Tom Paine, gave very sharp expression to the anti-religious trends of those times in his famous book, *The Age of Reason*.

But capitalism soon recovered from this early "leftism" of some of its ardent champions. The capitalists quickly came to realize that, like the feudal lords, they had to have religion, their own brand, to pacify so far as possible their inherently rebellious workers. Hence, they have long since laid it down as an iron-clad law that all their ideologists and political leaders must accept religion, or else suffer ostracism and the penalty of being cast into the outer darkness. This trend on their part has grown stronger with the passage of the years—until now, when it is indeed a daring capitalist writer or politician who ventures to speak a word against religion, or even to consider it rationally, as such. We have no bourgeois Tom Paines and Bob Ingersolls today.

One of the most disastrous examples of this general stifling of all intelligent discussion regarding religion is in the case of the scientists. These men and women, accustomed by the sharpest requirements of their occupation very carefully to check and recheck all facts and theories relating to their science, nevertheless, under the pressure of capitalist dictation, calmly accept all the impossible myths and legends of Christianity without the slightest scientific investigation, without blinking an eye, and without a single word of protest. Directly contrary to their scientific method, they offhand adopt a whole tissue of "miracles," without asking even a trace of proof or making any effort whatever at investigation. The scientists' allotted task, under capitalist domination, is to prove "the harmony between science and religion." Thus they attempt the subordination of science to religion. Such intellectual confusion and moral cowardice by modern scientists in capitalist countries are enough to make the bold pioneers of science—the Galileos, Copernicuses, Brunos, Darwins, *et al.*, all of whom were essentially materialists and dared to challenge many religious dogmas—turn over in their graves. This attempt to establish an impossible unity between materialist science and metaphysical religion is the most striking and harmful of all the many examples of intellectual regimentation and degradation under the capitalist system.

But capitalism, for all its efforts, cannot revitalize and rejuvenate religion, as it is now trying to do, by attempts to subordinate science to religion; by reintroducing religious instruction into the school system; by heavily financing religion; by making the formal profession of religion an indispensable condition for social respectability and for success in business, in politics, and in the intellectual pursuits. Such devices, while they give religion certain blood transfusions and hypodermic shots-in-the-arm, cannot breathe the breath of life back again into dying religious dogmas, into obsolete intellectual conceptions that are altogether alien to the times in which we live. The basic anti-religious forces of science, industrialization, and the non-clerical state cannot be overcome by such artificial means. These forces are going right on operating, faster and more irresistibly than ever, even under capitalist conditions of society. Throughout the whole history of capitalism, religion has been gradually on the decline, and this decline is hastened by the breakup of the capitalist system itself.

There are clerical leaders who, contrary to this, believe and claim that a renaissance of religion is being brought about because of the economic and political turmoil attendant upon the breakdown of the world capitalist system. There is a grain of truth in this. Undoubtedly, large

numbers of people, especially of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie, are frightened and confused at the wholesale mass slaughter, oppression, and impoverishment, at the economic crises, fascist tyranny, wars, and revolutions attendant upon the decline of world capitalism, and they look to religion in their despair. Such elements, who like their religious teachers, do not realize that capitalism is collapsing, are tending to turn to religion for solace and relief. Consequently many religious leaders are talking of a great spiritual revival taking place among the masses.

But such religious stirrings are only of a temporary and limited character. Fear of atomic wars and of paralyzing economic breakdowns cannot basically revive religion. The breakup of capitalism, with all its accompanying mass struggles and with its rising perspective of socialism, for the overwhelming majority is not creating mass fear and religious mysticism among the body of the people, but, to the contrary, is infusing them with new courage and hope, with a new materialistic outlook on life. Larger and larger masses of the world's peoples in this period of the advance of socialism are coming finally to see the way out of the jungle of violence, oppression, and starvation into which the decaying capitalist system has for the past generation been increasingly plunging them. This constructive, ideological tendency will deepen, the stronger the movement for socialism becomes in the world. The breakdown of the capitalist system, therefore, instead of giving a new and substantial lease of life to religion, as clericals hope, can only speed the tempo of religion's disintegration. The decline of religion goes hand-in-hand with the decline of capitalism.

Nor can this downward trend of religion be reversed because of the active, provocative political role most of the Christian denominations are playing in fighting to save the doomed capitalist system. For example, the Catholic Church, itself a wealthy holder of lands and industrial establishments, is a most militant champion of capitalist reaction; it is a major force in the present attempt of Wall Street imperialism to preserve the capitalist system by setting up a fascist world under American domination. Although the huge mass of European Catholic workers are democratic and anti-fascist, as they demonstrated decisively during the anti-Hitler war period, the Vatican hierarchy nevertheless ventures to ignore their democratic sentiments and interests and to work all-out for a system of clerical fascism. The Vatican's political program is expressed in the policies of such fascist and near-fascist figures as Franco, Petain, de Gaulle, de Gasperi, Peron, and the late, unlamented Mussolini. It is to the end of creating a system of clerical fascism, under the leadership

of American imperialism, that the powerful Catholic parties in many European countries are now striving.

Take, for example, the case of Cardinal Mindszenty, arrested last December in Hungary for treason. Here is a man who, like church leaders in early Soviet Russia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Spain, and elsewhere, openly took sides with the monarchist, fascist, and capitalist enemies of the people, who were seeking to defeat democracy by armed force. He has even admitted this. But the Vatican practically takes the position that such Catholic leaders are immune to arrest, regardless of their counter-revolutionary activities. So the Church proceeds to excommunicate (that is to condemn to eternal hell fire) all those who had anything to do with the arrest of the Hungarian Cardinal, or who even condoned it. This is clearly a political attempt, under a religious guise, to force the Catholics of Hungary, who constitute 67 per cent of the total population, into the camp of fascist-like reaction. But the once dreadful weapon of excommunication, before which medieval kings and emperors cringed and succumbed, now lacks most of its one-time power. It will not defeat the Hungarian democratic government.

Such intense political participation as this of the Catholic Church on the side of reaction, and for obviously fascist goals, and this has happened many times, is an extremely dangerous course for the Church to follow. It is bound, in the long run, to boomerang disastrously against Catholicism. For the masses of Catholic workers and peasants must eventually come to more or less identify the Church politically with their main enemies, the national capitalists and American imperialism, with whom the Church is actively allied. The Catholic workers' opposition to the Church's reactionary political activities, in the very nature of things, cannot avoid eventually also having considerable religious consequences. Cardinal Spellman, with his recent organized strike-breaking against New York gravediggers, gave these Catholics a small taste of what Vatican agents are dealing out generally to fighting workers in Europe. By sabotaging the living standards of the people, by attempting to destroy the unified trade union movements of Europe, by limitless red-baiting and socialism-hating, by open support of reaction in every form, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church is bound to come more and more into serious conflict with millions of its co-religionists all over Europe. Because of the complete identification of its present and future with decadent capitalism, the Church will inevitably lose heavily in religious influence among the toiling Catholic masses of Europe. It is unthinkable that these workers, compelled by impossibly difficult living and working conditions to struggle for democracy and

socialism, will indefinitely tolerate their church leadership's following an anti-democratic, anti-socialist course. Already in France and Italy alone, not to mention Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other countries, a million or two Catholics, true to their common interests with all workers, are members of the Communist parties, and literally tens of millions of Catholics belong to the Communist-led trade unions in various countries on the Continent—although the Communist parties and unified labor unions are being fiercely combatted by the Vatican. In Italy, for example, where communism has many millions of adherents and supporters, the Church claims (*New York Times*, Feb. 13, 1949) 98 per cent of the total population. In France, where one-third of the people vote Communist, the Church asserts that three-fourths of the nation are Catholics. Poland, whose government is led by Communists freely elected, is 90 per cent Catholic.

The bitterly anti-socialist attitude of the Catholic Church presents certain grave problems to Communist parties seeking to win the co-operation of the masses in largely Catholic nations. But these problems are by no means insoluble. Communists do not hesitate actively to combat the reactionary economic and political policies of the Catholic Church hierarchy, but, at the same time, they definitely leave the question of religious belief up to the individual. The great strength of the Communist movement in France, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, etc., where the Catholic Church is also very strong among the masses, proves the correctness and success of this Communist policy of the comradely working together of all groups of workers and other toilers, in support of their common basic interests irrespective of their sex, nationality, or religious convictions.

It is a basic sign of our revolutionary times that all the great religions of the world—not excluding even the Buddhist, Hindu, Moslem, and others in the East—are all more or less in crisis, and from the same general causes; namely, the erosion of basic religious belief by the spread of science and industrialization, and by the growing influence of the non-clerical state. The Christian religion, and above all the Catholic Church, is feeling this deepening religious crisis more sharply than any other religion, precisely because it is more directly and more strongly subjected to the pressures of the forces which are so inexorably undermining religion. As for the Catholic Church itself, it is now in the deepest difficulty in its entire history, not excluding the critical era of the Protestant Reformation. This Catholic crisis is financial, political, and, more than everything else, religious. A desperate determination to escape from this many-sided crisis explains why the Vatican hierarchy is carrying on

so vigorous a struggle for its present reactionary political policies.

The crisis generally in the Christian religion, however, does not proceed at all times in a straight line downward. It follows rather a zigzag course. Obviously, the churches are still very powerful. The strong political and religious role now being played by the Catholic Church in Europe and the United States proves this. Not the least of the signs of Catholic religious strength is to be found in the American trade union movement. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church in this country, with its Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, is boldly trying to capture the unions. With Phil Murray's and James Carey's active collaboration, these organized Catholic forces are especially strong in the C.I.O. Organizing trade unionists along religious lines is a dangerous practice, and were the Protestant churches to adopt it, it could have a very disintegrating effect upon the unions. Undoubtedly, too, the churches are also capable of recurring, lively general revivals and of wide-spread activities in their general fields of work. Nevertheless, for the reasons cited above, their main tendency is inexorably towards decline of the churches, towards a weakening of their general base through a falling off of elementary religious sentiments among the people. This trend will inevitably continue in a developing tempo as the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism proceeds.

It has become clear, however, from the experience of the last generation that religion will not necessarily die with the capitalist system. Most, if not all of the important religions, including the Christian denominations, will very probably live on over into socialism. The downfall of capitalism will weaken but not destroy them. This has been demonstrated already by Church experience in the socialist Soviet Union, and it is now being proved afresh in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, which are moving on to socialism. In such situations, the churches are showing a certain capacity to adapt themselves to socialist conditions. The Greek Orthodox Church showed this in the U.S.S.R., and some of the churches in the new democracies are now displaying similar adaptive tendencies. The Catholic Church, so far, is showing the least trend of the churches towards adjusting itself to meet the new social conditions, although in Hungary and elsewhere there are rank and file priests now openly demanding that the Church abandon its irreconcilable attitude towards socialism. In China, too, faced with the spectacular advance of communism, many of the Christian sects, financed from other countries, are beginning to reshape themselves to the profoundly changing social conditions. They are proposing to function behind the Communist lines, which means they will have to

drop their anti-Communist activities. The Christian church has lived through and adapted itself to general regimes of slavery, feudalism, and capitalism (including fascism), in various parts of the world and over the course of many centuries. It obviously can also exist under socialism. But in order to so exist it will be compelled to abandon its support of capitalism and accept the reality of the new socialist economic and political system. Under socialism religion must cease being a tool of political reaction or face the wrath of the people.

Under socialism, although a much greater freedom of conscience prevails than has ever existed or can exist under capitalism, nevertheless religion will find the general social climate less favorable for it than was the case under capitalism (and the capitalist system has by no means offered religion good conditions for luxuriant growth). The reason for this more unfavorable religious climate under socialism is to be found in the facts that in a socialist regime science flourishes as never before, industrialization develops upon an unprecedented scale, and the state rigidly separates itself from religion. Especially there is no ruling class under socialism to require religion as a means to hold its workers under exploitative control. Moreover, the people, freed of all exploitation and enjoying the fruits of their labor, then have no need to dream about a mythical paradise. With the expanding development of the Marxist materialist outlook upon life and death, the masses under socialism are provided with an ethics and a moral code which are completely satisfying to them intellectually and socially, and which render altogether obsolete religion's myths, legends, superstitions, and slave moralities. All those forces that we have seen operating under capitalist conditions tending to erode religion at its base, operate more powerfully and effectively than ever under socialism, and new constructive ideological forces are added to them. In a socialist regime religion, although granted every freedom, inevitably becomes a diminishing quantity.

Religion, like capitalism, was an unavoidable step in humanity's advance. Although religion through the ages has been shamelessly and unscrupulously used by exploiters to rob and oppress the masses and used as "the opium of the people," as Marx described it, nevertheless, in primitive times it gave man some sort of answers to many of his puzzling problems—the only answers possible under the given undeveloped circumstances. But those days of deep ignorance of life and the world are now forever past. Many centuries ago religion completely lost to science whatever indispensable function it may once have had in the simple societies of primitive man, and it has long since become a drag on human

progress. In this era of growing science and industrialization, and of developing dialectical materialism, religious mysteries and metaphysics are quite out of place. We are well into the period of all-embracing realism in which religion plays no living role. It will not be very long before man, completely emancipated mentally from superstition in all its forms, will marvel as to how and why humanity was able to accept and to tolerate intellectually for all these ages, the rational impossibilities of religion.

## VIII. The Expanding Communist Movement

In this general period of the decline of world capitalism, encompassed within the span of my life, a fundamentally dynamic development has been the birth and growth of the world communist movement. The Communist Party is the party of socialism, and as the worldwide surge of the masses towards socialism expands, the Communist Party, its leader, develops with it. In every significant country, from the most advanced capitalist nations to backward colonial lands, a Communist Party is to be found. It is the party with the historic role of leading harassed humanity out of the present jungle society onto the higher social level of socialism. I have devoted most of the best years of my life in helping to build this great movement in the United States, the heartland of world capitalism.

The Communist parties of the world now have about 20,000,000 actual members. This total figure does not include, of course, the many millions of Communist sympathizers in trade unions, youth organizations, peasant bodies, women's clubs, etc. This number gives no indication of the immense mass following of communism. Today almost one-third of the human race (counting China), is under the direct political leadership of Communists, and large numbers of the rest of the peoples are more or less influenced by communism. Among the largest Communist parties are those of Soviet Russia 7,000,000 (or over), China 3,000,000 (a year ago), Italy 2,250,000, Czechoslovakia 2,000,000, France, Poland, Hungary, and Rumania, about 1,000,000 each, and Bulgaria, 600,000. There are Communist parties in almost every country in the world.

The capitalists everywhere realize the significance of the Communist Party and are stricken with alarm at its progress. Frightened also at the precarious condition of their beloved profit-system, they watch with dread the growth of the Communist Party and they concentrate all their venom and hatred against it. They have no such revulsion towards the opportunist Social-Democratic Party, because they have seen it in political power in many countries and they have found out in

practice that, despite its use of socialist phrases, it never establishes socialism. But they have also learned from experience that the Communist Party, once in power, does surely bring about socialism. They see in our party their Nemesis, the leader of the revolutionary workers, whom Marx called "the grave-diggers of capitalism."

The Communist Party has been developing since the turn of the century. The chief architect of this "party of a new type" was Lenin, master organizer, leader of the Russian Revolution, and the profoundest political thinker since Marx and Engels. Their successor, another great party builder, is Stalin, the outstanding living Marxist. Lenin outlined all the basic propositions around which Communist parties everywhere are being built. The party of Lenin has nothing in common with the fantastic caricatures of it that are now current in capitalist circles. The total falsification of the Communist Party, its theory, structure, practice, and objectives, by the capitalist enemy is a key phase of the latter's utter misrepresentation of everything connected with socialism.

The first great source of strength of the Communist parties in all countries is their scientific Marxist-Leninist theory. This is their brain stuff, their nerve system, their life blood. Communist theory is all-comprehensive, dealing with practically every phase of human society—economic, political, military, literary, artistic, scientific, philosophical. Marxism-Leninism gives Communists a strong, dynamic, materialistic conception of life, creating for them an endless perspective of the development of freedom, prosperity, and the progress of man. It produces a rational, powerful, well-balanced optimism and a fighting spirit for socialism. The metaphysical ideological trash of capitalism is comparatively insignificant as an inspiring force. There is no pessimism among Communists, nor are there in socialist countries the crass social frustrations that are filling the insane asylums and jails with misfit people in all capitalist lands, especially the United States. It is significant that Communist parties, even in countries not yet socialist, have in their ranks almost none of the drunkards, dope addicts, criminals, sexual perverts, and the various other social nondescripts that infest the capitalist world. The Communist world outlook is incomparably superior in quality to the hodge-podge, aimless metaphysical mess of propaganda that constitutes the world outlook of capitalism, if that wolfish system can be said to have a general viewpoint. Some wiseacre enemies of ours assert that communism is a new religion, but this is absurd. Communism is based upon the profoundest realism, and there is nothing whatever metaphysical about it. It is the most down-to-earth of all political movements. There is no god of any kind anywhere in the communist cosmos.

Marxist-Leninist theory equips Communists with a penetrating, scientific method of social analysis which is altogether on a higher plane than the crude rule-of-thumb methods of capitalist ideologists. This Marxist science makes clear the lessons of history, and it also lays bare the fundamental significance of current political developments. It explains the economic and political laws that have operated to bring about the rise of capitalism, and also the forces that are leading inexorably to the decay of that system and the establishment of socialism. With this scientific analysis at their disposal, Communists have a tremendous advantage over the defenders of capitalism. They are fighting in the bright light of political science, while the latter are fumbling about in the dark. Capitalist ideologists neither know how, nor do they dare try, to analyze their system—its history, its present status, nor its perspectives. In the early revolutionary days of capitalism, its economists and political leaders, of the type of David Ricardo and Benjamin Franklin, boldly analyzed the youthful capitalist system. But such honest practices are irrevocably past and gone for capitalism. Capitalist intellectuals no longer venture to dissect their society—for fear of the inconvenient facts they might uncover. What passes nowadays for capitalist analysis of the existing social order is merely the grossest propaganda, deliberately concocted to defend capitalism and to discredit socialism. It ignores and falsifies the most obvious realities. Consequently, the bourgeois ideologists know neither what is basically happening in the world nor why.

