

## IV

# The "Haves" and "Have-Nots"

RECENT events, since I accepted your kind invitation to address the Carolina Political Union, serve to sharpen considerably the issues involved in finding an effective peace policy for the United States. The aggressions of the bandit governments have engulfed Austria, in the heart of Europe, and proclaim quite openly that Czechoslovakia is next. To the north of us, the province of Quebec seems to have been rather firmly seized by admirers and imitators of Hitler and Mussolini. To the immediate south, in Mexico, only the firm actions of President Cárdenas have forestalled a fascist putsch, inspired and directed from Europe with the collaboration of American vested interests.

Within the United States itself, the incitations of big business fascism to the assassination of President Roosevelt have become common knowledge; and in the last days has been added the revelation of a German spy-ring actively operating on our soil to purchase military secrets, especially regarding the defenses of the Panama Canal. The events in China continue their inexorable course, more obviously than ever involving the future of America.

In facing the problem of finding an effective policy to maintain peace and democracy, in a world where winds of war and fascism blow ever more wildly, the people of the United States are involved in deep confusion of counsel. In a world setting quite new, the disillusionments of the last World War are gathered into a system of deep-seated prejudices and call for the isolation of the United States from the rest of the world, which is to be allowed to go to hell in its own way, while the

United States finds its own path for itself alone. Against this naïve and irrational dream, there arises more and more the understanding that peace (and consequently democracy also) can be preserved only by the co-operative and concerted action of all peace-loving peoples of every country, and the governments whose policies they can still determine.

The central issue is the choice between isolationism or international concerted action as the path to peace. The greatest debate of our day is on this issue, which is gradually involving the whole of the thinking population.

The position of my Party, the Communist Party, has from the beginning of this discussion been definitely against isolationism and in favor of the path of concerted action.

Last year, during the discussions around the falsely-named Neutrality Act, we formulated our views with much precision, advocating legislation which would sharply distinguish between those governments which upheld their treaty obligations with the United States, under the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the Nine-Power Pact, and those which violated these obligations. We advocated that those governments which upheld their treaty obligations should be guaranteed freedom of access to the American market, and if necessary be assisted by credits when victims of the treaty-breakers; while the bandit governments, which dishonor their obligations, should be barred from access to American markets or credits. We advocated consultation between the United States and the governments maintaining their treaty obligation, to obtain the maximum concerted action along these lines to restrain the bandit governments.

Our sharpest criticism of President Roosevelt and his administration has been, for a long time, against their failure to come forward with such a positive peace policy; their apparent willingness to compromise with or surrender to the crudest isolationism is exemplified in the infamous Neutrality Act and

its special application against loyalist Spain, while the bandit nations continue to draw war materials from American markets.

Therefore, when President Roosevelt made his peace speech in Chicago, on October 5, indicating a turn away from isolationism and toward concerted action, we of the Communist Party gave immediate and unstinted support to this declaration of policy, and called upon the people to demand its practical application. We recognize full well all the difficulties that beset the implementation of this policy, but we also recognize that the only alternative is the drift to certain disaster.

Such is the confusion in public debate in these days, that there are still people who reject President Roosevelt's Chicago speech, either wholly or entirely upon the grounds that the Communists support it, and therefore it must be wrong. What would such people, most of them good Christians no doubt, answer to a Communist declaration of support of the Ten Commandments? Let us hope that, in a day in which the Communists more and more find themselves in agreement on current issues with great sections of our population, and often even with a majority, to refute such argumentation will soon be unnecessary. At least I hope that with this audience I need not demonstrate that those who reject Communism as a program of social reorganization, need not necessarily take an opposite position to that of the Communists on every issue of the day, that our arguments should be dealt with on their merits on each question under discussion.

Another appeal to prejudice that is made by enemies of the policy of concerted action consists in charging that this is a special interest of the Soviet Union; since this policy is also supported by the Soviet Union, this is proof, they say, that the whole policy is a clever trap by Stalin to trick America into fighting his battles. Even David Stern, the supposed New Deal newspaper publisher, issued a hysterical outburst to this effect on the occasion of Stalin's recent letter in which he



pointed out that maintenance of peace is an international problem, can only be solved by the international action of those who want peace, primarily the workers, and concluded that it is necessary for the Soviet Union to pursue such a peace policy that will win the support of the workers of the capitalist lands so that they will help restrain the war-makers.

