

# Who Is Coughlin, What Is His Program, How Did He Rise?

**Aided by Big Business, America's  
Number One Fascist Rose from  
Obscurity to Lead a Movement**

By JOSEPH HANSEN

**Father Coughlin: Fascist Demagogue**  
INSTALLMENT II

## Capitalism is Bankrupt

One of the surest signs that a social system is mortally sick is the existence of a large body of permanently unemployed workers. Greek civilization toppled amidst the frenzied despair of her unemployed. The broken pillars of the Coliseum in Rome still stand as a monument to the tyrants of the mighty Roman Empire who vainly attempted to trick the hordes of unemployed out of their hunger. During the death agony of feudalism, all Europe was wracked by wandering bands of desperate and starving unemployed. American capitalism is mortally sick.

For ten years, since 1929, capitalism has cast off an increasing number of people whom it can never employ, whom it cannot even feed—despite the fact that the land is bursting with food and crops are rotting on the ground.

Each year an estimated 500,000 youth reach employable age and are thrown into the ever-swelling ranks of the unemployed. These hungry, ill-clothed Americans number now almost 17,000,000—a colossal figure!

At first they listened to the promises of Roosevelt's New Deal and these promises sounded good. He was going to feed them, clothe them, give them jobs and security.

Now they know that he lied. Now they know that he cheated them, that he had nothing to give them but increased misery.

The unemployed stand for the moment, uncertain what road to take next. They are starving in the richest country in the world. Warehouses are crammed to the roof with goods. Billions in gold lie idle in the banks. Factory gates are shut. Machines are silent. Crops are plowed under.

Using the LIE that private industry will provide jobs, Roosevelt's slash relief program hurls fresh million after million of Americans into the streets. There they may eat garbage—if they can find any left in the garbage pails—while they hunt for a job in private industry.

All about them they see incalculable wealth monopolized and enjoyed by a miserable handful of parasitic stockholders.

The unemployed go hungry.

They are bewildered, but one basic truth they do understand: *This situation is intolerable.*

They are ready for action. No more postcards to Congress! Already they feel in their minds the thing that is coming . . . *revolution . . . three square meals a day . . . clothing . . . a decent home . . . plenty for all . . .*

Democratic capitalism is doomed. Coughlin knows it. Big Business knows it. Roosevelt knows it.

Everybody knows it but that wooden skull minority composed of John L. Lewis, William Green, Earl Browder, an idiot or two, and a handful of old maids of both sexes who were left over from the last century. This minority still believes that democratic capitalism will continue indefinitely to punch its meal ticket!

In America apt students have watched the rise to power of Mussolini and Hitler. They understand that only one road is left open to capitalism that has become sour and rotten with old age. In Italy Mussolini called it fascism. In Germany Hitler called it Nazism. We do not yet know what name a similar movement in America might bear. Perhaps in America it will be called—*Social Justice.*

## What Is Fascism?

Fascism is a combination of two things.

First, it is a wide mass movement of farmers and small business men who face bankruptcy, of youth denied a future under capitalism, of sections of the unemployed. All these layers of the oppressed who are seeking desperately to put their hands on the surrounding plenty become hypnotized by the silver-plated promises of a demagogue who regiments them into blindly obedient shock troops.

Secondly, it is financed and controlled by the very capitalists who above all are anxious to keep the revolutionary violence of the masses from turning against them. In America—the DuPonts, the Morgans, the Rockefeller—the Sixty Families.

To the rank and file followers of fascism, at first it seems a genuine revolutionary way out of their misery. They discover the truth *too late.*

The capitalists provide the money. The dictator provides the powerful slogans, the stirring names, the demagogic program, the organization, the lieutenants, and the oratory.

## Father Coughlin's Real Program

A few years ago it was very difficult to prove that Father Coughlin was *consciously* plotting to build a fascist movement in the United States. But now he has come out more in the open. He has had time to make slips in his public and private utterances. It is only necessary to read his speeches and his magazine *Social Justice* with a little care to discover Father Coughlin's REAL program.

Only one month before he launched the National Union for Social Justice he said to Paul Weber of Hearst's International News Service (*Detroit Times*, October 10, 1934): *"I am devoted to capitalism."*

Among his sixteen points for Social Justice he calls for the *preservation of private property.*

Devotion to capitalism and preservation of private property—this is the holy Bible of fascism.