Much of the strength of the Communist parties everywhere is due to the firmness with which they hold to the tested principles of Marxism-Leninism. Flexibility in strategy and tactics and solid integrity in matters of principle are the Communist rule. Lenin was often denounced by the Social-Democrats as a narrow sectarian because of his steadfast support of Marxian fundamentals. But Lenin had not a single drop of sectarianism in his whole being. While stoutly maintaining the integrity of Marxism, he also profoundly developed its principles and flexibly applied them in a rapidly changing capitalist world. The revolutionary results of his brilliant work in Russia, as well as the demonstrated correctness of his analysis of the whole subsequent course of world capitalism, have overwhelmingly justified his theoretical and practical labors. Lenin's integrity regarding principles runs through the whole theory and practice of communism. Communists are the most reliable, outspoken, and honest of all people—in their personal dealings, in their relations with each other, in their connections with their political allies, in the make-up of their political programs, and also in the fulfillment

of agreements made with the capitalists. This quality of Communist integrity both shocks and amazes capitalists whose own word, because of their cheap commercial spirit, is worth nothing, neither among themselves nor with their opponents. Capitalists have a price for everything, including the national honor and welfare of their country. It is characteristic of capitalist ideologists, in their frantic endeavor to protect capitalism from advancing socialism, that they should especially attack this marked Communist personal, theoretical, and political integrity with all sorts of manufactured stories about supposed Communist trickery, double-dealing, treaty-breaking, and the like.

The second great source of Communist strength, in addition to its scientific Marxist-Leninist theory, is the superlatively good structure and organization practices of the Communist parties. The capitalist world has nothing to equal them. As its foundation the party in all countries is made up of the most devoted, most energetic, most resolute, and most politically developed sons and daughters of the working class and its allies. This high level of membership gives the party an understanding, a drive, a discipline, and a flexibility that is quite impossible for parties with an indiscriminate membership. The charge is often made by capitalist enemies to the effect that the Communist Party, especially where it is in power, comprises a hard-and-fast "elite," a new ruling class which lives on the fat of the land. But this is utterly ridiculous. Communist parties are always organizations closely bound up with the people and completely devoted to the people's welfare. There is nothing "elite" or exclusive about them. Although party membership requirements may be high, especially to keep out opportunists and careerists where the party is in power, nevertheless the rolls are always open to workers of integrity and adequate political development who are willing to assume the heavy burdens and responsibilities that go with being party members. Instead of comprising a privileged group, the Communists, whether under capitalism or in the building of socialism where they head the government, are rigidly required to set personal examples of diligence, courage, and intelligent leadership for the masses. These sterling qualities of Communists were typically illustrated by the heroic conduct of the Communist parties in all the European underground resistance movements during the Hitler occupation period.

The history of the Russian Revolution presents the classical example of the high quality of Communist membership and leadership. Soviet history has been one long saga of boundless Communist devotion, work, struggle, and sacrifice. It is this indomitable spirit that enables the Communists to accomplish things that to the capitalist mind seem almost to

be miracles. Thus, at the time of the November, 1917, Revolution, the Russian Communist Party, led by Lenin and enjoying the deepest confidence of the Russian millions, boldly assumed the leadership of the people in their seemingly impossible effort to abolish capitalist-feudal reaction and to build socialism. And thereafter, whether it meant dying in the Civil War, starving during the famine, taking the lead in organizing production, or solving incredibly complex economic and political problems, those who gave the people inspiring personal examples of fighting spirit and general leadership efficiency were (and still are) the Communists.

No organization in the whole history of mankind has had such a magnificent record of sacrifice and achievement as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and none is more beloved by its people. What doubly appalls the capitalists is their realization that the Communist parties of other countries, even if they are as yet less developed, are nevertheless all made of the same invincible stuff as the great party of Lenin and Stalin. Just now the world is being given a dramatic demonstration of this decisive fact by the Communist Party of China, led by the brilliant Mao Tse-tung. With its 3,000,000 members, the gallant people's army, and the backing of the masses, it is resolutely cleaning away the trash of feudalism, and smashing the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek government, which American imperialism has long been bottle-feeding. It is in the process of leading its vast people along the road to people's democracy, industrialization, and eventual socialism. To carry out this monumental task will require literally miracles of work, but we can be assured that the great Chinese Communist Party, in the spirit of Lenin, will be able to accomplish them. Those who are now hoping that the Communist Party will never be able to lead backward China to freedom and prosperity are in for a sad awakening.

The Communist Party in every country is a voluntary organization. Its organizational effectiveness is greatly strengthened by the high sense of discipline with which its members are infused. Capitalist enemies fiercely attack this Communist discipline, which they deeply fear. They try to discredit the party among the masses by picturing its discipline as a mechanical, military-like domination of the leaders over the rank and file members. But such a characterization has no connection with reality. Communist parties are far and away the most democratic of all political parties, whether in socialist or capitalist countries. Selecting their leaders upon a democratic-efficiency basis, which constantly brings the best and most capable elements to the fore, they have a minimum of the evil of bureaucratic clique control that hamstringing so many other political

parties and trade unions. The Communist Party discusses its problems in a democratic way (and no other party has such penetrating discussions), works out its general political line, concentrates its attention on "the key link that can move the whole chain," and then mobilizes its forces energetically for the task in hand. The Communist Party is a fighting organization, not a talking machine. Once the decision has been taken, the minority is expected to abide by the will of the majority, or, if its differences are fundamental, to sever its connection with the party. This resolute method of the party greatly enhances its power and efficiency.

Still another vital Leninist principle that basically strengthens Communist parties is their practice of self-criticism. In this most important respect, no other party can even remotely compare with the Communist Party. Non-Communist parties habitually try to cover up their political errors and to defend their policies, right or wrong. We constantly see this illustrated by American capitalist parties during elections, and the practice seriously weakens their effectiveness. Communist parties, on the other hand, make no pretense of infallibility. They frankly admit such mistakes as they may make and they freely alter their political line to meet changed political conditions. They are not interested in saving their "face," and they are not held back by attempts of their enemies to capitalize on Communist admissions of errors. A Communist leader who is not self-critical is not worth his salt and will sooner or later come to grief in the party. As a result of this self-criticism, the Communist Party is enabled to learn the vital lessons from the path that has been traversed, and it can then see more clearly the road that lies ahead. Self-criticism, in the practice of which the great Lenin was without a peer, is one of the most dynamic features of Communist political organization and activity. It gives Communist parties a huge advantage over the conceited, self-satisfied parties of the usual bourgeois and Social-Democratic stripe. As Lenin says, "The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is, and how it in practice fulfills its obligations towards its class and the toiling masses."

Communist parties, in line with Lenin's teachings, also constantly strengthen the fiber of their organization by cleansing their ranks of elements that have become confused, corrupted, worn-out, or defeated in the hard and complex struggle to build the forces of socialism in the face of a still powerful and militant capitalism. This Communist internal cleansing practice also shocks capitalists and their henchmen, who usually allow every kind of political faker to belong to their parties. The

life of the great Communist Party of the Soviet Union, for example, has been marked by the sloughing off of many useless or alien elements, who have been weighed and found wanting during the course of the hard struggle to build socialism. Communist parties in other countries have had similar purifying experiences. Nor has the Communist Party in the United States been an exception to the rule— we, too, have had alien elements in our ranks who, surrendering to the powerful pressures of American capitalism, took an anti-Communist line and found themselves outside the party.

Frequently these discarded individuals line up with the very worst red-baiters. Take Jay Lovestone for instance. Shrewd, cunning, and unscrupulous, after being expelled from the party for gross opportunism, he soon found his true political level by becoming an enemy of the party and the confidential adviser of such sinister labor bureaucrats as Matthew Woll and David Dubinsky. Another such is Ben Gitlow, a brass-lunged blatherskite. The party was not revolutionary enough to suit this character, so he finally secured a satisfactory expression for his "revolutionary" sentiments by becoming a professional red-baiting writer and an open supporter of capitalism. James Cannon, for whom the Communist Party was no longer revolutionary, now satisfies himself with peddling left phrases and joining his little band of Trotskyites with every attack of American imperialism against the U.S.S.R. and the new democracies. Then there is Max Eastman, a petty-bourgeois softhead and confusionist. When Eastman was expelled from the party twenty years ago, only blatant Trotskyism could satisfy his yen for revolutionary phrases; but now he finds the program of the N.A.M. quite adequate. There is also Louis Budenz, one of the choice informers of these days. His self-chosen specialty was "God-killing" and fighting the Catholic Church. He got cold feet in the face of reaction's attack against the party, hence he scurried back to the Church for protection. He is a fantastic liar. Msgr. Sheen may have him, and welcome.

Earl Browder is another who failed to fit into the Communist Party. His early record in the party was good, but he became intoxicated with too much party adulation. He is monumentally conceited, and his theoretical conceptions have always had cracks in them. Bedazzled by Roosevelt's reformism, he cast aside his own always thin store of Marxism. His admiration of American capitalism became so great that he finally reached the low point where he outdid even Eric Johnston in shouting that American imperialism would pacify, democratize, and industrialize the world. He is another victim of American "exceptionalism." Now, just when the party is being most viciously attacked by

reactionaries of all stripes, Browder joins this assault, with his own special brand of red-baiting. Others could be cited in this unsavory list of traitors and renegades to the cause of communism, but I guess this list is enough to illustrate the point. Cleansed from such alien elements, the party goes ahead, refreshed and invigorated.

With Communists called upon increasingly to head governments in various countries, the most serious deviation from Marxism-Leninism that they are liable to make in this period is that of bourgeois nationalism. This is an abandonment of the principles of internationalism, an attempt to further the interests of one's own country, or rather of its capitalists, at the expense of other peoples. Tito, of Yugoslavia, whose action is being gleefully hailed by world reaction, shows how dangerous this nationalist betrayal of Marxism can be. Bourgeois nationalism, like white chauvinism, anti-Semitism, male superiority notions, bureaucracy, etc., is part of the intellectual and political baggage of decadent capitalism, and remnants of it sometimes retain temporary roots even in countries that are building socialism.

The ultimate great source of Communist Party strength in capitalist countries, along with the party's scientific Marxist-Leninist theory and its splendid system of organization, lies in its program of action, that is, in the resolute, comprehensive, and clear-sighted way in which it applies its Marxist principles in the mass struggles against capitalism. The Communist Party, the party of the working class, fights shoulder-to-shoulder with all the toiling masses of the people in their daily struggles against capitalist exploitation and oppression in all its forms. The party is the reliable supporter of the united front of all democratic forces—trade unions, farmers' societies, Negro organizations, professional groups, etc., in defense of the people's day-to-day demands. This broad daily fight constantly takes on more and more significance in every country, particularly in view of the striving of American imperialism to conquer the world and the trend of Social-Democratic parties and conservative trade union leaders to sacrifice the interests of the workers and their whole peoples in the face of this drive by Wall Street.

One of the most idiotic of all the capitalist-concocted slanders directed against the Communist Party is the charge that it "exploits" the hardships of the workers and seeks to make their lot worse in order to discredit capitalism. This is very much not the case. All over the world the very essence of Communist policy is to defend the people to the maximum against every capitalist oppression and to secure for them the best possible conditions under existing circumstances. This policy is perfectly logical. The Communist-led masses are human beings and, like

other sections of the oppressed masses, they strive to secure whatever protection they can here and now. They would never rally to a Communist Party that did not ardently defend their immediate interests but contented itself with telling them to wait for the establishment of a more or less distant socialism. And as for the worsening of conditions under capitalism, that system does this itself through the operation of its own inner conflicts and contradictions. The Communists don't have to do it. The capitalists, in their incurable greed and stupidity, take care of that matter themselves. In the struggle the masses learn that although day-to-day ills may be treated, the contradictions of capitalism do not allow for a full cure. Only socialism can do this.

The interests of the Communists are identical with those of the masses, both in an immediate and a long-run sense. Marx laid down this fundamental principle one hundred years ago in *The Communist Manifesto*. There is a perfect harmony between the Communist Party's fight for the people's everyday demands and its fight for their ultimate goal of socialism. The two go hand-in-hand, mutually complementing each other. A successful movement for socialism can only develop out of a loyal and determined defense of the people's everyday interests, and only a leadership with a socialist perspective knows how to defend the workers' interests under capitalism. It is this identity of interests between the Communists and the broad masses, between the fight for everyday issues and the fight for socialism, that is bringing the Communists into the leadership of the nation in so many countries and is making socialism the living world force that it is today.

All this goes to demonstrate the stupidity of another stock argument of the capitalists and their stooges, namely, their blather about the Communist parties of the world being merely "puppets," "fifth columns of the Soviet Union," instruments of the U.S.S.R.'s foreign policy. This silly charge ignores the patent facts that Communist parties are always inseparably identified with the most basic interests of their respective peoples, and that the interests of all the peoples in the world fundamentally dovetail. The supreme nonsense of this "fifth column" conception of communism is exposed with sharp clarity by the situation in China where the entire vast people's liberation movement, uniting all the democratic forces under the leadership of the Communists, is based upon an all-out people's fight against Chinese feudalism and American imperialism. It is an insult to American and Chinese intelligence to try to reduce this stupendous movement to the status of being merely a plot by "foreign agents."

There are five major spheres in which the Communists are active in

the defense of the people's interests. Let us review them briefly:

1. Throughout the world the Communists are the most determined fighters for the wage and working standards of the workers. This is a decisive reason why the organized workers internationally are turning more and more to Communists to form their union leadership, especially in countries where the class struggle is toughest. I have already remarked this growth of Communist leadership in the unions of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, as well as in most of the countries of Europe. Thus, the biggest union centers in France and Italy are Communist-led. In Great Britain, where the Social-Democrats have not yet succeeded in fully discrediting themselves, only about one-third of the labor movement is headed by Communists. In the United States, Communist leadership in the unions is much less, chiefly because in this country, which is still fat from living upon the ruin of other peoples during the war, the wage struggle of the workers has been relatively easy and they do not yet powerfully sense the need for more resolute and clear-sighted leaders. But that will all change. The development of Communist leadership in the trade unions, as a successor to the bankrupt leadership of the Social-Democrats, is a world phenomenon of these times, and the United States labor movement, in the long run, will prove no exception to the rule.

The charge that the Communists of Europe, by opposing the Marshall Plan, are sabotaging the economic interests of the workers and their nations, is a brazen lie. Communists oppose the Marshall Plan precisely because it injures the interests of their peoples by lowering living standards through inflation, by crippling their industries in the face of American capitalism, by subsidizing and keeping in power bankrupt and reactionary capitalists, and by loading the nations with unbearable military expenditures for the war that Wall Street is organizing against the U.S.S.R. All these things, resulting from the Marshall Plan, definitely sacrifice the welfare of the workers. European Communists are not opposed to American aid. They are opposed to surrendering countries to Wall Street, economically, politically, and militarily. But they demand, like Henry Wallace, that this aid be extended, as it should be, through the United Nations. Were this done then it could not be used by arrogant American monopolists to enslave and exploit the European peoples. Let the U.N. have full charge of all international rehabilitation funds, then the world will see at once how hollow is the allegation that European Communists, for sinister political purposes, are sabotaging European recovery.

2. Communists everywhere, in the United States and all over the world, are also in the very front of the people's fight to protect and extend civil liberties. Our members proved this with their blood in the Spanish civil war. The danger of fascism has once again become acute in many countries, because of American imperialism's drive for world conquest. Capitalist statesmen, Social-Democrats, and conservative labor leaders, in this country and elsewhere, by supporting American imperialism, are thereby betraying their people's most fundamental liberties. It is the Communists and the Left generally in all countries who are giving the masses leadership in the fight against the new, Wall Street-bred, fascist menace. The American Communist Party, ever since its birth in 1919, has unceasingly fought for civil liberties. Especially has it battled side by side with the persecuted Negro people. All capitalist slanders to the contrary notwithstanding, Communists are the best of all democrats and the most inveterate enemies of fascism. They fight everywhere for the most democratic conditions possible under capitalism; their establishment of socialism jointly with the great masses represents a tremendous democratic advance, and their ultimate goal of communism, a regime in which there will be no state with its various organs of repression, constitutes the maximum of democracy achievable by mankind.

The Soviet Union, with its people's ownership of the industries and natural resources, with its equality of all races and creeds and nationalities, and of both sexes, and with its worker-led people's government, is incomparably more democratic than any capitalist country. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which is the rule of the workers and farmers, is the opposite, the democratic pole to the autocratic dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, which prevails in all capitalist countries, including the United States.

The one-party system of the U.S.S.R. is also thoroughly democratic. Parties represent the interests of classes; hence in capitalist countries, in which there are several classes with violently conflicting interests, usually various parties are to be found (under fascism, there is just one capitalist party which suppresses all other class parties and interests). In our capitalist country we have two major parties, both of which are controlled by capitalists and represent their class interests. But in the Soviet Union, where the workers, farmers, and intellectuals, friendly classes that are in the process of merging, are in power, there is room for only one political party, the Communist Party, which represents all their interests. The one-list election system, in which the real selection of candidates is done during the nomination process, is also thor-

oughly democratic. Trade unions and all other mass organizations take a most active part in it. Also, the system of recalling an elected official is a particular feature of Soviet democracy. Charges of anti-democracy against Communists are belied by the world-wide struggle of the latter for democracy and against fascism. Such charges are nothing more than another phase of monopoly capital's attempt to discredit world socialism and to besmear the great Communist movement which is leading the democratic masses of the world in bringing it about. The attempted identification of communism with fascist authoritarianism is the greatest lie of our period.

3. The Communists are also everywhere the ardent defenders of the national independence of the peoples. This issue, too, has become acute throughout the capitalist world as a result of the expansionist, imperialist policy of American big business. Countries like Germany, Japan, Greece, Turkey, Italy, the Latin American states, and others have already lost much of their independence to the United States, while France, the Scandinavian countries, several Near East lands, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, and several more, are steadily being infringed upon. Indeed, even in Great Britain, which country is being pressed ruthlessly by powerful American aggression, the matter of the preservation of the nation's independence has become a decidedly living question. In their eagerness to get their hands on American money to save their national capitalist system, and to halt the progress of the rebellious masses, capitalists and their lackey Rightwing Social-Democrats all over the world are peddling away the national interests of their peoples to the American imperialist mammoth. They are letting their governments become United States puppets in the latter's cold war against the U.S.S.R. It is the Communists, voicing the deepest sentiments of the masses of the people, who are the most determined fighters for national independence. This is one of the chief reasons for the growth of Communist strength in many capitalist countries.