It is not necessary to be an enthusiastic supporter of the Soviet Union, and an admirer of Stalin, as I am, in order to see the falsity and downright dishonesty of such appeals to prejudice. First of all, the policy of concerted action for peace, or "collective security" as they say in Europe, was first enunciated by the French republic—before the People's Front came to power there. Then it was adopted by the League of Nations, with the withdrawal of the bandit governments from that body as a consequence. The Soviet Union came into the picture to support a peace policy already worked out by all the democracies of the world except the United States; and at the same time it greatly improved its relations with the United States.

Surely even the most rabid enemy of the social and economic system in the Soviet Union must, if he is really an advocate of international peace, welcome joyfully the accession of that great power to the peace alignment of the world. No one who is ready to base his opinions strictly on the record can deny that the Soviet Union has been the most consistent supporter, in word and deed, of world peace and disarmament as its needs have been formulated by the great body of democratic nations in the world. Stalin's letter was a further rallying of the one hundred and eighty million population of the Soviet Union in the cause of peace; instead of attacking him for it, it would be more to the point if his non-Communist or anti-Communist critics should demonstrate that they also, from their own point of view, can help arouse the masses of the United States for an equally energetic attempt to restrain the bandit governments from further engulfing the world in war.

But the viewpoint of isolationism leads its defenders into ever more irrational and reactionary positions. For the broad masses who are influenced by isolationist moods and sentiments, largely as a disillusionment with the hypocrisies of the imperialist World War, isolationism is in reality a peace sentiment unilluminated by any consistent political thinking through of the problem. But for the political leaders and ideologists of isolationism, who must face and answer all questions, and who must draw the logical consequences of their position or abandon it, isolationism very rapidly is becoming a deliberate abandonment of the ideal of peace, of all struggle to maintain peace.

The greatest danger in our public life today is this, that under cover of isolationism, to which great masses adhere as a peace sentiment, there is being broadcast a spirit of cynicism toward peace as a goal to be striven for, and as a consequence also toward the very idea of democracy.

We Communists are often attacked as enemies of democracy in general and of American democracy in particular. That was never true, for we have always been adherents of democracy; that is less true than ever today, for since democracy is being actively threatened by the rise of fascism, we Communists have come forward as its most consistent and self-sacrificing defenders.

We are, of course, keenly aware of the limitations of democracy under the modern capitalist system. This democracy based upon private property in the means of production has even lost much of the strength of its early period, because it has largely lost its economic foundation. Where one hundred and fifty years ago widespread distribution of private property, based upon individual production, was itself something of a guarantee, while it lasted, of the democratic rights and powers of the mass of the people, such private property today has largely disappeared, and has been replaced by giant cor-

porations which occupy all the commanding heights of the national economy. This corporate economy is the antithesis of democracy; its control is the acme of self-perpetuating oligarchy, with the oligarchs constantly diminishing in number, a small fraction of one per cent of the population exercising decisive power over the whole economy upon which the livelihood of all depends.

So long as the democratic forms of government follow the leadership of the oligarchs of industry, the economic royalists, these forms are tolerated and even defended by them. When, however, as today has clearly shown, there is a conscious split between the mass of the democratic electorate, and the economic rulers, then as President Roosevelt pointed out in his Constitution Day speech last year, the economic royalists begin to question why they should continue to support a democracy which threatens to curtail their special privileges, and they begin to turn toward fascism. This is the danger of fascism from within our country, that rises simultaneously with the fascist aggression from abroad and develops in conscious collaboration with the foreign fascist powers.

That is why it is impossible effectively to fight against reaction and the war-mongers at home, without at the same time fighting the same forces internationally, and vice versa. It is the height of futility, and that means, in the last analysis, of stupidity, to try to follow a domestic policy of a progressive, democratic and peaceful character, and at the same time in foreign affairs to be "neutral" as between fascist and democratic, between war-making and peace-seeking governments, to retreat before and surrender to the bandit governments.

Precisely to that futility does isolationism lead some of our best intentioned and energetic progressives. For example, no one can question the honest progressivism and good intentions of Congressman Maury Maverick. And yet his isolationist prejudices caused him to draw back, to withhold his name,

from one of the most historic demonstrations of American democracy's solidarity with world democracy. I refer to that splendid greeting by sixty-six Senators and Representatives of the United States Congress sent to the meeting of the Cortes, parliament of the Spanish republic, when it met on February 2 in the midst of a life-and-death struggle with the international bandits. No, Maury Maverick had been so poisoned by isolationism that he considered it dangerous to American peace even to express congratulations to the Spanish parliament because it was still alive, meeting and fighting the fascist invasion to the death. Even to express good will to the Spanish republic, he fears, may bring the wrath of the bandit governments down upon our American heads.