On March 13, 1938, in a broadcast over his network, Coughlin urged the establishment in the United States of a *"corporate state,"* which is the gilded way of describing

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# Fascists Wreck N.Y. Labor Hall

## Breaking Through



## W.A.A. ENDS BUSY WEEK OF LOBBYING

Set Record for Visiting Congressmen—and Inaction

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

WASHINGTON.—Sponsored by the Stalinist-controlled Workers Alliance, the "Right To Work Congress" ended its sessions here June 10, after one week with the feeling, as expressed in the Daily Worker of Sunday June 11 by George Morris, that "The Job Congress is the greatest mass lobbying action that has ever been carried through."

That the Workers Alliance met in Washington not to fashion a fighting program to meet the needs of the unemployed but to curry favor from the New Deal is best expressed by Herbert Benjamin, secretary-treasurer of the W.A.A., who stated that "Few actions of the unemployed have been so fruitful as this Congress. I think that at no time have so many Congressmen been visited."

Far from preparing the nation's unemployed and relief workers for militant struggle in their own behalf, the Workers Alliance Washington convocation disgraced itself by granting Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt an honorary membership after she had stated to the press that

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## Twin City Workers Showed the Way to Fight W. P. A. Cuts

AN EDITORIAL

Seven months ago, in November, 3,350,000 men and women were employed on the W.P.A. rolls.

At that time the New York Times' authoritative business activity index stood at 94. Today that index stands at 86.

And today the Roosevelt Administration has cut down the W.P.A. rolls to 2,500,000.

While business activity—and jobs—fell by nearly one-tenth, Roosevelt was firing 850,000 W.P.A. workers on the pretext that there would be jobs waiting for them in private industry.

He lied. Those workers, fired from W.P.A., are roaming the streets looking for non-existent jobs, eating if at all on the miserable hand-outs of local home relief.

But that isn't the worst of it. On April 27 Roosevelt sent a message on relief to Congress, recommending an average of 2,000,000 on W.P.A. rolls during the fiscal year which begins July 1. That means another 500,000 are to be thrown off the W.P.A. if Roosevelt has his way.

What are you unemployed and W.P.A. workers going to do about it?

Last week the workers of Minneapolis and St. Paul showed the way. Five thousand of them closed up W.P.A. projects in a one-day demonstration and, in trucks provided by General Drivers Local 544's independent truck owners' section, they descended upon the various relief authorities and presented their militant demands. In a word, they demanded a job and a decent living for every worker.

If the stirring demonstration in the Twin Cities were repeated in only twenty other cities, ears now deaf in Washington would be impelled to hear. Fighting demonstrations in the streets are the only road to W.P.A. jobs, the only language that the Roosevelt War Deal can be made to understand.

That is the concrete task now facing the progressives in the unemployed and trade union movement everywhere: to organize demonstrations against the W.P.A. and relief cuts. On however modest a scale, demonstrations should be organized wherever they are at all possible. Millions of workers are waiting for a lead; the progressives have only to prove by action that they are ready to lead these workers in the fight against starvation.

## "Freeing" of Mrs. Rubens Opens New Chapter in Case

Reporters, American Embassy Officials Unable to Find Any Trace of Her

By NAT LEVINE

The latest chapter in the G. P.U.-staged drama of the Robinson-Rubens case unfolded in a Moscow court last week when Mrs. Ruth Marie Rubens, wife of the missing Russian secret agent, A. A. Rubens, pleaded guilty to a charge of having illegally entered the Soviet Union on a false American passport.

The charge was an afterthought, merely following the already-established fact, for which three American Stalinists were recently convicted in Federal Court in New York, that Rubens supervised a passport forging ring. Rubens was recently identified by Walter Krivitsky, former head of the Soviet Intelligence service in

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## A Tribute From An Enemy

"The only sections of the Left who can consistently oppose the Government's plan (for conscription) are the Trotskyists, who regard all wars as capitalist plots, and the Lansburyites, who would not fight on any provocation."

(From the "Evening Standard", Lord Beaverbrook's paper, April 27, 1939).

Join the Socialist Workers Party

## WRECKING GANG SMASHES DEBS SCHOOL OFFICE

Raid Marks Stage in Rise of Fascist Movement in U. S. A.

Fascist hoodlums broke into the Debs Labor School, 114 West 14 Street, New York City, and wrecked the entire office, sometime after midnight Saturday.

It was the first recorded instance of fascist gangsters breaking into and destroying a working class headquarters in the United States, and marks a stage in the speedy rise of the fascist movement.

As they entered the building, the fascists ripped down the labor school's sign in front of the door, cracked open the lock on the school door, and proceeded to destroy everything in sight.