4. The Communists, likewise, are the leading political force in the struggles of the colonial peoples for national liberation. The talk we hear on all sides to the effect that imperialism is now abolished, due to the good will of the capitalists, is just so much drivel. The reality is that the bankrupt British, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Belgian empires are making frantic efforts to hang onto their colonies in Asia, Africa, and America despite the growing mass fight of the colonial peoples for freedom. Even as I write these lines, the Dutch imperialists, armed with American guns, are shooting down the Indonesian patriots who are fighting for independence. And the United States is not only aiding

the many old empires in their reactionary efforts to keep their clutches on the colonies, but is also struggling to set up a great new-type empire of its own. In the growing American empire, the dominated peoples, although allowed to retain a shadow of independence, as in Cuba and the Philippines, and less, in Puerto Rico, are made dependent upon the United States, economically, politically, militarily, and every other way. This makes American imperialism more dangerous. The imperialists of the world are now desperate because of the growing resistance of the colonial peoples to exploitation and also because of the vital role the Communists are playing in this stupendous movement. The major enemy the imperialists see in all colonial countries, as the force understanding and leading these oppressed millions comprising over half the human race, is the Communist Party. In this they are quite right. It is the Mao Tse-tungs, not the Nehrus, who will lead the colonial peoples to freedom and prosperity. China is blazing the way for the exploited and oppressed colonial peoples everywhere. The colonial and semi-colonial peoples are starting along Lenin's and Stalin's path, which is the only road to freedom, whether for the oppressed working class and peasantry in the capitalist countries or for the vast, doubly-exploited masses in the colonial lands of the earth.

5. Lastly, the Communists are also the most resolute defenders of world peace. The war issue has again been made acute, although World War II is not yet officially ended, by the determination of America's big capitalists, armed with the atomic bomb and other lethal weapons, to bring the whole world under their control at any cost. The only possible hope of American big businessmen to achieve this reactionary end (a hope that will eventually be completely frustrated) is to impose their control on the rest of the world by force of arms. The peoples of the world are alarmed and frightened by this menacing policy of American imperialism. On the basis of the record of world politics, they increasingly learn that the U.S.S.R. on a world scale and the Communist parties in the individual countries, are the best fighters against the Wall Street warmongers. The peoples of the earth are deeply opposed to war and they may be depended upon to make those reactionaries pay very dearly who would dare to plunge them into World War III.

By the same token, because communism is fundamentally a peace movement, the Communist parties everywhere seek to achieve their foreign and domestic aims by democratic, peaceful methods. It is a brazen lie, the capitalist allegation that the Communists are trying

to achieve socialism by the forceful overthrow of the capitalist governments. Wherever democratic channels are open to the people the Communists use them. Any violence that may occur in the class struggle, whether the workers' aim is for immediate wage demands, for the maintenance of world peace, or for the establishment of socialism, is always fomented and provoked by the capitalists and their agents. Denial of civil rights and stark violence are the habitual weapons of the oppressors to beat down the democratic movements of the people and to further their own reactionary purposes. All trade unionists, not excepting those here in the United States, know perfectly well that violence in strikes originates with the employers' forces, not with the workers. The same principle applies in the general struggles of the workers which are leading directly towards the establishment of socialism.

The foregoing paragraphs constitute a brief outline of the theory, organization, and practice of the Communist parties of the world. These parties, although each one is independent, taken together as a world movement constitute an irresistible force. Battling along with the people in broad united front movements against militant reaction on every vital issue, they are achieving an ever-widening circle of mass strength and prestige. As the best defenders of the people's interests, the Communist parties are steadily winning the leadership of the world's people away from the domination of the capitalists and of their Right-wing Social-Democratic lackeys. This great Communist movement cannot be defeated by capitalist misrepresentation of its policies; it cannot be broken up by the jailing of its leaders and the outlawing of the Communist parties in capitalist countries; and it cannot be crushed by the capitalist armed force in military war. The Communist movement is destined to lead the peoples of the world, and it is increasingly leading them, in the greatest progressive movement of all history, to socialism.

## IX. The Communist Fight for Peace and Freedom

The Communist Party is the chief defender of the American people's immediate interests and the leader in their ultimate struggle for socialism. Hence the nature of its policies and methods, affecting as they do both national and international situations, should be of the deepest concern to everyone. In the previous chapter, I have analyzed the Communist Party itself and given the elements of its program. In this chapter I will deal with the means—strategy and tactics—by which the party puts its policies into effect.

The fight for the workers' and the whole nation's interests, in both an immediate and a long run sense, is carried on in a rapidly changing economic and political situation. Consequently, great flexibility by the Party in fighting for its program is necessary. Communists are keenly aware of this fact and are inveterate foes of dogmatism in all its forms. As Lenin said, Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action. Stalin put it this way in *The October Revolution*: "The strategy of the Party is not something permanent, fixed once for all time. It changes to meet historical turns, historical shifts." (p. 59.) The history of the Communist movement is the history of its evolving, developing Marxist policy, to meet the requirements of the ever-changing class struggle.

I remember the illusions that prevailed in the American Socialist Party when I joined it almost half a century ago. These false notions were largely of the same legalistic, parliamentary stripe that were to be found in Socialist parties everywhere. With Debs's votes piling up from election to election, many members believed it would take only a few years, by a sort of geometrical progression, until the party would win an election majority in a straightout vote for and against socialism. This would settle everything, they thought, and socialism would thus be easily established. This was opportunist political naiveté. Jack London, for all his weaknesses, was one who knew better than this; in *The*

*Iron Heel* he gave a rough forecast of fascism and of the bitter struggle needed to vanquish it. But such warning voices as London's were lost in the officially cultivated opportunism of the party.

Lenin, unknown to nearly all of us in the United States, was at the time already very active combating the opportunist nonsense which prevailed throughout Europe in the parties of the Second International. Resurrecting the basic principles of Marx from the deep obscurity in which the revisionists had buried them, hopefully forever, he ruthlessly shattered the opportunist views of the Bernsteins and others. Lenin outlined a perspective of resolute class struggle against a capitalist class that, faced by a revolutionary working class, would unhesitatingly abolish its thin veneer of democracy and use every violent means at its disposal to maintain its rule. He relentlessly attacked all reformist ideas of an easy, legalistic, almost automatic victory over capitalism, and prepared the workers for revolutionary struggle. He boldly and ably expanded the whole theory and strategy of Marxism to fit the period of imperialism, raising it to a new and higher level.

The first great practical test of Lenin's revolutionary theory, strategy, and tactics came towards the close of World War I. He called upon the workers to transform that imperialist mass butchery into a civil war for the establishment of socialism. The workers and peasants of old Russia responded, with the result that tsarism-capitalism was overthrown and the Soviet government established. Very probably the rest of Europe would have followed suit and gone Socialist too had it not been for the betrayal of the workers by the Social-Democrats of Germany and other European countries. The great Russian Revolution under the leadership of the master, Lenin, constituted a brilliant example of vital, developing Marxism and of its adaptation to a changing world.

For his bold line of action and his revolutionary writings, Lenin has been widely accused by reactionaries of being an advocate of force and violence in principle. But this is a basic distortion of Lenin's outlook and work. In reality Lenin was the sincerest of all champions of peaceful, democratic progress. But, clearly, under the circumstances there was no way, other than that taken by Lenin, to bring about socialism. There was no real democracy in the revolutionary storm centers of Europe, especially in Russia, Germany, and Austria. Lenin had no choice in the matter. Although he had often expressed his desire for a peaceful course of social development and he even worked out a program for the peaceful development of the Russian revolution early in 1917, this course was simply not to be had. Reaction appealed to violence, and by violence it was beaten.

Revolutions in general are not to be halted by ruling class denials of democracy, and the Russian Revolution was no exception. With unprecedented initiative and success, Lenin advocated that the violence of the reactionary landowners and capitalists be met with the violence of the revolutionary workers and peasants. Let it be remembered that President Wilson, with his Fourteen Points in World War I, called upon the peoples of the Central Empires to revolt against their rulers, although, unlike Lenin, he did not want them to establish socialism. The path indicated by Lenin was by far the most peaceful and democratic one for the masses to follow under the circumstances. It would have led to a socialist Europe, which, had it succeeded, in turn would have prevented the butchery of World War II and also the present deadly world threat of a new war. Lenin was a man of peace, and his famous slogan for transforming the imperialist World War I into a civil war for socialism was one of the most profound peace and progress slogans of our times.

The next great development in world communist political strategy and tactics came with the rise of world fascism, largely after Lenin's death in January, 1924. Faced by this new and menacing situation, world communism, while retaining in full the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, made certain important changes in its strategic and tactical line. This new line was fated to play a tremendous role among the peoples of the world during the next years and, indeed, right down to the present moment. The chief architect of these new developments in Communist policy was Joseph Stalin, the greatest living Marxist. With this and other theoretical contributions by Stalin, the working theory of Marxism has thus become Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism.

Fascism, the rule of the most reactionary, chauvinistic, terroristic sections of finance capital, is generated by the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism (which I have analyzed in Chapter I). As the capitalist system sinks into greater and greater difficulties from the sharpening of all its inner conflicts, antagonisms, and contradictions, the ruling big bankers, industrialists, and landowners reach out for more violent means of struggle against the workers, against the colonial peoples, and against rival capitalist powers. Democracy is thrown overboard, the labor movement is suppressed, the bourgeoisie rules with open terrorism, and imperialist war is glorified into a holy national objective. This is fascism. But fascism is much more than merely a German-Italian-Japanese phenomenon. In this period of capitalist decline and decay of capitalism, all big capitalists are essentially fascists, whether or not they are in a position to come out with it so openly or to develop full-

fledged fascist policies. The present is the fascist phase of imperialism.

Consequent upon the development of fascism as a world danger, that is, after Hitler's seizure of power in Germany in March, 1933, the peoples everywhere were filled with alarm. They saw the gravest assaults on their living standards, their trade unions broken up, their political parties driven underground, their democratic parliaments abolished, their countries over-run by fascist barbarians, and humanity blood-drenched with a terrible new world war. And this serious danger came not only from outside—from the Hitler-Mussolini-Hirohito-Franco gang of open fascists—it also came from the reactionary big capitalists in their own countries—England, France, the United States, etc. These dominating capitalist groups in the democratic countries were busily appeasing the German-Italian-Japanese fascist aggressors and were quite willing to have a fascist world in which labor would be completely subjugated and the big capitalists could rule as unchallenged masters. The result of the rise of this fascist world danger was to arouse broad masses of the people, whole groups of classes, entire nations, to fight militantly to defend their economic well-being, their democratic organizations and institutions, their national independence, and their very lives against fascist enslavement and slaughter.

The Communists, with Marxian flexibility and true to the interests of the people, proceeded to reshape their policies to meet the fascist menace. Their new political line began to take definite shape at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, held in July, 1935. The chief steps taken were to re-emphasize the fight against fascism and war as the all-decisive task of the working class and the various peoples, to evaluate the tremendous scope of the developing mass anti-fascist world movement, to point the way for the building of people's front, anti-fascist governments, and to indicate the possibilities for the formation of an international peace front of the world's democratic peoples against the aggressor states—Germany, Japan, and Italy—to halt the developing war. One of the most striking features of this anti-fascist line was a realization of the possibility of electing governments willing to fight against big capital notwithstanding violent employer opposition. The tremendous spirit of the anti-fascist mass movement and the vital importance of the issues involved made this possible in countries possessing a considerable degree of democracy. In fascist countries there was no alternative other than that of armed struggle to overthrow the fascist dictatorship. This new people's front line was a radical departure in Communist policy. Georgi Dimitrov, general secretary of the Communist International, in summing up the work of the

historic Seventh Congress, said: "Ours has been a Congress of a new tactical orientation of the Communist International."

The actual beginnings of the united front struggle of the Communists against the fascists goes back, however, some years before the Seventh Congress, to the all-out fight against Hitler proposed by the German Communists to the Social-Democrats in 1932. This proposal was rejected by the Social-Democrats and Hitler won an easy victory. The preliminary application of the new line, as worked out by the Seventh Congress, began early in 1936, when people's front governments, supported by Communists, Socialists, trade unionists, and many non-party democratic organizations, were elected in France and Spain by big majorities of the aroused peoples of these countries, in spite of a malignant fascist opposition. Meanwhile, in September, 1934, the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations and began its historic fight for a joint peace front to halt the fascist war program of Germany, Japan, and Italy. This was the policy of collective security.

These early united front, anti-fascist efforts, products of the new Communist tactical line, failed, however. The French People's Front Government was betrayed by Leon Blum's Right Social-Democrats, and the Spanish People's Front government was overthrown by the Franco counter-revolution, pushed through with the help of Hitler's and Mussolini's intervention, and aided by the sabotage of the French and British Social-Democrats. The Spanish defeat became all the more certain because the People's Front government, many of whose leaders suffered from liberalist illusions, failed to take the elementary measures necessary to disarm the reactionaries and to guard against counter-revolution. As for the gallant efforts of the U.S.S.R. to organize the peace-loving peoples of the world against the marauding fascist powers during the latter 1930's, that, too, did not succeed, because of the appeasement of Hitler by the leaders of Britain and France, and of American big business, as I have described earlier.

The Communist anti-fascist policy in those crucial pre-war days, had it not been sabotaged by Right-wing Social-Democrats, would have destroyed fascism at its roots in many countries and it would also have prevented the outbreak of World War II. Humanity would then have been spared the slaughter of two score millions of people and the present danger of another world war. Let the enemies of communism bear in mind these facts while uttering their hysterical red-baiting attacks.

It was only after the U.S.S.R. got into the war in June, 1941, that the fundamental Communist united-front anti-fascist line, initiated by the Seventh World Congress, actually got into effective and successful

application. By the time Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, the western democracies, whose armed forces had been either crushed or driven into the sea and who were then at the point of complete defeat by Hitler's armies, were glad enough to form an anti-fascist international alliance on the general lines of the peace front that the U.S.S.R. had proposed to them several years before. And in the respective democratic countries, the hard-pressed peoples generally were also quite willing to work in national unity with the Communists, who, everywhere in the shops, in the anti-Hitler underground, and on the battlefield were the very best fighters against fascism. Especially was this true of the Soviet Red Army, which did far more extensive, intensive, and effective fighting than all the other anti-Hitler forces combined.

A world historic event in this situation was the fact that it was the basic Communist anti-fascist strategy that won the war. It was the fundamental policy, worked out at the Seventh Congress in 1935 of a joint anti-fascist line-up of the democratic powers on a world scale and an anti-fascist united front of all the democratic forces in the respective countries, that finally smashed the Hitler-Mussolini-Hirohito combination and saved the world from the worst enslavement it has ever been threatened with. This is another fact that the detractors of communism would do well to remember.

With the victorious end of World War II, the Communist anti-fascist policy entered into a new phase of vital application and development. When the war had concluded, the world democratic forces under Communist influence carried over into the post-war period, with certain modifications, essentially the same general policy of anti-fascist unity that had won the great war. They did this within the setting, on the one hand, of a capitalism where the reactionary forces—army, police, State, etc.—had been largely shattered by the war, and, on the other, of a vast, world-wide, democratic upsurge of peoples, who were determined to realize the democratic, anti-fascist principles which they had so valiantly fought for during the war.

On the international field, the united front unity against the fascist nations took shape in the closing phases of the war, through the formation of the United Nations, of which the U.S.S.R. became an ardent supporter. In the many countries of Europe freed from Hitler's occupation, the anti-fascist peoples built national unity coalition governments which included Communist, Socialist, Peasant, and Catholic parties, and even some parties representing the smaller businessmen. Such countries as France, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Albania, set up these united front, multi-party coalition

governments. In many colonial lands, notably China, Burma, Korea, Indo-China, Indonesia, etc., the surging liberation movements also took on this general character of all-around united front, anti-imperialist combinations, with special national adaptations of the policy. The Communists everywhere played a decisive role in the formation of these anti-fascist governments and movements, which flowed along the general lines foreseen by the Communists as far back as the Seventh Congress.

Two facts of tremendous importance stand out clearly from this whole postwar anti-fascist movement. The first is that all the coalition governments in Europe were legally elected by huge popular majorities running from 70 per cent to 90 per cent of the total number of votes cast. The reactionaries within these countries, badly shattered and demoralized because of their allegiance to Hitler during the war, were unable to halt by violence the great democratic sweep, although in a number of countries, notably Poland and Greece, they did succeed in forming a lesser or greater degree of armed opposition. In Czechoslovakia, in April, 1948, the capitalist reactionaries attempted a *coup d'état*, but the masses of the people were on the alert and the enemy was crushed. The second significant fact is that the basic trend of this whole movement was toward socialism. This trend was especially marked in Eastern and Central Europe, where the Red Army had demolished the capitalist reactionaries during the war and where the Soviet example of socialism was strong in the eyes of the people. In this big area the new coalition governments, "People's Democracies," with definite programs of nationalization of industry, break-up of big landed estates, planned economy, and working class leadership, began to move consciously and resolutely towards the building of socialist regimes.

After winning the war Communist anti-fascist strategy—as developed by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International—thus not only provided the post-war type of coalition government for the effective handling of the people's urgent tasks of reconstruction but also opened up what has been termed a new road to socialism. The whole peaceful, orderly, democratic, overwhelming mass character of the great anti-fascist coalition, pro-socialist movement throughout Europe in the early post-war period, largely under Communist initiative, was a striking demonstration of the constructive, close-to-the-people, and flexible character of Communist policy. It provided a crushing answer to those reactionaries, here and abroad, who constantly shout from the housetops that the Communist Party is made up of a handful of desperate conspirators, and that its program is for the violent overthrow of democratic governments on principle.

World reaction, especially the Wall Street section of it, watched with dismay the complete defeat of Hitler in the war and the rapid expansion of democracy and socialism in Europe and Asia after the end of the war. The capitalists everywhere shivered with fear at the growth of mass sentiment for democracy and socialism, at the comparatively easy, peaceful, and legal establishment of coalition governments and People's Democracies in many European countries, at the rapid spread of the huge national liberation movements in the Far East, at the gigantic growth of trade unionism and other democratic movements, at the vast increase in the democratic prestige of the Soviet Union, and especially at the vital role being played by the Communists everywhere in the world peoples' movements. The reactionaries in our country were appalled by the weakness of the capitalists in many countries in the face of this vast popular upsurge.

As we have seen in previous chapters, American imperialism, controlling the gigantic resources of this country, is determined to redress this whole situation. Driven on by its imperative need for markets for its war-swollen industries, by its deep hatred of socialism, by its desire to save dying world capitalism, by its determination to bring the whole world under its sway, it has embarked upon a policy of ruthless expansion, reaction, and warmongering. The concrete aims of Wall Street are to smash growing Communist-Socialist unity, drive the Communists out of all the European governments, break up the World Federation of Trade Unions, dictate the policies of the weak capitalist governments, reorganize the reactionary, imperialist, fascist forces of Europe and the world, arm and prepare the United States and the capitalist world for an all-out war against the Soviet Union. This is the general plan of the Truman Administration, which gets its orders not from the democratic American people but from Wall Street. In this course of action, American capitalism is proving Lenin's position that a ruling class faced with a revolutionary movement will use every violent means in its power to suppress and defeat it.