What Maverick forgets, with those who think along the same lines, is this: If Hitler and Mussolini can already, from so far away, dictate so thoroughly what the Mavericks may do and say in America, then indeed American democracy has already gone a long way along the road of surrender, and it is not much farther to the establishment of a fascist dictatorship upon our own soil.

So, also, it is the pacifist funk of isolationism which leads our Mavericks into such childish blind-alleys as the belief that with such paper weapons as the Ludlow amendment, or the kind of fight they are making against the Naval Appropriation Bill, they are really fighting for peace. Nothing could be more dangerous to peace than precisely the Ludlow proposal; in a period when the chief characteristic of wars is that they are *not declared*, it turns its whole attention to the problem of the technique of declaring war. At a moment when all energies should be turned to preparing the conditions for peace, it turns all attention away to the problem of making war difficult to declare on the side of one of the chief peaceful powers. And in fighting the huge naval appropriations, this is done by emphasizing a hundredfold precisely that condition which



furnishes the chief influence behind these huge expenditures, namely, the conviction that in a hostile and war-mad world the United States can co-operate with and trust no other nation, people or group, nor even trust its own President to follow a real peace policy. These are the logical fruits of isolationism, which cultivates national exclusiveness, chauvinism, division from other peace-loving peoples, suspicion and distrust, and finally cynicism even toward the very ideas of peace and democracy.

As a matter of fact, capable of verification, it is exactly this fear of and retreat before fascist aggression that itself creates the danger of further fascist attack. Every concession to fascism has led to new aggressions; but in those few instances when the democratic powers sharply challenged the bandits, precisely those were the few times when the bandits drew back and showed some respect, however brief, for something besides their own mad appetites. All the hypocrisies of the Non-Intervention Committee only encouraged Mussolini and Hitler to spit in their faces and redouble their intervention in Spain; but the Nyon Conference, in a few hours culminating in sharp decisions, brought the submarine piracy to at least a temporary halt—and decreased the immediacy of general war. France was placed in mortal danger, not by coming to the help of the Spanish republic, but precisely by refusing to do so, a danger that was partially overcome, not increased, when France finally began in a small way to counter big-scale fascist intervention for Franco by some small favors to the republic. The Soviet Union strengthened itself against fascist aggression, and did not further endanger itself, when it generously provided the Spanish republic with the needed supplies when all others had run away in fright before the fascist threats. Concessions to fascism, fear of fascism, retreat before fascism, these are not ways to peace; on the contrary, they are

the infallible way to a general world war that will involve also the United States.

Examine how the isolationist newspapers have treated the recent developments in Great Britain, and you will find dramatic exposure of the fundamental unsoundness of their position. Almost universally these newspapers expressed two thoughts: first, that Chamberlain had betrayed democracy and world peace, specifically that "he had let us down," when he threw Eden into the discard, and openly went toward capitulation to fascism; second, that this proves that the policy of the United States should be modeled along Chamberlain's lines, that is, go it alone, make the best possible bargains for ourselves, and to hell with the rest of the world. Truly, a marvelous logic, which brands Chamberlain's crime only to urge the same course upon Washington. It is the logic of such cynicism that can result only in open acceptance of fascism in full, if followed to its conclusion.

But there were two sides to the British events, while our isolationists see but one. The other side is this: that Eden's open challenge and resignation, followed by the Labor Party's going over to active opposition and appealing to the country, and a split within British imperialism itself shown in the opposition of Winston Churchill and Lloyd George, two old war-horses of British imperialism, all go to demonstrate how near to complete collapse is the Chamberlain policy of surrender to the bandits. The greatest threat against a general united front of the democratic nations to halt fascism was always the almost solid front gathered around the Baldwin-Chamberlain line of equivocation and compromise, a united front that included even the Labor Party. That is now smashed to bits, and the broad democratic forces in Britain, first of all the labor movement, are now released to fight for their own natural line of resistance to fascism, a line which can be enormously strengthened and brought closer to victory by demonstrating

that in the United States it finds sympathetic understanding and the possibility of future co-operation.