The furious and reckless drive of Wall Street imperialism for world domination became especially obvious with the launching of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, as well as with the bald announcement of the get-tough-with-Russia policy during the first half of 1947. This expansionist policy has since produced such threatening results as the American-instigated expulsion of the Communists from the French and Italian governments, the taking over of the Greek civil war by the United States, the jockeying in the Near East with the Arab states and British imperialism at the expense of Israel, the stimulation of the Chi-

nese Civil War, the rebuilding of Germany and Japan under fascist control, the formation of the North Atlantic military alliance, the wholesale militarization of the United States, and a host of other menacing developments, amounting to a new world threat of fascism and war.

Manifestly, the democratic and socialist peoples of the world would not stand idly by in the face of these attacks. They had to take steps to check this new danger of fascism and war, now coming from Wall Street imperialism. In this world emergency the responsibility for giving leadership naturally fell to the Communists, for the Right-wing Social-Democrats and their American brothers, the big labor bureaucrats, were actively supporting the American monopolies' Marshall Plan drive for world domination. Hence, in the middle of 1947, the U.S.S.R., in the United Nations, called sharp attention to the aggressive policies of the American government and to the widespread campaign of anti-Soviet warmongering that had been going on openly in the United States since the end of World War II. In September of the same year, the nine largest Communist parties in Europe met in Poland to give consideration to the critical situation. This Communist conference pointed out that Wall Street had divided the world into two camps; one of democracy and peace, the other of imperialism and war. The conference warned the peoples of the world of the grave danger involved in American imperialist expansionism, and called upon them to defend their democracy, peace, and national independence from the Wall Street marauders.

The essence of these Communist decisions was a reaffirmation of the basic united front, anti-fascist, anti-war line that was outlined by the Seventh World Congress in 1935 and which had since played such a vital role in world affairs. The Communists refused to recognize the inevitability of war, as is assumed by capitalist leaders, and they decided to redouble their efforts all over the world to bridle the warmongers. They also refused to admit the inevitability of fascism, which is the basic trend of the program of Wall Street, and they embarked upon an even more vigorous defense of democracy on all fronts. They reindorsed their policy of seeking the election of broad, united front governments in the various countries based upon the support of trade unionists, Communist parties, Socialist parties, peasant parties, non-party democratic groupings, etc. At the same time they recognized that the reactionaries everywhere, led by American imperialism, were, by their attacks on democracy, trying to make the election of such governments impossible, and seeking to reduce the struggle, for even the most elementary demands, to the status it has in Spain. The Communists warned the

people of the danger of civil war provoked by American imperialism.

The substance of the present European situation is, therefore, that the Communists and the broad democratic masses are trying to continue the orderly and peaceful advance toward democracy and socialism begun at the close of the war, whereas the reactionaries, organized and led by Wall Street imperialism, are striving at all costs to block this socialist advance by creating civil war conditions and laying the basis for another world war. Under American pressure the class struggle in Europe is rapidly sharpening, and it will become more acute. In the early days after the war, before American imperialism got its reactionary offensive under way, there were practically no strikes anywhere in Europe, the people, under the leadership of the coalition governments, being assiduously engaged in reconstruction work. But now, with the provocations of the reactionaries, the workers are being compelled to deal massive blows in their own defense. Great strikes occur in rapid succession and the horizon grows dark with portent of attempts by the reactionaries to smother the labor movement by force.

Two danger spots in Europe are France and Italy. There, as is perfectly obvious, the reactionaries, who are financed by the United States, are quite ready to precipitate civil wars to prevent the formation of genuinely democratic coalition governments which would include the Communists. The tenseness of the situation in these countries was illustrated in the Italian elections of April, 1948, in which the United States and Great Britain interfered outrageously on behalf of fascist-minded clerical reaction. There was a similar interference in the strikes of the French coal miners and other workers. Nevertheless, despite such violent employer tactics, the Communist parties in France and Italy are still clinging to their line of peacefully electing parliamentary majorities and coalition governments. Characteristically, the French Communist Party calls for the election of a "Government of Democratic Union," supported by a broad united front of "Socialists, Communists, Catholics, and Republicans," and the Italian Communist Party follows a similar policy.

The heart of the capitalist reactionary strategy is to make impossible, through the violent suppression of democracy, the election of such coalition democratic governments. But, the workers will know how to meet this fascist line of action. One thing is very certain, the French and Italian peoples, like others in Europe, are not going to permit Wall Street-paid reactionaries to strip them of their democratic rights, to fasten a new yoke of slavery upon their necks. They will deal blow for blow, and more, against rising fascism. The leaders of the French and

Italian Communist Parties have clearly stated that their peoples will never fight against the U.S.S.R. We may be assured that if Wall Street, in spite of democratic resistance, should succeed in plunging Europe into civil war and in bringing about another world conflagration, this would not give world mastery to American capitalism; it would bring ruin upon itself, at a terrible cost to humanity.

The political line of world reaction, led by American imperialism, leads straight towards war—international war and civil war. The political line of world democracy and socialism, at whose head stands the Soviet Union, makes definitely for peace—international peace and domestic peace. The forces of democracy and socialism militantly defend their cause during wars, national or international, that have been thrust upon them by the aggression of reaction. These wars are just wars for them. But, basically, the forces of the people, while pressing for their constructive immediate and ultimate programs, find themselves in the position of restraining and defeating the violent policies of imperialist, fascist-minded reaction. This fight of the people—the world camp of peace—to preserve national and international peace, against American-led reaction—the world camp of war—is one of the most decisive political facts of our times.

The political policy of the American Communist Party harmonizes in general with that of Communist parties in other industrialized countries. Our Party backed the policies, in the early days, of the Communist International, with which it was then affiliated; it supported the pre-war, anti-fascist world Communist policies during the thirties; it went all-out for the anti-Hitler struggle during World War II, and it gave its hearty approbation to the broad, peaceful, mass advance towards socialism that developed in Europe at the close of the war. Its policy now, in this country, is that of building up a great anti-monopoly coalition of workers, farmers, Negroes, intellectuals, and other democratic forces to fight for the immediate interests of the people and for the ultimate establishment of socialism. The present party line follows the broad path towards the people's front and people's democracy types of government now to be found in Eastern Europe.

There is now no Communist International, neither open nor secret. It was abolished in 1943, partly because its form had become obsolete, but mostly in order to facilitate an all-around anti-fascist war co-operation. And it was *not* resurrected when the nine Communist parties in Europe formed their Information Bureau, an advisory body with quite a different type of organization from that of the old International. The American Communist Party, while endorsing the objectives of the In-

formation Bureau, is an independent political organization. It is not bound by the programs, strategy, or tactics, as enunciated and applied by other Communist parties, although, naturally, as a Communist Party possessed of a high spirit of proletarian internationalism, it is deeply interested in them, learns much from them, and gives the struggling workers in all countries its ardent solidarity. Otherwise, our party works out its policies and programs upon the basis of its own understanding of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and in accordance with the requirements of the political situation in the United States and the world. It should surprise no one, however, that there is a fundamental similarity between the policies of our party and those of other Communist parties, even though there is no organic connection between these bodies. This is because all these parties are guided by the same basic principles of Marxism-Leninism.

In order for the people to put the United States firmly on the path toward peace, democracy, and general well-being the power of the monopolists who dominate our country must be curbed and finally broken, and the people themselves must take political charge, under the leadership of the working class. The struggle for socialism grows inevitably out of the everyday fight of the workers and their allies, especially against the present menaces of economic chaos, fascism, and war. In all good time the American people, on the basis of their existing conditions, will decide how and in what forms they will introduce socialism. The way our party foresees the possible development of the future is along the following general lines:

First, we propose the regular election of a democratic coalition government, based on a broad united front combination of workers, small farmers, Negroes, professionals, small business groups, and other democratic elements who are ready to fight against monopoly, economic breakdown, fascism, and war. This type of united front government could well have behind it an overwhelming majority of the people, as it has in other lands. It goes without saying that the election of such a democratic government could only be brought about in the face of powerful and very surely violent opposition from organized reaction. The whole history of the American class struggle, which is full of examples of employer violence in strikes and in other mass struggles, teaches this lesson with unmistakable clarity. The bitter attacks made against the Progressive Party, led by Henry Wallace, during the 1948 elections, gave a sure indication of the frenzy and desperation with which the capitalists would confront a people's united front combination that was strong enough actually to threaten their control of Congress and

the Presidency. Obviously, it would be an extremely difficult proposition to elect a truly democratic government in the face of this strong, violent, and reactionary opposition.

Second, our party contends that such an anti-fascist, anti-war, democratic coalition government, once in power, would be compelled either to move to the Left or to die. With state power in its hands, it would be forced to pass over from the more or less defensive program upon which it was elected to an offensive policy. Confronted with the sabotage and open resistance of big business, it would have no other alternative than this, if it hoped to realize any of the progressive legislation of its program and to ensure its staying in power. A people's government would be forced to proceed directly to curb and undermine the power of the monopolies by adopting far-reaching policies of nationalization of the banks and major industries, the break-up of big landholdings, the beginnings of a planned economy, the elimination of reactionary elements from the control of the army, schools, and industry, as well as various other measures to weaken monopoly and to strengthen the working class as the leading progressive force in the nation.

Third, a democratic, anti-fascist, anti-war government, under the violent attacks of the capitalists and in its efforts to find solutions to the burning economic and political problems, if it were to survive, would necessarily move leftward, towards socialism, much as the People's Democracies of Eastern and Central Europe are now doing. Some liberals believe that a united front coalition government in this country would introduce a regime of "progressive capitalism," but this is a naive and dangerous illusion. Capitalism is now in its monopoly stage and is hopelessly reactionary. Any people's government in our times, in order to be progressive (or even to live), inevitably must move towards socialism. American socialism, beyond question, will have its own specific forms and methods, but basically it will be the same as socialism in other countries, with monopoly capital completely defeated, the industries and national resources in the hands of the people, production for general use instead of for profit, and the working class the leader of the whole people. Only in this way will this country and the world be finally freed of the dangers of poverty, economic chaos, fascist slavery, and murderous war. These steps could be taken legally by a people's government, notwithstanding the opposition of the capitalists, however violent.

To promote the election of a progressive, coalition government of this type which, by force of circumstances, would move to the Left and, eventually, to socialism, on the general pattern of the European People's Democracies, is obviously not to advocate a program of force and

violence, the enemies of the Communist Party to the contrary notwithstanding. The charge by the Department of Justice that our party advocates the forcible overthrow of the government is a brazen conscious lie. The plain fact of the matter is that the Communist movement in this country as well as abroad, since the Seventh World Congress in 1935, has been going along on the practical working theory that in this period, because of the broad mass struggle against fascism and war, it had become possible in a whole number of democratic countries, including the United States, legally to elect democratic governments which could, by curbing and defeating capitalist violence, orient themselves in the direction of building socialism.

Is it possible to elect such a democratic coalition, anti-monopoly government in the United States, the stronghold of world capitalism? It is a sinister fact that civil rights in this country, notably since the end of the war, have been seriously whittled away; but the United States is by no means at the stage of fascism. Nor do we Communists consider American fascism to be inevitable. The big popular upsurge in the recent presidential elections was a dramatic justification of our faith in the democratic strength of the American people. It showed a profound anti-fascist, anti-war sentiment among the masses. In the event of an economic crisis or a war, this mass democratic upsurge would be vastly greater and more clear-sighted.

Our party's political line is thus based upon the assumption that it is possible, under present political conditions in the United States, for the broad masses of the people, militantly led by the trade unions and a strong mass political party, to elect a coalition, anti-monopoly government. How long this possibility may last in the face of the fascist trends in this country is problematical. But if we should get fascism, if the United States were to be reduced to the level of fascist Spain, then the Communists will also know how to reshape their policies to meet that kind of situation.

It may well be asked, what resistance will American capitalism be able to make when the great masses of the people finally decide, as they surely will, to establish socialism? Today American capitalism is strong; but it is not as strong as it appears to be, nor has it got a permanent lien on its present strength. Now, it is true, Wall Street is the world bully and is busy trying to organize civil wars in various countries and to arm itself and other capitalist countries for another world war. But what will its power of resistance to socialism be when, as may be likely, the vast bulk of the rest of the world has "gone Socialist," when its own foreign markets have largely dried up, when it is undermined by economic

crises, when it may have just about wrecked itself by its projected world war, and when its working class has developed a Marxist-Leninist ideology and sets out to bring about socialism? It may well turn out that it will be far easier for the American working class, in the midst of a socialist world, to establish socialism in this country than now appears to be the case, with American capitalism at the peak of its strength. Who can foretell these things? Certainly we Marxist-Leninists do not indulge in such prophecy.

In connection with the fight for eventual socialism, there are three basic, general considerations to be borne in mind:

First, the question is not that the Social-Democrats want to bring about socialism in a legal manner, while the Communists want to establish it by violence. Such a placing of the question is utter nonsense. The true issue is that the Social-Democrats do not fight for socialism at all, their line leading only to the buttressing of capitalism; whereas, the Communists do fight for socialism, and in their relentless struggle against capitalist resistance they adapt their strategy and tactics to the given situation.

Second, the question also is not whether the capitalists will or will not use violence to prevent the establishment of socialism. Of course, they will use violence, here as well as elsewhere; it would be silly to think otherwise. Lenin taught us that long ago. Are not the capitalists, even at this very moment, attempting to organize another world war in their effort to murder world socialism? The real question, therefore, is how to confront the capitalists with such gigantic masses of people in broad, democratic political movements that they will be relatively isolated and thus unable to organize effective violence against the cause of progress. This is the purpose of the Communist united front, anti-fascist policy.

Third, the question, finally, is not whether or not there will be socialism in the United States and the rest of the world. History has already settled that matter. Socialism will come, eventually, regardless of all the violent efforts of the capitalists to stop it. The real issue is to bring about Socialism with the minimum of capitalist violence and at the earliest date. The Communist line is the way of peaceful advanced and social progress; the policy of the capitalists leads to mass suffering, political enslavement, and devastating war.

## X. Socialism Meets the Test of Life

The establishment of a socialist sector in the world, dealt with in an earlier chapter, has truly been an ordeal by fire. Socialism, originating in old Russia, first had a hard struggle to be born and then an even more desperate fight to live on and develop. But socialism has survived all these severe tests with flying colors, in the face of a ruthless world capitalism determined to kill it at all costs. The birth, survival, and spread of socialism are like a series of miracles to the world capitalists and to their Social-Democratic understudies. This is because no ruling class, threatened by a rising social system historically slated to supersede it, can ever really understand the new society's qualities and superiority. Together with the capitalists' violent opposition, is the chronic underestimation of the capacities of socialism. This is bred of their wishful thinking and blind hatred of socialism. Such underestimation is a political fact of much significance; indeed, it could even lead to disastrous consequences in the present tense period, as we shall see further along.

The very conception of socialism for backward Russia was long deemed an utter impossibility, not only by capitalists, but also by Right Social-Democrats and, of course, by our American capitalist-minded labor leaders. The self-assured opportunist heads of the Second International argued that socialism was unthinkable in any but the most highly developed industrial countries. But the great Lenin knew better; he saw the revolutionary potentialities of an alliance between the Russian workers and peasants which the conceited Right Social-Democrats scoffed at. Lenin also understood that socialism could be established in one country alone, a land with such great resources as Russia, and not necessarily in several countries simultaneously. This vital conception the opportunist Socialists also denounced. But events bore out Lenin's judgment completely in every major respect, to the confusion of the opportunist Social-Democrats and other enemy forces.

Accordingly, when the Bolsheviks accomplished the "impossibility" of mobilizing the majority of the Russian people and winning power in November, 1917, and then took on the gigantic task of leading the revolutionary Russian people to socialism, a sneer of contempt went up

all over the Social-Democratic world. A few weeks would suffice, these pseudo-Socialists said, to expose the bankruptcy of the naive Bolsheviks and to demonstrate the futility of their fantastic plan for building socialism in Russia, a country with strong feudal survivals. The Communists could never win the peasantry, nor had they any incentive to offer the workers that would make them produce, the capitalists also declared. The Greek Orthodox masses of peasants and workers would never stand for a socialist regime, the clericals asserted. But these enemies, croakers, and pessimists were all completely refuted by the course of history. The Soviet government went right on living and getting stronger as the months and years went by.

Next came the foreign murderous intervention and Civil War of 1918-21. This war would surely wipe out the impossible Soviets, said reactionaries all over the world. And, indeed, for a while, the life of the Soviet regime appeared to hang by a thread. Fourteen capitalist nations, plus the plentiful native Russian reactionaries, ganged up in a military struggle against the infant socialist republic. Our own country took part in this reactionary enterprise. President Wilson, to our national disgrace, waged an undeclared war against the Russian people without even bothering to secure the consent of Congress. Things looked bad, indeed, for the new socialist government, which was without a regular army or strong industry, in the face of this general capitalist assault. In the worst period of the civil war most of the territory of Russia was in the hands of the invading counter-revolutionary forces. The big capitalist powers were so sure of their prey that they already had their plans drawn up for splitting Russia among themselves. Then the "impossible" happened once more. The gallant Russian working class, the most revolutionary of all workers, led by the indomitable Communists, succeeded in smashing all the military forces arrayed against them and in freeing the entire country of all its enemies—American, British, French, German, Polish, Czech, Japanese, White Russian, and all the rest. Our own Revolutionary War was only a minor affair in comparison with this unprecedented civil struggle. The Russian revolutionary fighters fought through a thousand Valley Forges.

Following this fierce civil war, which ended victoriously for them early in 1921, the Soviets undertook the gigantic task of industrializing their country. In this they faced a truly appalling prospect. Russian industry, comparatively small in size and very primitive in technique, had been virtually destroyed during the seven years of world war, revolution, foreign intervention, and civil war. Grim famine stalked the land, agriculture being prostrate. The engineers and technicians, dedi-

cated to the old regime, had either fled the country or abandoned their posts permanently, leaving the industrial organization in chaos. Production had fallen to about 15 per cent of the pre-war level. To make matters worse, the great capitalist powers, the United States among them, threw an economic and diplomatic blockade around the Soviet Union, so tight that not even medical supplies were allowed in. The reactionaries were sure they could starve the very weak, first socialist country into submission. But the Russian people, led by their invincible Communist Party, with Lenin at the helm, heroically fought their way through this new maze of difficulties. By 1927 they had already repaired their old industries and raised production up to the 1913 pre-war level, and they were rapidly increasing the tempo of industrial development.

This whole course of events amazed the incredulous capitalist world which, a hundred times over, had declared the Russian Revolution defeated and ruined. But the reactionaries were indeed put on their toes when, in 1928, the Soviet government outlined its first five-year plan. The production goals set by this plan were enormous, a total of 65 billion rubles investment for industry, transport, and agriculture. The difficulties still afflicting the new socialist economy were so staggering that merely the announcement of the first five-year plan provoked a resounding guffaw throughout the capitalist world. The whole project was silly, ridiculously impossible, the wise ones said. The Soviet Union lacked the capital, the engineers, the skilled mechanics, the industrial organization, and the natural resources necessary to put it through, they maintained. Such a plan, agreed the capitalist "experts," would take not five years but fifty, if not more, to complete. The Bolsheviks might be able to patch up their old factories, as they obviously had done, but they never could build new and modern industries, nor could they operate such plants even if someone else should build them for the socialist government. And all talk of collectivizing the land, they declared too, was sheer insanity, for the peasants would tear the Soviet government to pieces if collectivization were tried. The industrial experts of the capitalist world had a very fine time (so long as it lasted) laughing at the "impractical" Bolsheviks. Obviously, they declared, the entire five-year plan monkey business was just a "propaganda stunt," designed to quiet the clamors of the discontented Russian masses. The Soviet people contemptuously replied to this barrage of sneers and wishful-hatred thinking by actually finishing the five-year plan in a little over four years. They built a great industrial system in the U.S.S.R. at a rate never equaled by any capitalist country, and at the

same time they collectivized most of the farm land of their tremendous country. On the basis of all this success, the Soviet government then announced its second five-year plan, containing even more ambitious proposals than the first plan. These developments shocked the world capitalists, who tried in vain to belittle the big industrial achievements of the new socialist system.

As the U.S.S.R. plunged ahead with its swift industrialization, Stalin, following the theory of Lenin, promulgated his famous proposals for the building of socialism in one country, the Soviet Union. This theory provoked another outburst of merriment from world capitalism and its opportunist Social-Democratic lackeys. These reactionaries had the gall to declare that Stalin was abandoning various major principles of Marxism-Leninism. Echoes of this capitalist opposition were heard in certain groups within the Russian Communist Party itself. Thus the Trotsky faction contended that socialism in one country was impossible; their plan was to wage political warfare on the peasantry generally in the U.S.S.R. and also to try, at any hazard, a world revolution. The Bukharin group, also believing socialism in one country to be an empty dream, wanted to compromise socialism by making basic concessions both to the rich peasants and to the big capitalist powers. The result of both these groups' programs, had they been adopted, would have been a return to capitalism in the U.S.S.R. In these vital struggles Stalin proved himself a supremely expert Marxist, a superb leader of his people and the world forces of democracy and socialism.

The capitalist world egged on the opposition groups in the Communist Party, hoping that the far-reaching internal struggle would tear the Soviet government to pieces. But Stalin, in the most brilliant debate of modern times, carried his basic point. In this historical theoretical struggle, Stalin won much of his present great prestige with the Russian people. The combined inner-party opposition was routed (it later degenerated to the point of becoming fifth column agents of Hitlerism). The mechanization of industry and the collectivization and mechanization of agriculture thereafter proceeded even more swiftly than ever. To the point that now, not only has socialism been built in the Soviet Union, but it is expected that within fifteen or twenty years communism will be fully introduced. These great developments scored another decisive victory for the Communists over the rampant world capitalist underestimation of the vitality and efficiency of socialism.

The extreme rapidity of Soviet industrialization in the pre-World War II period far exceeded all capitalist records of production, as is indicated from the following quotation of figures taken from the *His-*

*tory of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (p. 335):

“Whereas by the middle of 1937 world capitalist industry, as a whole, had barely attained 95-96 per cent of the level of production of 1929, only to be caught in the throes of a new crisis in the second half of 1937, the industry of the U.S.S.R., in its steady cumulative progress, had by the end of 1937 attained 428 per cent of the output of 1929, or over 700 per cent of the pre-war [World War I] output.”

During the exciting years of the first two five-year plans, throughout most of the 1930's, not only did the new Soviet socialist regime prove that it could build great industries at an unprecedented rate and then operate them efficiently, but it also demonstrated at the same time that the Soviet economic system was immune to the deadly cyclical crisis which throughout these years had wracked and torn the international capitalist system. While the whole capitalist world, especially the biggest capitalist countries, the United States and Germany, were utterly prostrated by the economic crisis of 1929-33, the Soviet industries went right on, forging ahead at full speed, unaffected by the deep-cutting world economic dislocation that was eating at the heart of capitalism. These events showed that socialism had clearly banished the cyclical crisis and unemployment. And the whole capitalist world, with such a dramatic example as this before its amazed eyes, could not help getting the point. Today, as I write these lines, signs are multiplying of another developing economic crisis that will have devastating effects in the capitalist countries. But everybody knows that the crisis, no matter how severe it may be, will not affect the economy of the U.S.S.R., which is immune to such crises.

These tremendous industrial victories of socialism spurred the world capitalists on to make even more determined efforts to destroy the Soviet Union. Their hostility came to a head in Hitler Germany's attack on the U.S.S.R. on June 22, 1941. Great Britain and France, with the aid of American big capitalists, had long been building up the Nazi regime, in the definite expectation that Hitler's armed forces would shoot the hated Soviet Union to pieces. But, unable to come to an agreement with the greedy German dictator over the division of the spoils of the expected victory, the capitalist powers wound up with a wolfish war among themselves. The Western democracies very quickly were getting the worst of this war. Whereupon, Hitler, figuring that he had these enemies licked, and fearing the might of the Soviet Union, finally put his basic plan into effect by attacking the socialist country. This was his fatal mistake for he soon broke his neck on the solid rock of socialism.

The leaders of the western democracies, full of their habitual hatred-underestimation of the strength of Soviet socialism, had no faith in the military power of the Russians. When Hitler began his attack, from all over the capitalist world came the practically unanimous "documented" opinion of military wiseacres to the effect that the Nazi army would cut the Red Army to ribbons in six weeks at the most. Hitler himself was obsessed with this same capitalistic underestimation of the Soviet Union, and this proved his undoing. As early as August, 1941, only two months after Hitler had begun his ill-fated invasion, it had become clear, according to General Halder, Chief of the General Staff of the German High Command (quoted in the *New York Times*, December 14, 1948), that the Nazis had fatally "underestimated the Russian Colossus." Let it be remarked in passing that the world's Communists, who basically understood what had been taking place all these years in the U.S.S.R., were quite sure that socialism could withstand the terrible test of war. Expressing this general Communist opinion, I wrote the following lines a week after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, in a pamphlet, entitled *The Fight Against Hitlerism*:

"Hitler, in declaring war against the Soviet Union, has signed his own death warrant. He and his Nazi barbarians are now marching to their doom" (p. 3). And so it was.

The heroic Red Army, with the all-out backing of the Soviet people, won the war against Nazi Germany and its allies, although Hitler had the whole industrial power of Europe behind him. The Red Army smashed the Wehrmacht while the British armed forces were desperately clinging to their islands, helpless, and while the United States was gradually transforming itself into the "arsenal for democracy." In more honest days, when Americans openly appreciated the brave fight of our Soviet ally, and it was, temporarily at least, not the fashion to slander that country, General Douglas A. MacArthur made the following accurate estimate of the Red Army. He said in an *A.P.* dispatch, February 23, 1942:

"The world situation at the present time indicates that the hopes of civilization rest upon the worthy banners of the courageous Russian Army. During my lifetime I have participated in a number of wars and have witnessed others, as well as studying in great detail the campaigns of outstanding leaders of the past. In none have I observed such effective resistance to the heaviest blows of a hitherto undefeated enemy, followed by a smashing counterattack which is driving that enemy back into his own land. The scale and grandeur of this effort marks it as the greatest military achievement in all history."

This glowing tribute to the Red Army was written by MacArthur just six months before the beginning of the great battle of Stalingrad in which the Red Army, outdoing all its previous achievements, shattered the German Wehrmacht and definitely saved the world from the menace of fascism and slavery. Even the Soviet-baiter Winston Churchill was moved to remark that "The Russian Army tore the guts out of the German Army." Today, however, there are lots of petty souls in our country who, in their efforts to whip up war hatred against the U.S.S.R., are trying with glaring lies to dim the luster of the heroic fight made by the Red Army and the Soviet people. They shamelessly claim the lion's share of the victory for our lend-lease supplies to the Soviet Union. They are placing the 10 billion dollars in munitions that we sent to Russia (about 5 per cent of our total war production) against the Red Army's matchless struggle and the 7,000,000 Soviet dead. However, the vast battle that MacArthur speaks of, which took place before the gates of Moscow, was fought at the end of 1941, or before the Russians had received more than a trickle of our munitions shipments, which at that time amounted to only a tiny fraction of the war supplies Hitler was getting from the industries of occupied Western Europe. Indeed, the Nazi General Halder, quoted earlier, shows in his diary that as early as the third month of the war, before the Soviets received any appreciable help from us, the Red Army had thrust a knife into the heart of Hitler's army and it was slowly bleeding to death. Again citing Halder, the *New York Times*, December 14, 1948, states:

"By Aug. 11, 1941 [less than two months after Hitler's invasion of the U.S.S.R.], Germany's last reserves were committed in a last desperate effort to keep the line from becoming frozen in position warfare. . . . In the first three months Germany lost 15 per cent of an army of 3,400,000 men. . . . On Nov. 19, Hitler admitted he could not annihilate the Russians. On Nov. 27, the German supply chiefs reported they were at the end of their resources, in personnel and materiel, though confronted with the danger of deep winter. By the 176th day of the campaign, Dec. 10, 1941, a quarter of the army was gone. . . . By March, German casualties had exceeded 1,000,000 and on Sept. 10, 1942, Hitler ordered a war of defense."

In the face of such facts, one would think that those who are boasting so blatantly that our lend-lease shipments to Russia won the war and who are demanding repayment in part or in full would hide their heads in shame. If the Truman Administration had a trace of political decency it would strike this whole Russian lend-lease account from the books and

be done with it. More than that, American writers and political leaders should put a stop once and for all to the disgraceful belittlement of the Red Army which, on its unchallengeable record, did more intense fighting against Hitler than the United States, Great Britain, France, and all the rest of the Western democracies combined, and paid in human losses correspondingly.

After the great showing of the U.S.S.R. in the war, which was still another profound demonstration of the strength and general livability of a socialist regime, the Soviet Union plunged into the task of post-war reconstruction. Here its situation was indeed an appalling one. From the ravages of Hitler's army the U.S.S.R. had suffered a far greater devastation and material loss than all the rest of the allied combatants in Europe. Any capitalist country so ravaged would have capitulated to the enemy. The occupied and ruined Soviet territory totaled 40 per cent of the population of the U.S.S.R., 58 per cent of its iron, and 63 per cent of its coal; 31,850 of the larger industrial plants had been destroyed or looted, 50 per cent of its railroads wrecked, 7,000,000 horses and 17,000,000 cattle killed or stolen, thousands of collective farms pillaged, and hundreds of cities and towns completely wiped out—the total property losses running to 679 billion rubles, or approximately 128 billion dollars. These figures, of course, do not include the many more billions spent by the government in conducting the war.

With their usual inveterate hatred and underestimation of the U.S.S.R., the American capitalists, themselves rolling in wealth as a result of the war, refused in the post-war period to help our Russian ally financially to rehabilitate its industries. They hoped that Socialist Russia would not be able to recover from the war. But with characteristic socialist vitality and vigor, the Soviets are now going ahead, unaided, with their own rehabilitation. And with their usual success. At the present writing, while Great Britain, France, Italy, etc., despite receiving many billions of dollars in Marshall Plan subsidies, are still floundering around in a hopeless crisis, the U.S.S.R. is booming rapidly ahead. It has formed (Jan. 1949) a Council for Mutual Economic Assistance with five neighboring people's democracies, which of course, the capitalist economic experts say "can't work." The Soviet government has abandoned all rationing and in 1948 its total industrial production, despite the terrific war depredations, exceeded that of 1940 by 19 per cent. As part of its current vast program of development the Soviet government has just announced a stupendous fifteen-year project to overcome the drought conditions on the Russian steppes. Instead of being crippled or wiped out by the war, as capitalism hoped, the Soviet Union has

become one of the two greatest powers in the world. The Soviet writer, P. Yudin, in the journal *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, November 1, 1948, thus outlines the general perspectives of the U.S.S.R.:

"When in the course of the next three or four five-year plan periods, the main economic task facing the U.S.S.R. will have been accomplished, namely, the task of overtaking and outstripping the principal capitalist countries in production per capita of the population—the land of socialism will be far ahead of the United States in the total volume of industrial output. It will then be the biggest, most powerful and richest industrial country in the world."

Thus, during the three decades of its existence, the Soviet Union, starting from a very weak industrial base and notwithstanding twelve years of devastating wars, great famines, economic blockades, and monumental tasks of industrial construction, has in the face of the most profound world capitalist skepticism, opposition, and hatred, forged ahead irresistibly, accomplishing results quite impossible for any capitalist regime. This has all constituted a profound demonstration of the viability and success of socialism. The enemies of socialism have been repeatedly confounded and enraged by it and they have been transformed into half-crazed Soviet-baiters. And the successes of the U.S.S.R. thus far are, however, only a preliminary to that country's achievements of the future, now that it is really getting its industrial foundations solidly established.

The next great section of humanity which, after the Russian people, has embarked upon the road to socialism, namely, the 100,000,000 inhabitants of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, and Albania, were born amid the fire and sword of World War II. Although they have not had to face the fabulous difficulties of the U.S.S.R. in its early years, nevertheless, they have also had to demonstrate their right and power to live. World capitalism, principally Anglo-American imperialism, has been amazed and sceptical about the socialist developments in these countries and it has done all in its power violently to suppress them, just as it did during the development of the Soviet Union. But the agents of the western capitalist oligarchs, who insolently take unto themselves the right to own every people's industries and to dominate the world, have sought in vain to overthrow the democratic coalition governments of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Balkan countries, all of which were born in the struggle against Hitler. They have similarly tried fruitlessly to upset these new democracies by denying them rehabilitation funds and by

cutting off their foreign trade. Under the general protection, however, of the nearby friendly Soviet Union, these countries could not be brutalized and recaptured for capitalism. Only in the case of Yugoslavia, where Tito has betrayed the camp of peace, democracy, and socialism and is driving his country to Wall Street, has any of these new governments wavered.

The capitalists have watched with incredulous eyes agricultural countries like Poland rapidly heading towards socialism, and their amazement has been no less great when the highly industrialized Czechoslovakia, which they devoutly considered to be their very own, also took the same socialist path. The capitalists are dismayed, too, to observe that these people's democratic countries, unlike the rag-tag capitalist nations of Western Europe, are going right ahead bringing about their own industrial rehabilitation at a rapid rate and without the benefit of American loans with their political strings attached. It is all so incredible to the capitalists, this great socialist movement of these peoples.

The big capitalists of the world, particularly Wall Street, simply cannot believe their eyes; in fact, they are constitutionally incapable of understanding that any people really wants and will work for socialism. So they must try to explain away the whole business in Eastern and Central Europe on the grounds of Russian plotting and Communist "totalitarianism," and they do all they can with their Canute brooms to hold back the irresistible tide of social progress.

Similar lessons are to be learned from the present vast national liberation movement in China. This constitutes the third great mass of humanity that has begun to move towards socialism and it is now demonstrating dramatically in battle—military, economic, political and ideological—its right to be born, to live, and to supersede the obsolete hodge-podge of feudalism and capitalism hitherto prevailing in China. Here, in this tremendous popular upsurge, the largest of its kind the world has ever seen, we have the Communists performing one "miracle" after another, in the grand manner of the Russian Bolsheviks. And the hostile capitalist world once more is watching the unfolding spectacle with awe and confusion, uncomprehending, unbelieving, unknowing, and registering an impotent rage. But the Chinese Communists are not surprised by these great developments, nor are the Communists of other countries. They rejoice in the Chinese people's splendid victory; but then, they know that these are the results of the historical process guided by the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. They know that rotten capitalism cannot stand before vigorous, advancing socialism.

The world capitalists, especially those hard-boiled autocrats who rule

the United States from Wall Street, have completely misunderstood and underestimated the situation in China. Once again, they have expressed their wishful-hatred thinking about the Communists in wrong policies. How could these reactionaries even dream that the Chinese Communists could carry out such a super-heroic achievement as their celebrated "long march" of 7,000 miles during the years 1934-35? How could they believe that the Communists were capable of the "impossible" by adapting Leninism to Chinese primitive agricultural conditions? How could they figure out that the scattered people's guerrilla bands of two decades ago would eventually be hammered into a great Red army able to smash the much stronger (numerically and in equipment) Nationalist Army and take their shiny new American arms away from them? How could they and their military experts even realize that a people's army, such as the Chinese, could win a war without tanks or airplanes against an enemy that had both? How could they understand that in Mao Tse-tung, whom they have so often condemned as just another "Communist ranter," there was developing one of the greatest political leaders of our times? How could they ever possibly conceive of a day when a great people's government, Communist-led, would be set up in China?

Of course, the capitalists, American variety especially, in their class blindness and hatred, could not understand any of these deadly dangers. They have answered everything about China with their stupid charge that the Chinese Communist Party is a fifth column, a tool of Moscow. This lie has blinded them. A few years ago, they and their puppet Chiang Kai-shek boasted they could "wipe out the Communist bandits" in three months, or in six at the most. That's why they refused peace and made war against the Communists in the first place. The war responsibility is entirely upon their shoulders. Nor will the capitalist world be able to understand it when the Communists eventually proceed to lead the Chinese people, let the obstacles be what they may, to the industrialization of their country and to the creation of a free and happy land and hence to socialism. Capitalist ideologists will not be able to believe it even after the event. Already they are telling us that "It can't be done; the new people's democratic regime will collapse under the crushing weight of China's stupendous economic problems." Such statements will just make the Chinese Communists laugh.

Marxists-Leninists multiply and world socialism grows by constantly accomplishing what the capitalists, who cannot see anything beyond the ideological borders of the capitalist system, deem to be impossibilities. To do the "impossible" is routine stuff for advancing world socialism.

The efficiency and unconquerability of Communist-led governments is only an expression of the undefeatable determination of the great masses of the people to work and fight their way through capitalist opposition to socialism. But, then, it would really be expecting what is indeed "the impossible" to count upon capitalists, Social-Democrats, and conservative labor leaders to understand this elementary fact of political life.

One could laugh at, while also taking advantage of, this incurable tendency of the capitalists and their "running dog" Social-Democrats and conservative labor leaders, constantly to underestimate the creative power of socialism and its Communist leadership. But there is at present a grave danger in this capitalist belittlement tendency. For such an underestimation, coupled with the intense prevalent capitalist anti-socialist hatred, could be the means of plunging the world into a third devastating World War. Did not Hitler make precisely such a wishful-thinking, hatred-underestimation of the U.S.S.R. and on the basis of it deluge the world with blood? This must not be allowed to happen again. The peoples of the West must be made to understand fully that the U.S.S.R. is a very powerful and dynamic country and that a war with that great land would not only be a dreadful war, but a lost war for the United States and its reactionary allies.