The isolationists make the assumption that a policy of concerted action to halt fascism would be immensely expensive for the United States, whereas, they argue, isolation would be very economical. Nothing could be further from the truth. To halt fascism now will entail a minimum of economic cost for the United States. The main burden of the job is already undertaken by the immediate victims of fascist aggression, and with a little help, enough to bring them the victory they are promising to win even alone, they will save us from the gigantic bill of having to do the job alone later on. But a consistent policy of isolation will quickly become, directly and indirectly, an enormous economic expense. Indirectly it will saddle us with the future costs of dealing single-handed with the bandit powers. Already it is responsible for the enormous military burdens that are being laid upon the country, upon the theory that we must go it alone. Directly, with the spread of war, isolation will result in such far-reaching economic dislocations as to make the losses of the 1929-33 crisis look small in comparison.

Some of the isolationist propagandists are already playing with the idea that, if the Soviet Union can develop its own self-contained economy which, even while doing business with the rest of the world as far as possible, is quite independent of the course of world capitalist economy, then the United States also, with its much higher development of productive powers, can shut itself off from the rest of the world and make economic advances equal or comparable to those of the Soviet Union.

There is only one little thing wrong with this calculation. It forgets that the Soviet Union could make its tremendous economic advances, in the face of a world of crisis and economic retrogression outside its borders, only by virtue of its

unique social and economic organization, in which private capitalists and profits are entirely eliminated, and in which the entire economy can be directed to the single end of raising the general living standards of the population, an aim limited by but one factor—the needs of defense from outside aggression. We have nothing of the kind in the United States, and our isolationists do not propose to give us anything of the kind. We have capitalism in our country, with the economy directed by the single aim of making profits for the benefit, primarily, of the "sixty families," our economic royalists. Leaving aside all arguments of whether this is good or bad, advisable or inadvisable, necessary or unnecessary, one central fact is clearly demonstrable—that given this capitalist system, the sudden cutting off of the United States from the world market or any considerable portion of it would precipitate an economic crisis that would inevitably result in upheaval, and some kind of sudden and drastic change in our system of government and the direction of our policies. Capitalism, in its modern stage presented in the United States today, cannot be cut off from its world connections without undergoing profound convulsions and deepgoing modifications. Application in practice of the policy of isolation, carried to its logical conclusions, would quickly defeat itself.

Propagandists for isolationism, seeking to discredit the policy of concerted action for peace by identifying it with unpopular symbols, go hunting with a double-barreled shotgun. One barrel contains the charge that collective security is a Communist conspiracy, or "orders from Moscow." With this I have already dealt. But the other barrel contains the much more deadly charge, that collective security is a Wall Street conspiracy, that it proposes to make war for American imperialist interests. Although these mutually contradictory charges are fired from the same gun, by the same marksmen, and should logically cancel one another, I often find it is not safe to depend upon



logic alone, but that it is necessary to give concrete answers to all, even the most contradictory charges.

One of the most interesting examples I have seen of this was contained in an "open letter," signed by forty-five isolationists who consider themselves of the "Left wing," published in the *Nation* of January 22. Rebuking the *Nation* for its support of President Roosevelt's quarantine proposals, these pacifist-isolationists fire point-blank with the second barrel of the shotgun. They say:

The *Nation* seems to have ignored the embarrassing fact that at the time of the attack the *Panay* was convoying three Standard Oil tankers. Indeed, in its editorial of December 18 these tankers were actually described as "three American ships containing American refugees." Is this liberalism?

There we have the full argument, in all its glory. Since American ships, outside of naval units, are necessarily private capitalist ships, even "imperialist" ships, and perhaps even Standard Oil tankers, therefore "liberalism" demands that if they are in Chinese waters and the Japanese army and navy order them out, and proceed to bomb them out of existence, they shall obey the Japanese orders or take the consequences without any protest from American liberalism. Against Standard Oil tankers, this "liberalism" demands for the Japanese bandits a free hand. And if the *Nation*, a liberal magazine, joins the world-wide protest against the Japanese bandits, this "liberalism" of the "Left-wing" isolationists hastens to the help of the Japanese with the "embarrassing fact" that the *Nation* is really defending the profits of Standard Oil.

The *Nation's* crime, in their eyes, is all the worse, because it described these tankers as "three American ships containing American refugees." That the ships actually did contain American refugees is only another of those devilishly clever tricks for which Standard Oil is famous. But Norman Thomas

and his friends will expose this trick, and with "true liberalism" will hand over to Japan the liberal privileges of doing what it wishes not only with the Chinese people but also with any Americans who fail to obey their orders and get out of China and stay out—especially if they are fleeing on Standard Oil tankers.