In the present fanatical warmongering campaign of the imperialists against the U.S.S.R. there is already very much in evidence this wishful underestimation of the power of that country. Take the atom-bomb brandishers, for instance. These political maniacs, drawing upon their hatred-wishful-thinking and with no facts to justify them, are telling the world that the Soviet Union has not yet got the atom bomb and won't have it for several years, if ever. Therefore, they conclude, the United States would be wise to move quickly into a "preventive" war while it still has the bomb monopoly. Indeed, these firebrands would very probably have already dropped their atom bombs on Russian cities had they not been plagued by the fear that, as Stalin clearly stated and as Eisenhower has indicated, the atom bomb would not be a decisive weapon against the U.S.S.R. The atom bomb frenzy constitutes a typical and highly dangerous example of the characteristic capitalist wishful underestimation of the U.S.S.R. which has persisted since the Soviet government was established. The American people must clearly realize, however, that, contrary to the atom-bomb wavers who believe the Soviets are helpless, there is every reason to suppose that the U.S.S.R., with its high scientific development, already has the atom bomb and that it probably also has the many other dreadful weapons that modern science knows how to produce. We must make our people realize very

clearly, therefore, that in a war against the Soviet Union our population and cities would be exposed to wholesale destruction from atom bombs, guided rockets, and other lethal weapons. We must not allow the warmongers to deceive us into believing that "the backward U.S.S.R." is incapable of producing such instruments of war or of waging a real war.

Then there is the more general argument of those militarists who, while not pinning everything upon the atom bomb, nevertheless are alleging that the U.S.S.R. is generally too weak to fight. This is only another way of expressing the chronic capitalistic hatred-underestimation of the Soviet Union. If the American people should allow themselves to be deceived by the "too-weak-to-fight" argument and let the imperialists plunge us into a war with the U.S.S.R., that would indeed be a sad day for our country and the world. For let there be no mistake about it, the Soviet Union and the democratic nations of the world are plenty strong enough to fight, if compelled to do so by Wall Street aggression. If they have to do so, they will surely prove themselves more effective fighters than the decadent capitalist countries of the West. Let us not learn this lesson the hard way.

In case of war, the capitalists would be astounded at the fierce resistance they would encounter, not only from the socialist and democratic countries, but also from their own peoples. In such a war just how much fighting against the U.S.S.R. would be French, Italian, and British people do, or the Germans and the Japanese, for that matter? Very little, surely. The bulk of the fighting would inevitably fall to the United States. And who can guarantee that the American people would calmly sit by and let Wall Street lead them into such a futile and dreadful slaughter? The capitalist countries could not possibly win an anti-Soviet war. Let them take warning from the fatal experience of Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and Hitler, or maybe they can learn a few lessons from current events in Greece and China. The capitalist system of the world, irretrievably shattered by World War I and II, is rotten at the heart. Another world war would bring about its complete bankruptcy and just about destroy it altogether. Let the wishful-thinking militarists, the chronic underestimators of the power of socialism, put this fact in their pipe and smoke it.

But there are those who will ask: if another war would destroy capitalism, why, then, should the Communists be against it? The answer to this nonsense is that war is not necessary for bringing about socialism. Socialism is coming anyway, war or no war. Why, then, should Communists favor a war in which the common people, their people, would

have to do the fighting and dying by tens of millions, in which living standards, the industries, and the substance of the world would be ruined, and the reconstruction tasks of socialism made incomparably more difficult? The question answers itself. The movement for socialism is the great international peace movement; it is the inveterate foe of militarism and war. It carries with it the one solid hope to preserve the world from another wholesale butchery, organized by American monopoly capitalists, who are made desperate by the failure of their own system, by their blind hatred of socialism, and who have the fantastic idea that they can solve all their problems by grabbing control of the world through military force.

For the past generation, ever since the birth of the U.S.S.R., the world's capitalists have been feeding their peoples a long succession of gross slanders and hatred-underestimations of socialism. Unfortunately, many of these were swallowed whole at the time, without questioning, by the masses. They were understood by the people only when, in the course of long experience, the U.S.S.R. had proved the slanders to be just so much malevolent capitalist wishful-thinking. But in this critical period the American people cannot allow themselves to be deceived even temporarily by this latest hatred-wishful-thinking device of the imperialist warmongers, the "Russia-is-too-weak-to-fight" propaganda. To be compelled to learn the folly of this capitalist underestimation of socialism through practical experience in war would be too terribly costly. This is one time at least when our people must be able to see through an anti-Soviet slander before it has been disproved by life itself. The American people want peace and to get it they must enforce a peaceful policy upon the United States government, which is now in the hands of imperialists. But to make their peace will and power thus prevail, they must be able to penetrate the anti-Soviet lies and wishful-thinking of the imperialists.

## XI. The Advent of Socialist Man

The crowning political development of our period is the appearance upon the world scene of the socialist man and woman. These new-type people are both the main goal and highest achievement of socialism. They will reach their highest development under communism, which is the next social stage beyond socialism. One of the charges most commonly directed against Communists, and also one of the most false, is the allegation that the Communist movement has in mind only the state and never the individual; that communism seeks to create individuals who are so warpedly collectivist in spirit as to have no other goal in life but selflessly to serve an all-powerful state. President Truman repeated this slander in his Inaugural Address. But such charges bear no relation to Communist reality. The supreme purpose of communism, on the contrary, is precisely to develop to the maximum the individual human being; to bring about a freer, happier, higher type of man and woman. If Communists now place so much emphasis upon discipline this is because of the exigencies of the class struggle, the supreme need of the workers and the whole socialist people to stand solidly together in the face of the still powerful capitalist enemy.

No other political movement aims so consciously for the cultivation of the highest possible type of individual as does communism. The distinction of the Communists is that, as no others, they seek to develop an integrated, well-balanced individual, one who, while enjoying personal freedom to the maximum degree, also knows how to utilize fully the basic principles of collectivism. Collectivism and the development of the individual, under socialism and communism, are not antagonistic but complementary principles. In the communist conception the fundamental aim is of creating such free collectivist individuals that the state must serve the people, and not the other way around. Although that country is still young and is combating world difficulties from hostile capitalism, in the U.S.S.R. the new socialist type of social being is rapidly developing. Soviet citizens live together in fruitful co-operation, and do not war upon each other, as under capitalism, in frantic efforts for self-preservation or self-aggrandizement.

Socialism (and later, communism), bases its cultivation of the individual upon the existence of a whole series of specific freedoms, all co-related. The first and most fundamental of these is economic freedom. With the industries in the hands of the people, with no ruling class to live by the exploitation of the workers, and with production carried on for social use instead of for the profit of a few, the people are economically free and the whole aim of production is to increase their well-being. Under this free economic system the people enjoy unequivocally the right to work. Work also becomes a matter of honor and a glory. It is an obligation as well as a right. A national slogan is: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." Thus work and freedom become harmonious principles. Workers under socialism don't have to suffer the humiliation of asking private employers to give them jobs, nor are they compelled to walk the streets idle and demoralized, as they are under capitalism, when the autocratic owners of industry cannot provide them with work. It is a lie, the allegation that under socialism, specifically in the U.S.S.R., a new ruling class springs up which exploits the people economically. If this were true, the capitalists of the world would suddenly lose their bitter hatred of the Soviet Union. Precisely the revolutionary thing about socialism is that it frees the workers from economic exploitation and turns the whole production mechanism of society to the cultivation of their individual well-being and prosperity. This is the foundation of all other socialist freedoms. Socialism also removes the capitalist fetters from production and opens up endless perspectives of industrial development. Only such a regime can truly apply atomic energy on a broad scale to peaceful purposes. Capitalism has never been able to spread the blessings even of steam and electricity throughout the earth, over half of humanity being still without energy generally. It will take socialism to usher in the true atomic age.

2. The people under socialism are also free politically. With the abolition of economic exploitation, inevitably there goes at the same time out these essentials. And capitalism will be still less able to utilize atomic energy generally. It will take socialism to usher in the true atomic age.

at the end of political domination by the capitalist class. Under socialism, for the first time men and women are able to rise to their full stature and to breathe the fresh air of political freedom. Socialist political freedom gives them a new sense of human dignity, a new realization that they are truly individuals and not merely robots who are serving life sentences in dismal factories for the profit and glory of parasitic employers. The workers of the socialist Soviet Union possess a sense of freedom, of enjoying the rights of free speech and assembly, of being

the masters of their own political fate, that is altogether unequalled in any capitalist country, including the United States. Anybody who knows the Russian working class is aware of this striking fact. Today, because of the heavy pressure of capitalist reaction against the U.S.S.R., the Soviet people are compelled to maintain a high degree of national discipline, a strong central government, and powerful armed forces. But once this world capitalist pressure is released, as it will be by the development of the victory of socialism, and also as the U.S.S.R. develops into communism, gradually dispensing with the present-type state and evolving into what Engels calls "the administration of things," then the Soviet people will develop an exuberant democracy such as people in capitalist countries do not yet even dream of. In the meantime a never-ending struggle is carried on against bureaucratic hang-overs from capitalism. Under socialism and communism the individual will be free politically to a degree unprecedented in man's experience.

3. Socialism also brings intellectual freedom. This is a cornerstone of all personal development under any regime. With capitalist exploitation abolished, the main shackles are thereby also stricken from the mind. Under socialism a regime of science prevails to a degree quite unheard of under capitalism. There is no ruling class to distort the findings of science and to cultivate superstition in order to bolster its class rule. Those who believe in religion have the full right to practice it and others have an equal right to oppose religion. Science under socialism will increasingly flourish and pass on to achievements altogether beyond the scope of science under the yoke of capitalism. The right of the people to the fullest education is a necessary part of this regime of science and intellectual freedom. The central aim of socialist society, unlike under capitalism, is to extend the maximum possible degree of scientific education to the broadest masses of the people. Education becomes truly democratic only under socialism. An indication of what this signifies may be gathered from the fact that in the U.S.S.R. the government is already aiming at breaking down the old-time walls between intellectual work and manual work by raising the educational standards of the masses generally to those of engineers and technicians. This has now become practical policy in a country which only a few years ago was fighting to eliminate an 85 per cent illiteracy among its people. There is no real intellectual freedom for the people under capitalism. This great freedom in its full amplitude, which contributes so enormously to the dignity and individuality of man, arrives only with socialism.

4. Socialism also initiates an era of cultural freedom and growth. Under every oppressive regime—whether slavery, feudalism, or capital-

ism—the arts and the artists have always been but so many weapons in the hands of the exploiters with which to help maintain their class rule. This has poisoned culture at its very heart. Never was the stultification of culture more clearly seen than in the present imperialist phase of capitalism, when poetry, painting, drama, music, and literature are at record low levels. In all their complex modern forms and mediums, the arts are all thoroughly organized, standardized, and exploited by the capitalists. The arts have become robotized. Under fascism, towards which imperialist capitalism naturally tends, art is degraded and paralyzed to the last degree. Socialism frees culture from these strangling capitalistic restrictions by turning art in all its forms to the service of the whole people. It gives art and culture the most fertile field for growth they have ever experienced. Socialism knows, at once, how to take advantage of collectivist mass production and also to cultivate the individual arts and handicrafts to the maximum. And there is no conflict between them. Socialism, and the succeeding stage of communism, will be truly the age of art.

5. One of the greatest of socialist freedoms is the freedom of woman. Socialism establishes sex equality in the fullest sense of the word. It does away completely with the many disgusting bourgeois sex distortions and inhibitions, and makes of sex a truly free, beautiful, and artistic expression of man and woman. For a long time the succeeding systems of exploiters have forced woman into an artificial position of alleged inferiority to man. Capitalism has done more than its share to maintain and extend this monstrous oppression. The capitalists exploit women doubly, both as workers and as women. Woman has to face special oppression in every field in capitalist society—as a worker, a wife, a home-builder, and a citizen. Whichever way she turns, she is confronted with subtle, and often crudely brutal, manifestations of “male supremacy” chauvinism. These cripple her in every respect. But socialism deals a shattering blow to this whole outrageous persecution system. It opens every door to woman, on the basis of the fullest freedom and equality. One of the very greatest achievements of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is the way it has extended real equality to women. The Soviet woman is truly a new human being. She has learned altogether new capacities and rights and has amazed the world with her ability to do superlatively well anything she turns her hand to. The tremendous added power that emancipated woman gives to the Soviet economy and political life is one of socialism’s greatest advantages over capitalism. The Soviet woman is incomparably the freest woman in the world. If one wants to know whether socialism cultivates personality and individuality, a powerful answer is to be found in the progress made by Soviet woman.

6. Socialism also establishes a new freedom for the youth. Under capitalism all sorts of key posts, in every line of endeavor, are monopolized by old fogies with no other qualifications than that they got there first. Youth, in capitalist countries, everywhere faces artificial handicaps. Socialism opens all doors to youth. Democratic regimes are always noted for the decisive role that youth plays in them, in every walk of life. This is, above all, true of socialism. By the same token, it is precisely under socialism that the nation looks after its aged and sick. In the Soviet Union, for example, there is no cold-hearted abandonment of the old and the incapacitated to the poverty and loneliness that is such a marked feature in all capitalist countries. The most tragic of all figures under capitalism are the older folks, who are so often without incomes, homes, or friends. In socialist regimes the care of children, too, is a sacred thing, without compare elsewhere in the world. Socialism, as no other system of society, takes devoted care of its young, sick, and aged.

7. Another very important freedom established by socialism is national freedom. Under capitalism one of the most poisonous of all influences is national chauvinism, the attempt of one national group to lord it over others on the basis of alleged superiority. Socialism solves this urgent problem. Under socialism the peoples of all nationalities and races live harmoniously together, without any prejudice or discrimination. No socialist citizen has to go through life under the crippling handicap and hardship, as hundreds of millions of capitalist citizens do, of being sneered at and persecuted because he is a Negro, a Jew, or a member of some other national group that the ruling class sees fit to harass and doubly exploit. In the U.S.S.R. the expression of such national prejudices is punishable as a crime. One of the outstanding achievements of the Soviet Union is the brotherly friendship and agreement that has been developed among the many nationalities comprising the Soviet people. This system unites the nations into one socialist regime, yet in doing so it allows them to preserve their specific national customs and cultures. This national harmony has been accomplished upon the basis of practicing the strictest equality, regardless of color, creed, or national origin. The harmonious relation now existing among all the national groupings within the U.S.S.R. is a forerunner of the eventual world liquidation of the present deadly capitalist national hatreds, jealousies, and rivalries that will be brought about by socialism. It is the road to putting an end to international war. The elimination of national jealousies is an achievement altogether impossible under the jungle system of capitalism.

8. Socialism also gives the people a new, free ethics. The ethical prin-

ciple of capitalism is "From each all you can squeeze out of him; to each all he can grab." This is fundamentally a gangster ethics, and it is fitting for a society in which a man's worth is measured by the amount of money he is able to amass in one way or another. Capitalism, by its very nature, unavoidably places a premium upon thievery, corruption, and crookedness of every description. Small wonder, then, that there is so much juvenile delinquency among our youth, when the dog-eat-dog ethics of capitalism stand before them constantly as the thing that they should emulate. Socialism introduces a new and higher principle of social relations, and crime rapidly diminishes. Its slogan is, "From each according to his abilities; to each according to his work." This motto is based upon the non-exploitation character of socialist society. It fits right into the actual life of the people. And when this free society passes into the higher stage of communism it will be guided by a still loftier conception, namely, "From each according to his abilities; to each according to his needs." This communist principle expresses a high degree of human solidarity and friendly relations that is quite unthinkable under capitalism.

Throughout the ages the central principle of all great systems of morals has been, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Under slavery, feudalism, and capitalism, although the ruling classes have constantly preached this maxim to their slaves as a way by which to regulate their lives, they themselves have cynically ignored it in practice. Their systems of exploitation, including present-day capitalism, have always been based upon a ruthless class ethics, condoning the most brutal violation of every principle of human solidarity. That is why Christianity has never "worked." As has been truly said, "It has never been tried." It is only with the introduction of socialism, and later of communism, that the Golden Rule, without benefit of religion, becomes a matter of practical politics and of general acceptance by society as a whole.

The rise of socialism means the development of a whole new set of people's freedoms to replace ruling class "freedoms" of capitalism, which are in reality just so many forms of slavery for the working class. Thus, most important of all, goes "free enterprise," which is only the capitalist freedom to exploit the workers, to be superseded by the genuine mass economic freedom from exploitation that is the very foundation of socialism. The right of irresponsible capitalists to throw the world periodically into economic crises and wars is also done away with. The rights of "free press," in the bourgeois sense that a handful of capitalists are allowed to monopolize all the means of information

for their own profit, is also abolished and is supplemented by trustworthy papers of the trade unions, the people's state, and other democratic bodies. The right of the capitalistic ruling class to monopolize the government posts is done away with and the workers take the helm of state. The right of religious freedom under socialism becomes a true freedom, instead of the fake freedom under a state-supported church dominated by a reactionary hierarchy that it is under capitalism. The right of reactionary groups to discriminate against minority peoples (as in the case of the Negroes in the United States) is ruthlessly abolished and all minorities under socialism enjoy the fullest equality in every sense. The "right," too, of the man, under capitalism, to dominate economically and politically over the woman is done away with under socialism and woman becomes truly free. Thus, through the whole category, new socialist rights supplant the ruling class rights of capitalism. But the capitalists, of course, don't yield gracefully to abolishing their old system of rights in favor of working class, socialist rights. They constantly fill the air with outcries that the new socialist freedoms, under which mankind for the first time really becomes free, are a vicious system of totalitarianism. This is part of their general ideological campaign against advancing socialism.

In addition to the foregoing list of elementary freedoms which contribute enormously to the development of human dignity and individuality, and which correct innumerable man-made injustices, socialism also attacks the series of limitations that have been placed upon man by nature itself. The general objective of this is to make women and men still more free and the masters of their fate. In this vital matter of conquering our natural difficulties socialism advances incomparably farther than capitalism can possibly go.

One of socialism's most important developments in this general respect is to give men and women a richer and fuller life by radically improving their physical environment. Under socialism, society will literally remodel the planet to suit its own needs, and with a boldness of plan impossible to disorganized, anarchistic, self-seeking capitalism. Many examples of this elementary trend of socialism are already beginning to shape up in the U.S.S.R. Among these are such projects as the conquest of the Arctic for agriculture and industry; the recently announced fifteen-year plan to relieve 300,000,000 acres from drought conditions in the middle areas of the U.S.S.R.; the systematic development and conservation of natural resources that is taking place on all fronts, and the planned enrichment and protection of the soil generally so as to provide properly nutritious foods for the people. These examples are

only preliminary developments, merely indicators of the still more gigantic projects to come in the future, in socialist mankind's adaptation of his environment to conform to his growing wants. The Soviet Union will never permit the wholesale destruction of the soil and the criminal waste of oil, lumber, iron, copper, and other natural resources of the people that has been one of the more scandalous aspects of the present capitalist regime in the United States. Nor will that country ever allow the shameful adulteration and misuse of the people's food supplies that is now going on unhampered in this country for the sake of the profits of food processors and monopolists.

Socialism, in its endless striving for the best possible regime, will also make a decisive assault upon the many personal physical handicaps that hang like a millstone about the necks of women and men, and which capitalism is incapable of solving with its exploitation and its planless, hit-or-miss methods. Preventive medicine on a general scale, mass physical culture, a scientifically adequate diet, and the most modern methods of medicine, will raise human beings under socialism to new heights of physical health and well-being. And far-reaching, concentrated research drives, on a scale that capitalism cannot equal, will make ever faster progress in the hunt for the causes and cures of the diseases that now plague mankind. Man will free himself, under socialism, from the burden of sickness and disease that has cursed him for so long and which is such a distressing feature of present-day society. Man, too, for the first time, disregarding foolish religious taboos, will boldly solve the population problems, both in respect to the size of his own individual family and that of the number of people in the nations generally. The spirit with which socialism will attack all these problems of the physical status of mankind is illustrated, among other things, by the very important scientific work that is now being conducted in the U.S.S.R. regarding human longevity and the actual process of death.

But the biggest of all tasks to improve the physical well being of humanity and thereby the broadening of the base for its freedom, is to improve the human species itself in an evolutionary sense. As things now stand, capitalism is actually degenerating our species by its reckless violation of the laws of natural selection. It has been stated that Napoleon with his many wars, which killed off the flower of young French manhood, cut two inches from the average height of all Frenchmen; it is stated, too, that British workers, because of the ruinous effects of factory exploitation through many generations, average some inches shorter than do the aristocracy, and, as can be expected, the slaughter and maiming of so many millions of the finest men during the two

recent world wars have done similar great damage to our species.

Socialism will reverse these harmful effects of capitalism upon the welfare of our species and will start the latter upon an upward course of development. To improve a species through the application of what Darwin called artificial selection, is a relatively simple thing to do with lower animals. To cultivate the evolution of the human species is quite another matter. To what extent a part will be played by eugenics, by controlling the endocrine glands, and especially by the creation of favorable environmental factors, as Lysenko maintains, or by a combination of all three of these methods, I am neither a biologist nor a geneticist to pass an opinion upon. The vital matter of the evolution of mankind is not one that can any longer be left to chance, especially as capitalist society is now having such a negative effect on the development of the species. The law of natural selection, which built the marvelous complexities of plant and animal species, no longer can work spontaneously. Now the evolution of the human species must be done artificially, by the conscious action of man himself.

Socialism is still in its infancy, having been born only 31 years ago in the Soviet Union. Its native land, since its fruition, has been overwhelmingly occupied in carrying out elementary tasks in the building of socialism—clearing away the material and intellectual rubbish of tsarism and capitalism; extending, under tremendous difficulties, its essential industrial base; and defending itself from incessant attacks from warlike capitalism. Nevertheless, the U.S.S.R. has already given birth to socialist man. The main outlines are now pretty clear as to the makeup of this new individual. And as socialism advances and passes over into communism, the characteristics of the new socialist human being will become more and more definitely elaborated.

Socialist man and woman are free individuals in the highest sense of the word. For thousands of years the toiling masses have struggled upward, fighting against succeeding systems of exploitation and oppression. But it is only with the defeat of capitalism and the establishment of socialism that they finally emerge from these long, varied forms of servitude. Socialist man and woman have no masters, economic, political, intellectual, or religious. They represent mankind finally emancipated, achieving a truly upright position, freed from every kind of exploitation and oppression, and bending the knee to no one.

Socialist man and woman have the basis for economic prosperity. They have at last won control of the instruments of production necessary to master their traditional poverty. The tremendous social production apparatus under socialism has as its main purpose, its sole reason

for being, to provide the people with the highest possible living standards, not to furnish fat living for social parasites of one kind or another. No longer do devastating economic crises paralyze industry, no longer do the citizens fear unemployment, no longer do they live in dread as to what will happen to them and their families if they become incapacitated by illness or when they grow old. Socialism completely solves all these economic problems and therewith lifts an Alp from the minds of the workers who have suffered the ravages of brutal and needless poverty for endless centuries. With socialism, humanity finally enters the era of plenty. It is silly to charge that socialism exchanges freedom for plenty; it achieves both freedom and plenty.

Socialist women and men are healthy human beings. For the first time in history, society turns its major efforts to achieving the maximum personal well-being for the people in general. It furnishes scientifically nutritious food and supplies the best of medical care, for prevention and for cure, from their birth to their death. The man and woman of socialism will be part of a species that is physically evolving to higher levels, and not retrograding, as under capitalism. Socialism writes "finis" to the ages-long, shameless neglect and exploitation of man's ill-health by society.

Socialist man and woman are happy beings. Mankind's passage through the ages has been one of suffering and tragedy by reason of bad economic conditions and political oppression. Bitter misery and corroding anxiety have always been the portion meted out to the toiling masses by the exploiting parasites in control of society. This is why there is so little happiness in capitalist countries. The United States, for all its wealth, is one of the unhappiest, most worried of countries. With the abolition of capitalism and its exploitation and oppression the people acquire a new buoyancy and win a new joy of life. This is true not only for the minority of developed Communists who catch the full vista of the possibilities of socialism, but also for the broadest masses who respond chiefly to the economically and politically improved immediate situation. Any reporter on the spot who has even a grain of honesty cannot help but remark the high spirits of the Soviet people. Despite all their heavy tasks in defending their country and in building socialism, and refuting all those hate-motivated writers who picture them as glum and dispirited, the Russian masses are now undoubtedly the most spontaneously joyous people in the world. More than any other country, the U.S.S.R. is the land of song, music, and laughter. All revolutionary peoples display a similar mass happiness. Even in the case now of the newly freed people of China, who have suffered so

frightfully from the long civil war, there is a new-found happiness, as a writer in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, November 28, 1948, remarks. Mrs. Tesdell, a Quaker missionary in China, dealing with conditions behind the Communist lines, says: "The common people of Northern China are the happiest I have ever seen." The Quakers are always spilling the beans like this. They don't seem to understand that it is the capitalist line to portray all revolutionary peoples as the dismal victims of a handful of artful and sinister Communists.

Socialist women and men also possess new and more powerful incentives to work and live and enjoy. The time was, not long since, when capitalist writers, with a pontifical wave of the hand, used to tell us that socialism could not succeed because it destroyed human incentive. But, after experiencing a generation of the U.S.S.R. and its tremendous achievements, we are now hearing less and less of such nonsense. It is capitalism, with its manifold oppressions and repressions and with its paralyzing grip upon all social institutions, that checks and cripples the incentive of the great masses of the people. They are cramped and handicapped in every direction. It is only with the advent of socialism that they finally emerge from these long, varied forms of lowed to manifest itself. Socialism is not a nirvana, where people vegetate in sloth and general stagnation. Under socialism the citizen is encouraged to excel in every field, and to this end there is a tremendous competition and emulation among the masses in all lines of endeavor, in science, industry, sports, arts, etc. Socialism cultivates all those qualities of initiative, ambition, strength, courage, and fighting spirit that are so essential for the rounded-out human being. Socialism, for the first time in human experience, puts all these necessary qualities to constructive uses. The only limit laid upon them is that they be not exercised to enslave other human beings for exploitation purposes. In no country in the world is there such general striving for self-development and such a love of achievement as there is in the U.S.S.R.

Socialist man and woman, in their full development, are Marxian materialists. Their intellectual and political life is established in scientific, economic, political, and social considerations, not according to the whims and interests of a barbaric ruling, exploiting class. The socialist people live under a rational system of planned economy, and are no longer lost in the vagaries and confusions of the anarchistic, chaotic capitalist system. Their ethical code is not taken from the clouds, but from their position in society, where their personal interests dovetail perfectly with those of society as a whole. They also calmly look upon the basic facts of life and death, and they require no artificial solace or

mental narcotic from ancient myths and fables. They have no room for existentialism and other forms of decadent bourgeois philosophy. Only with a materialist viewpoint does mankind reach his fullest intellectual stature, freed of all inhibitions, fears, repressions, and superstitions. This viewpoint man will increasingly develop with the expansion of socialism and its growth into communism.

Socialist woman and man are in harmony with their environment. This is the very heart principle of all the freedoms conferred upon mankind by socialism. Throughout the long history of slavery, feudalism, and capitalism, the vast bulk of men and women have been grossly at odds with the society under which they have lived. They have been kicked around and butchered for centuries by gangs of exploiters who had managed to grab control of economic and political power. As a result, all of mankind's natural human instincts and proclivities of solidarity have been repressed, thwarted, and stifled. This has made for measureless maladjustments and unhappiness throughout the several thousand years of man's enslavement to exploiters of various kinds. The effects of these social maladjustments are especially manifest in our days under the capitalist system of exploitation, with all its crises and tensions. This is particularly so here in the United States, and it is the major cause of our mounting rates of crime, divorce, drug addiction, drunkenness, suicide, and insanity. Socialism basically cures these mass social maladjustments by cutting out their main root, the exploitation of man by man. It therewith removes all those social pressures and strains and repressions that have wrought so much havoc with mankind throughout the ages and which have become so intense under capitalism as to threaten its very sanity. It is not only that great numbers of people now actually go insane in capitalist countries; the whole atmosphere of capitalism, with every man's hand turned against his brother's, is fundamentally neurotic and psychotic. Capitalism is a sort of social insanity. The dangerous effects of capitalism upon people's mentality is illustrated by the fact that in the present selective drafts no less than 50 per cent of the very high rate of military rejects is for mental troubles of one kind or another. Socialism, by setting up a free regime, develops a sane, well-balanced human being, thoroughly in tune with the world in which he lives. This is the very sum of the achievements of socialism.

Already, this fact of the harmony of the individual with his environment is very obvious in the U.S.S.R., despite its young years, and the extreme difficulties it has had to face in establishing socialism. The Soviet people, for all their hardships, are a far happier and better balanced people mentally than those of the United States, notwithstanding the

latter's greater wealth and higher standards of living. The Soviet people live in an atmosphere of friendly solidarity and they also have a clear social perspective ahead of them. This gives them a mentally healthy sense of stability and direction. This is almost entirely lacking in the United States, whose people live in a realm of daily insecurity and who do not know where they are going politically, with the consequence that they are plagued with all sorts of confusion.

These are some of the basic reasons for the striking fact that battle fatigue was relatively rare in the Red Army during World War II, because the Soviet soldiers knew and believed in what they were fighting for, whereas this serious mental disorder reached unprecedented heights in the American army, whose soldiers had by no means a clear social perspective, neither about the war nor about society in general. These facts also explain why there is such a frightfully high incidence of insanity in the United States, whereas mental disease is sharply on the decline in the U.S.S.R. This contrasting situation is definitely a reflection of the different degrees of social stability in the two countries. In the one case, in the United States, there is a gross maladjustment of the masses of the people to the dog-eat-dog capitalist environment in which they live, while in the other country, the U.S.S.R., the masses feel economically and socially secure and in harmony with socialism, although they still have many serious problems of construction before them. This harmonizing of man with his environment is the guiding principle for the building of socialism, a social system in which men and women will not only realize to the full their present abilities, but also, by improving the quality of the human species itself, will be able to soar to new capacities and achievements that people now do not even dream of in the capitalist world.

The foregoing paragraphs give at least an outline of some of the great advantages that socialism confers upon the individual. They indicate the basic fact that socialism, instead of suppressing the individual, raises him to his greatest heights. Capitalist individualism is a sort of social cannibalism, it is an individualism based on the destruction of other individuals. Only Socialism can produce the real development and expression of the individual, in harmony with his fellows. It is typical of capitalist propaganda against socialism, however, that it should turn this basic fact inside out and portray socialism as the enemy of the individual. But the realities of socialism will in the long run triumph over such lies, concocted by an obsolete social system which is desperately fighting for its existence in the face of impossible odds.

## XII. Some Personal Observations

The previous chapters outline generally the most important economic and political developments of my lifetime, namely, the decline of world capitalism and the rise of world socialism, together with many of their major accompanying features, such as the imperialist role of the United States, the progress of the American labor movement, the decay of world Social-Democracy, the growth of the Communist movement, and the advent of socialist man and woman. This concluding chapter I shall devote to my own personal connections with these tremendous events, together with some general remarks about the whole gigantic process of social development that is going on in this period.

Capitalist opinion in these days, both here and abroad, is very frightened and confused. One would think the world was about to come to an end. And it is in a way, at least for the ruling class. The workers are in the course of putting an end to the ages-old system of mass exploitation under which they have suffered for so long. To them the world situation appears very reassuring indeed in its basic outlines. Mankind is irresistibly on its way to socialism, and this is very, very good. Every other consideration is secondary to this main issue.

It is a terrible thing to view all the mass suffering, tyranny, and war devastation attendant upon the break-up of world capitalism and the birth of world socialism. But the responsibility for all this hardship and misery rests squarely upon the shoulders of the ruling capitalist class. It is not of the workers' making, and they are doing all they can to prevent it. One would have to ignore basic lessons of history in order to believe that the capitalist parasites would step aside quietly and let the people peacefully take over the helm of society. They are behaving just as every other doomed ruling class in the past has done; they are fighting to the last to retain their system of organized robbery of the toiling masses. The principal difference is that this time the capitalist class, controlling its vast modern industrial machine, is very much more powerful than any previous ruling class. It has incomparably more dangerous means of destruction at hand and it is using them to the limit in its struggle against the rising social force, the working class. Hence,

in leaving (being shoved off) the stage of history, the capitalist class is capable of, and is, creating more havoc than any other vacating ruling class has ever done. With its atom bomb, it is insolently threatening not only civilization, but even the very existence of the planet. The big job of humanity, in working its way to socialism, therefore, is to reduce to the smallest minimum possible the economic chaos, fascism, war, and other violence and disorders caused by the capitalists during their propulsion into the historical discard. So far as the general social problem is concerned, the thing the workers have to do is to make the capitalists heed the advice that Shakespeare somewhere gives an unwelcome guest; that is, "to stand not upon the order of your going, but go at once."

All my working life I have fought against capitalism and for socialism. It is good to feel oneself on the progressive side in the great social struggle of our times and also to know that one's side is winning. From my earliest youth I have been in conscious rebellion against capitalism. I cannot remember the time when I was not imbued with that class hatred against employers which is almost instinctive to workers. Starting out at ten years of age and later working over 26 years in industry, I was an efficient worker but always a rebellious one. An omnivorous reader and blessed with an insatiable spirit of observation, I couldn't help being repelled by the many oppressive conditions surrounding and immersing me. One of the very first signs of revolt on my part was the sharp revulsion I felt against the extremes of poverty and wealth that I saw about me. Long before I had any inkling whatever of socialism or of the true meaning of capitalism, I was taking sharp issue, however confusedly, with a situation wherein millions of people were compelled to work themselves into early graves in the industries and to live in poverty during their lifetime, while the rich, who were obviously just so many loafers and wasters, enjoyed all the good things of life.

I just couldn't take all that. Besides, my own bitter experiences in industry helped fill my cup to overflowing. The rank injustice of it all outraged my deepest sense of equality. During the many years that I worked in industry at very hard work, low wages and long hours (I never had a job of less than ten hours work per day, six days per week, and for ten years I slaved on the twelve-hour day, seven-day week at railroading), this spirit of revolt in me grew stronger and more conscious. I was a natural for the revolutionary movement. At 14 years of age I participated in my first strike, in Philadelphia, and by the time I was 19, in 1900, I was already a member of the Socialist Party. This was getting a pretty early start as a militant in the American class

struggle, and I already felt myself to be quite prepared to fight for socialism. But I was later to find out that it would still take me many years to learn the basic significance of socialism and to get rid of the complicated mess of ideological confusion that is customarily drilled into the minds of the workers, mine included, in order to make them into passive objects of capitalist exploitation.

My first long step towards a rational working class view of life and politics came through the liquidation of the religious beliefs that I had been so carefully taught during my boyhood. This, as it turned out, was a rather easy matter for me to accomplish. During my "teens," long before I had come into contact with any socialist writings, I read many books, the total effect of which was to knock religion out of my head. Among the more important of these works, in the general order of their reading, were Paine's *Age of Reason*, Lecky's *History of European Morals*, Draper's *Conflict Between Science and Religion*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Darwin's *Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man*, and Spencer's *Data of Sociology*, plus many more works on science, sociology, history, and religion. When I got finished reading or, rather, devouring, these books, which were written in the days when capitalism was more honest intellectually than it is now, there was very little, if any, religion left in me. All I needed for a completely materialist outlook on life were the works of Marx and Engels, which I was to read some years later. I don't consider my experiences with religion in any way extraordinary. I have always believed that anybody with an open mind who reads such basic books as I did could no longer believe the unsubstantiated myths and legends which constitute the material of religion.

During the course of my life I have never failed to marvel at how intelligent people can believe, for example, in the idea of a human-like Deity, who rules over the immense universe, one who, in fact, created it. For my part, I'll take the operation of natural laws as the explanation. Likewise, with the question of immortality. Contrary to those who think that man's mental make-up demands that he must have a perspective of life after death, I see no necessity whatever for this self-deception. Before I was conceived I had no consciousness of having any individual existence, and, in fact, I didn't have any. It is perfectly logical and easy for me to believe that "my" status will be the same after death. Hamlet says, "For in that sleep of death what dreams may come, when we have shuffled off this mortal coil," but as for me, I am not troubled about such dreams. To my mind there is no difficulty whatever in grasping and accepting the thought of a return after death to a state of

non-existence as a conscious being. Indeed, how can anyone really believe anything else? In my judgment the only way modern people can accept such ideas as a Deity and immortality (not to mention various other religious conceptions), totally unsupported as they are by any reasonable weighing of facts or logic, is by accepting them blindly on faith. Under the pressure of revered and hoary religious institutions, as well as because of strong social institutional compulsions, they adopt these conceptions mechanically, without any reasoned consideration of them whatsoever. Were such people really to weigh them thoughtfully, as they do other matters in their lives, they could do nothing else but reject them. The days of heaven and hell are past for men and women who actually think about such matters. This is not to say, however, that there are not myriads of sincere and fine people in the world who honestly believe in religion as something above reason, and not a few of them are good fighters in the various Communist parties of the world.