Thus does isolationism come to the service of the Japanese bandits, betray the Chinese people and surrender American rights—all in the name of fighting against Standard Oil and American imperialism! Truly, it is a wonderful "Left wing" that lines up with William Randolph Hearst, Hamilton Fish, Father Coughlin and Norman Thomas, with the common demand that we get out of China precisely when the Chinese want us to stay and the Japanese army and navy has ordered us out. You will excuse us Communists if we say that this kind of "Left wing" smells awfully bad to us, and we have nothing in common with it.

The isolationists are determined that nothing shall be allowed to disturb the serenity of their "neutrality." Therefore their main interest in life is to prove that all foreign governments are equally bad, the fascist bandits no worse than those of the democratic countries, and perhaps even a little better since they have the virtue of frankness. And, above all, they would engage our sympathies on the side of the bandit powers and against the democracies by describing the bandits as the "have not," the "proletarians among the nations," and the democracies as the "haves," whose wealth is to blame for the aggression of the bandits.

How false and misleading is this facile classification of "haves" and "have nots," instead of the correct one of "peaceful" and "war-making" governments, is clear from the most cursory examination of events leading up to today's world crisis. Was Manchuria one of the "haves" in 1931, when Japan grabbed it by force? Was Ethiopia one of the "haves," even

as compared with poverty-stricken Italy, when Mussolini raped this backward but peaceful nation? Is Spain one of the "haves" to incite Mussolini and Hitler to their invasion? Is Austria one of the "haves" as compared with Germany, to excuse Hitler's latest aggression? Is Czechoslovakia, next on Hitler's list, one of the "haves"? Is China, bleeding from the ferocious Japanese assault, paying for the sin of being more wealthy than Japan? And if the "have" and "have not" classification used to drum up sympathy for the bandit nations by our isolationists, really means that they propose to divide up the wealth of the world in favor of the bandits to buy them off, do our isolationists propose that the United States, with almost half the wealth of the world, is to present the bandits with its proportionate share of the bribe? Merely to ask these questions is to expose the hypocritical dishonesty of the "have" and "have not" classification as nothing but an empty apology for the war-makers, to excuse and condone their violent seizure of the weakest and most "have not" countries.

That does not, of course, mean that the greatest and richest democracies are not in danger. England, France and the United States are certainly in deadly danger. England is in danger, before all, because she is ruled by a group which is more and more tending to enter into partnership with fascism. France is in danger, before all, because her "two hundred families" and their agents are in league with Hitler and Mussolini, and conspire a fascist *coup d'état* with their help. The United States is in danger because our "economic royalists," holding economic power unparalleled in history, are moving toward fascism. All the democracies are in danger, because of the confusion of their counsels, and their inability hitherto to find a common path to ensure peace. It is these dangers from within the democracies that give menacing power to the drive toward world conquest by the bandit dictators.

The fight to maintain peace and democracy, to halt the

march of the war-makers and fascists, is the precondition for all hopes of human progress today. This task must unite all the forces of progress among the people, regardless of our differences on other questions, all progressive Democrats and Republicans, Socialists and Communists, and especially the great mass of working people and farmers.

We of the Communist Party have our own particular views about the necessities of future progress of the United States and of the world. We believe that the final solution of all our problems will require the transfer of our national economy from private ownership to social ownership and operation for the common benefit of all. We will continue to do our utmost to convince the majority of the American people to that program. But we are keenly aware that a relatively small minority of the population as yet share our views on this fundamental reorganization. We have a long and arduous task of education ahead of us, before we can lead a majority of the American people to the establishment of socialism. And in the meantime we want to do everything in our power to prevent the victory of fascism, and the consequent world disaster of war, which would throw back the prospects of socialism together with all progress into the mire of universal catastrophe. This view we share with the majority of the people. We want to help organize that majority to secure guarantees against fascism and war.

On the basis of these views, the Communist Party offers its co-operation to all honest democrats, progressives and lovers of peace. We have given the utmost guarantees of the solidity and permanence of our policy, in the self-sacrificing performance of our tasks in building the democratic front. We have earned our place as recognized participants in this democratic front. No one can deny us this place, except by adopting the Hitlerian formula of the "anti-Communist" alliance of the bandit powers, by capitulation to the enemy before the fight is well under way.

But America will certainly reject the Hitler slogans. America



will resume her old proud place in the vanguard of world progress. America will not turn aside toward a vain and false isolation. America will take a leading part in preserving the world, and thereby herself, from the disasters of fascism and war. America will take the path toward concerted action of all the peaceful and democratic forces of the world. Our present capacities and our past history join in giving us this assurance. We of the Communist movement will do our best to help realize this promise.

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