My break with religion had a considerable material effect upon the course of my life. My mother had long wanted to make a priest of me, and her wishes were seconded by Father Joseph O'Connor, a noted orator of St. Theresa's Church in Philadelphia, and a friend of mine. He offered to send me to a Jesuit college to be educated for the priesthood. He and my mother were both disappointed, however, when I let it be known to them that my reading had already taken me far and away beyond the control of the Catholic Church.

The second big step forward for me ideologically was my breaking with the whole intellectual baggage of capitalism proper and my acceptance of the perspective of socialism. The final break was rather a swift process for me, in fact, almost a matter of an hour. I was 19 years old at the time, and undoubtedly my previous extensive reading and my already considerable experience of nine years as a worker had quite prepared my mind for this sudden mutation from a capitalist to a socialist outlook. It all took place during my very first contact with the socialist movement, at an open air meeting at the corner of Broad and South streets in Philadelphia during the early summer of 1900. I think it was conducted by the Socialist Labor Party. This was the first time I had ever heard a Socialist speaker and his presentation won me immediately and completely. It took very little argument on his part to convince me that capitalists were both useless and harmful to society. I readily grasped the points that the workers were the useful producers, that they were potentially strong enough to take over society, and that, once in power, they would be quite capable of managing the economic

and political system infinitely better than the capitalists were doing.

Of course, in the new world outlook that I had gained so suddenly there was much on my part that was raw and unfinished. Many times since then, in the fight for socialism, I have had to shift my conception of political strategy and tactics, nevertheless the heart of my new viewpoint was as sound as oak and it has persisted with me. Since those far-off days when I became a Socialist, almost half a century ago, I have learned through hard knocks that the capitalists' defense of their system is much more complex and far more stubborn than I even dreamed of and that the struggle for socialism is correspondingly a very difficult one. But my whole experience has gone to justify the correctness of the basic decision I then took to work and fight for socialism. The most important day in my life was the one in the far-off summer of 1900, when I first met up with Marxism and took my place in the ranks of the international movement for socialism. I have often wondered who the soap-box teacher was who had such a vital influence upon my political development.

My adoption of socialism, like my acceptance of the materialistic outlook on life, also had a big effect upon my future work. About that time I had gotten myself a pretty good job as a minor executive in Armour & Company's large fertilizer plant in Jacksonville, Florida. The big boss there told me that I was right in line for a rapid promotion, inasmuch as, although only 19 years of age, I already knew the business well. But now that I had become a Socialist I simply could not become part of the employers' apparatus for exploiting the workers. So that was that. I quit my promising job in the executive field and went my way into other industries as a worker. This was a happy choice of route for me.

The third big ideological phase of my political evolution was to rid my mind of the illusions of opportunist Social-Democracy. The ideology of Social-Democracy is an extension of the ideology of capitalism itself. The Right-wing Social-Democrats have no faith in the ability of the workers to gain political power, to maintain power if they should get control, or to manage the complex machinery of capitalism. In fact, they see no need at all for a socialist revolution. Their line consists of tinkering with and reforming capitalism. They don't envisage knocking the capitalists really out of power. John Maynard Keynes, the British economist, has, in effect, given them their real economic program, which is the impossible one of transforming reactionary, monopolist capitalism into what they designate as "progressive capitalism." Their reformed capitalism, which they call socialism, would have, they think,

an indefinite lease on life. All this opportunist work these people do under slogans of socialism. The practical effect of Social-Democracy, and it is for this that it is so highly valued by the capitalists, is to take the revolutionary punch out of the workers during political crises by fooling them into believing that there is an easier way than that of hard struggle to get socialism. They want the workers to leave everything to evolving capitalism and, then, they say, all will be well. Social-Democracy is one of the major pillars of the capitalist system, its basic prop in the ranks of the working class. To free themselves from this Social-Democratic deception is a most difficult ideological task confronting the workers of all capitalist countries.

Almost as soon as I had joined the Socialist Party in 1900 I became a member of its Left wing. Like other militant workers at the time, at many points in the practical work of the party I came into sharp conflict with the flock of opportunist, middle class elements and trade union bureaucrats, who were running the party. More and more, too, I took issue with these elements on theoretical grounds, with the general consequence that in 1909, as a result of a party split in the state of Washington, I found myself outside the Socialist Party. I never went back to it again. By then I had become thoroughly convinced that the Socialist Party would never bring about socialism, despite all its radical phrases. And the ensuing 40 years have borne out this conclusion. During these tempestuous years Social-Democracy has amply demonstrated itself to be a barrier against socialism. My break with the ideology of Social-Democracy was a big milestone in the general course of my political growth.

My eventual rejection of Social-Democracy, including the undeveloped variety represented by the conservative trade union leadership, also had a decisive effect upon my life activities. Otherwise it would have been an easy matter for me to find a soft berth in the labor bureaucracy, as so many others had done. Thus, during the years when I headed major organizing campaigns for the A. F. of L. in meat-packing and steel, 1917-20, Sam Gompers dangled before me a good-paying job as an A. F. of L. general organizer, and Martin Ryan, the president of my union, the Brotherhood of Railway Car Men of America, asked me to take over the editorship of the union's national journal. But my Left views made such jobs out of the question for me. I just couldn't see myself becoming a cog in the big bureaucratic machine dominating the trade union movement.

My next big ideological advance, after getting rid of my religious, capitalistic, and Social-Democratic illusions, was my gradual develop-

ment as a Communist. This was no simple matter and it took me about a dozen years more to accomplish. During most of this interim time I was a Syndicalist, believing that the unions alone could bring about socialism. I joined the Communist Party early in 1921, about 18 months after it was organized. The major factor that decided me to take this big step was the stupendous reality of the Russian Revolution, together with an intensive reading of the works of Lenin. Becoming a Communist meant for me to put the logical capstone upon my whole previous life experience. I had reached my political destination. Since joining the Communist Party it has been a never-ending effort on my part, with such diligence and self-criticism as I can command, to master the revolutionary principles of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, and to apply them effectively in the American class struggle.

This long ideological development of mine represents, in a general way at least, the broad course of intellectual growth taken by the masses in their march towards socialism. But mine is the story of the development of an individual, not of a class. The working class, with the support of its democratic allies, in their struggle against the intolerable abuses of capitalism, will have established socialism long before the bulk of the masses have grasped more than the most elementary principles of Marxism. There can be no revolutionary movement without revolutionary theory, correctly says Lenin. Here is where the party comes in. It is the bearer of Marxist-Leninist theory and the practical leader of the masses.

My life in the labor, Left-wing, and Communist movement has been a very happy one. It has given me the opportunity to do the thing closest to my heart and mind—to fight against reactionary capitalism and for progressive socialism. From my earliest youth I have always felt a great pride in being a worker, and it has ever been a matter of the deepest satisfaction to me to be able to identify myself so closely with the struggles of the working class. If I were starting out my life all over again, I would take the same course as I have done; but naturally I would try to bypass the many political mistakes that I have made. One thing I would surely do, despite the press of practical work, would be better to organize my time so as to enable me to indulge more than I have in the reading of the science and history that I love so much. This is one thing that the youth in the labor and Communist movement should most resolutely strive to accomplish—to combine the theoretical with the practical, to find time for lots of solid reading, notwithstanding the most urgent demands of the day-to-day struggle.

Building the Communist Party in the United States, the citadel of

world capitalism, is no easy job. Indeed, I think party building is probably more difficult here than in any other leading country. In many lands Communists have been subjected to various sorts of persecution and hardship and they have resolutely triumphed nevertheless. Our problem in this country, thus far at least, is not so much that of combating such terrorism—although we have had a taste of that, too—as it is of prevailing over the insidiously corrupting effects of lush American capitalism. It is especially hard in this land of comparatively high living standards to make the workers understand the flimsiness of American “prosperity,” the advantage of having Communist leadership in their daily struggles, and to convince them of the need for the eventual establishment of socialism. For American imperialism obviously still exerts a powerfully corrupting influence upon the minds of huge sections of the working class. Marx long ago pointed out the similar corrupting effects of British imperialism upon the skilled British workers. But we American Communists have never been dismayed by this insidious difficulty. We realize perfectly well that when capitalism in this country begins to feel basically the disintegrating forces which are now wrecking world capitalism, and it inevitably must feel them, then the American working class, faced with rapidly deteriorating working and living conditions, will swing swiftly and heavily to the Left. Our party works and builds within the framework of this sure perspective.

Despite all the insidious, corrupting influences of American capitalism, and notwithstanding our own many shortcomings as political fighters, we Communists have nevertheless succeeded in building the core of what will one day be a great mass Communist Party in the United States. In the process we have taught many thousands of the most advanced workers the elements of Marxism-Leninism. Our party has also had a vast experience on many fronts of the American class struggle. In innumerable big fights of trade unionists, of the Negro people, of the farmers, of the people generally, we have demonstrated to the masses the value of Communist leadership. Of course, we could and should have done much better under the circumstances. With more effective work we could have a party of double or triple its present size. Nevertheless, those things we have done constitute major achievements. They were the sowing of seed which will one day bring forth a rich harvest. The 70,000 members of the party may seem indeed a small force, and truly they are, to face up to the tremendous power of American capitalism. But numbers are not everything, important though they may be. Quality and program count even more in the long run.

Communist parties, when favorable situations arrive, have the power of swift and solid growth. The Russian Communist Party, a generation ago, gave a brilliant, classic, example of this. Under Mussolini, the Italian Communist Party, its militants persecuted, imprisoned, and butchered, had only about 15,000 members and it appeared to be but a weak group when confronted with the big armies and fascist bluster of Il Duce. But today that party has 2,300,000 members, Mussolini "lies mouldering in his grave," and the Communists are on their way to the leadership of Italy. Or take the even more striking case of the Chinese Communist Party. In 1930, under constant attack from the apparently overwhelmingly superior Chiang Kai-shek armies, this party had only 10,000 members, among a vast sea of 475,000,000 people. It faced a terrific struggle even to survive. But the party had sound principles, brilliant leadership, and a favorable situation for growth. So that today, the Chinese Communist Party has 3,000,000 members. As I write these words, it is rapidly winning its way to the leadership of the great Chinese people. So why should we be dismayed at the difficulties we encounter in building our Communist Party in this country?

The Communist Party of the United States, for all its present small size, has a decisive historical role to play. The United States, like every other capitalist economy, must, through the destructive effects of its inner contradictions and as a result of ever growing class struggle, eventually become a socialist country. The Communist Party will have to lead the people to the new socialist regime, for there is no other party that can possibly do this. But our party will not be alone in this, of course; it will be at the head of a great people's democratic coalition fighting against the evils of monopoly, imperialism, economic chaos, fascism, and war—against capitalism. Our party, when it arrives at this historic moment, will not fail. As so many other Communist parties have done, it will in the meantime have produced the necessary trained leadership and rallied around itself the resolute fighting masses needed to write the epitaph of American capitalism.

Capitalism in this country may possibly last until after the great issue of capitalism versus socialism has been definitely settled on a world scale in favor of socialism. But, in any event, our country must also go socialist and the Communist Party will surely be called upon to play a decisive leading role. Our party does not contemplate this future mechanically or fatalistically. It knows perfectly well that only if it puts forth the utmost efforts to build and develop will it be able to take its part in the ever-increasing daily struggle of the masses and also,

finally, to lead the workers politically on their march to socialism. Such leaders as Mao Tse-tung, Dimitrov, Togliatti, Pauker, Rakosi, and Thorez did not spring up overnight, nor do effective mass Communist parties such as theirs spontaneously appear on the scene. They, both leaders and parties, are the products of many years of hard struggle and ideological development. Our party is now passing through this long and difficult school of preparation.

The big American swing to the Left will come sooner than most people expect, and it will have surprising depth and sweep. The United States is now living upon the thin crust of a live volcano. A devastating cyclical economic crisis is developing. The United States cannot possibly secure markets under capitalist conditions for the huge mass of products of its war-swollen industries. Even before World War II this was impossible (result, the 1929 crash), and it is now more than ever impossible to find ample markets, what with American productive capacity doubled since the 'twenties and the impoverished peoples of the capitalist world still less able to buy. Danger signs for American capitalism are multiplying fast. The war-created shortages in this country are being rapidly overcome, the stockpiles are swiftly heaping up, the people's wartime accumulated backlog of purchasing power has become practically exhausted, the industries are beginning to reduce operations, and mass unemployment is again appearing. All this constitutes an economic crisis in the making. Nor can the government avert this crisis by its Keynesian policies, whether in their reactionary or liberal variants; that is, by squandering huge sums on armaments and by making piddling concessions to the workers in the shape of miserly increases in minimum wages, pinch-penny improvements in unemployment insurance, and niggardly health programs. Nor can President Truman's fantastic scheme for the capitalist development of backward areas solve the problem. American capitalism cannot set up a "managed economy," in which deflationary and inflationary factors are safely controlled. Truman's "managed economy," which is a shield for developing a war economy and for promoting state monopoly capitalism, can only sharpen the contradictions of capitalism instead of "regulating" and "controlling" them. The economic crisis of 1929-33, with all its tragic mass misery, caused the United States to go to the Left, and to adopt the many reforms of the Roosevelt New Deal. The coming economic cyclone will push it even further and more permanently to the Left. In the ensuing struggles the workers will then gradually transform the present small Communist Party into a big mass organization.

At the present time, as one of the major phases of the drive of

American imperialism towards fascism and war, the Communist Party is being kicked around and abused. Our members are denied the right to hold jobs in the government service and to serve as trade union officials. In many cases, they are also being blacklisted from industry. Our members and leaders, including 12 members of our National Committee, are arrested and put on trial. The whole party is being blasted by the most frantic campaign of Red-baiting in the nation's history. The general aim of all this persecution is to outlaw the party, to break it up if possible. This is fascist policy, and a key part of the war program. The reactionaries realize that if they can but outlaw the Communist Party then it will be much easier for them to attack the trade unions and all other democratic movements and popular rights. The Communist Party is the first line of defense of American democratic liberties. If our party can be stripped of its rights, no other democratic organization will be safe. The people responsible for this orgy of Red-baiting reaction are brazenly advertising themselves all over the world as the champions of democracy. This assault, of course, will not break up our party, but will have the reverse effect of steeling it and strengthening its fiber. After all the experience the world has given us in such matters, it is stupid to think that the Communist Party can be crushed by violence. In the face of this attack, we Communists are practical people. We have no yearning for the crown of martyrdom, but, if need be, our morale will prove strong enough to withstand whatever attacks the capitalists are able to mete out. Communists have demonstrated their courage and fighting capacity all over the world, time and again.

They are charging that we Communists propose to overthrow the United States government by force and violence. This is a brazen lie and they know it. It is stupid to call ours a program of force and violence. Any violence that may occur in the course of the people's democratic advance towards socialism inevitably stems from the capitalist reactionaries who, like all obsolete ruling classes, try to stop the advance of the new order of society by setting up fascist-like regimes and by using their armed force against the masses. That, in a nutshell, is the truth about the question of force and violence in the class struggle. Another truth, still more important, is the fact that the awakened peoples, in whatever country, will never allow their march toward socialism to be stopped by ruling class violence. They will fight if democratic procedures are denied them, as history amply proves. Hitler could tell us something about what aroused democratic nations will do. The right of revolution cannot be taken away from the people.

Reactionaries are charging, too, that Communists are "foreign

agents," who betray the interests of the American people. I, along with other Communists, challenge this lying charge. There is no other group as loyal to the interests of the workers and the people as the Communists. As I have pointed out earlier, the whole life of our party has been a ceaseless fight for the interests of the workers, the Negro people, the nation. In our demand for socialism for the United States, we are giving expression to the supreme interest of the overwhelming majority of the American people. It is precisely because the Communists are the very best defenders of the interests of the American people that eventually our party will be the leading party of the nation. I, as other Communists, love the American people and their glorious revolutionary democratic traditions, their splendid scientific and industrial achievements. And I love, too, our beautiful land, in every corner of which I have lived and worked. I want only the best of everything for our people and this country. I have only contempt, therefore, for the "foreign agent" charge, and doubly so because it comes from reactionaries who live by exploiting the American people and whose basic principle of operation is to peddle away the national welfare for the sake of their own narrow class interests.

We Communists revere our country. We are ardent patriots, but not nationalists. We defend the people's interests but we do not try to shove official American (capitalist) interests ahead at the expense of those of other peoples. For that is the road to war and general ruin. We are Marxian internationalists. We realize very well the common interests that the workers and the peoples of the whole world have together. The key to an intelligent internationalism in our day is friendly co-operation between the United States and the Soviet Union. This collaboration is indispensable if world peace is to prevail. On this basic issue we Communists stand four-square, come hell or high water! Our resolute position in this fundamental matter puts us into direct and irreconcilable collision with the imperialists. That's why they and their "gangsters of the pen" so loudly denounce us as "foreign agents." But their Red-baiting and persecution will be in vain so far as we are concerned. We can neither be coaxed, fooled, nor frightened away from our support of Soviet-American co-operation.

The United States, richly endowed with natural resources and highly developed industries, can perform a tremendously progressive role in this world full of poverty and mass suffering. But our country is being misled by Wall Street monopolists to use its vast resources in an attempt to subjugate the rest of the world for the profit of American imperialism. By following this fatal line our country, instead of being

a progressive force, has become the most sinister menace to the peace and prosperity of all humanity. In the present critical world situation, the United States can live up to its democratic traditions and be an influence for world peace and progress only if our people smash the power of the ruling capitalists, take control themselves, and enter into genuinely fraternal relations with other peoples, particularly the U.S.S.R. The American people, with the workers in the lead, we may be confident, will not fail in the end to cleanse our nation and the world of the Wall Street warmongers and atom bomb firebrands.

We are living in a great historical period, that of the replacement of capitalism by socialism. In the working out of this tremendous process, the present period is an era of vast mass struggles, of wars, and of revolutions. Very probably socialism has already become the most powerful of the two rival systems. This is a good time in which to live; it is one that should give supreme inspiration to our youth. In my time I have seen much of this great struggle developing, and I would want nothing better than to live long enough to see the big undertaking of licking capitalism well completed. This job will not take so much longer; it is not a task of the dim and distant future. Sooner than we realize, with events traveling at their present rapid pace, mankind will have smashed capitalism, which is the last of the long series of great systems of exploitation by which the peoples have been enslaved and robbed throughout the centuries. The advent of world socialism, now standing historically at our doors, in fact, already across the threshold, will liberate man from his ages-long slavery and open up before him a perspective of freedom, development, and happiness that he now hardly dares dream of. Before very long the capitalist system, with all its organized greed and violence, will only be a dark memory to man as he travels into a future that will realize the very best of which our species is capable.

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