Typewriters were broken apart, their parts strewn about the room. Plush chairs were slashed to bits while the rest of the furniture was broken beyond repair. The posters decorating the walls were torn down. All the files and records that were kept in the office were ripped up and destroyed. It is believed that some of the more valuable records are still in the hands of the fascists.

The wrecking gang, it is believed, belonged to the Coughlin organization which earlier the same day for the first time invaded the Union Square section and stabbed a Jewish school teacher.

Compelled to leave the neighborhood by the hundreds of anti-fascists who confronted them, the fascists returned, at night, it is believed, to wreak their vengeance on the first labor headquarters they found.

The Debs Labor School is operated by the Socialist Party.

Before they left, the fascists turned on the water faucets and the entire floor was flooded. Firemen discovered the wreckage after an alarm had been turned in by an unidentified person.

The second of James P. Cannon's discussion articles on problems confronting the coming party convention appears on page 3 of this issue.

## Irish Revolutionaries Break With Stalinism, Form Club

Call for Organization of Revolutionary Socialist Party in Ireland at Demonstration

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

LONDON.—Thoroughly disgusted with the Popular Frontism and bureaucracy of the Connolly Club, a Stalinist stooge outfit composed mainly of Irishmen living in England, a group of members have split away and founded The Friends of the Irish Republic. Especially infuriated with the call of the Connolly Club for unity with De Valera, the members of The Friends of the Irish Republic have organized on a program clearly against British imperialism and Stalinism.

Though the program of the organization, which is now three months old, indicates considerable unclarity on some points, it appears to be turning towards a consistently revolutionary position under the leadership of chairman Murphy and secretary McDermott.

Commemorate Martyrs On May 14, the Friends held a parade from Hammersmith Bridge to Hyde Park in commemoration of the execution of James Connolly by the British imperialists. Though the Connolly Club had turned down a

## Thugs Stab Worker; SWP Branches Hold Anti-Coughlin Rallies

Knife Teacher Who Speaks Up against Anti-Semitic Filth

Huge Meeting Protected by Anti-Fascist Labor Guard

The urgent necessity of mobilizing the labor movement against the Coughlin Fascists was brought home to New York's workers on Saturday when the Coughlinites invaded the Union Square area, traditional labor and Jewish neighborhood, shouted their anti-Semitic slogans and stabbed a protesting school teacher.

Samuel Applebaum, a French teacher at New Utrecht High School, was stabbed, necessitating seven stitches to close the wound, when he spoke up against insults levelled at Jews by Coughlinites selling "Social Justice" on Fourteenth Street.

Party Answers Fascists

As soon as the news was brought to the nearby Socialist Workers Party headquarters at 116 University Place, party and youth members speedily mobilized in a counter-demonstration against the Coughlinites. They were joined by hundreds of workers on Fourteenth Street. The Coughlinites quickly left the neighborhood, while S.W.P. spokesmen set up a platform and addressed the workers on the necessity of uniting to build Workers' Defense Guards against the fascist menace.

Several persons who had joined in the anti-Coughlin demonstration were so appreciative of the action of the Socialist Workers Party that they donated money so that Socialist Appeals could be distributed free to interested workers. Over 100 Appeals were sold here.

Meanwhile two mobilizations of S.W.P. forces were successfully challenging Coughlinite domination of Times Square and 34th St. corner of Macy's Department Store. Over 100 copies of the Socialist Appeal were sold at Macy's and another sixty at Times Square in short order. The Socialist Appeal salesmen, shouting anti-fascist slogans, were set upon several times at 34th Street by Coughlin thugs, but the sympathetic crowds rushed to the defense of the anti-fascists each time.

Augmented by a detachment of the Anti-Fascist Labor Defense Guard and actively assisted by numerous workers anxious to fight against the fascist gangs of New York, the Bronx Branch of the Socialist Workers Party successfully demonstrated in the Fordham Road District of the Bronx, a major stronghold of the Coughlin Fascist gangs.

Despite police interference and organized heckling from a large contingent of Coughlin Fascists, led in their disruption by students from nearby Fordham University, and by a frocked Catholic priest who sat directing them from a parked car, the anti-fascists were able to stage a huge outdoor mass meeting on the corner of Valentine Avenue and Fordham Road. At least 1,000 were in the meeting.

Standing only a few paces apart from Coughlin's "Social Justice" hawkers, squads of Socialist Appeal salesmen sold more than a hundred copies of the anti-fascist paper in less than an hour and a half.

Coughlinites at Bay

Although the organized heckling of the Coughlinites drowned out several speakers, the mass meeting continued for well over an hour in defiance of the fascist provocations. Hundreds of workers saw for the first time the fearless opposition of the Socialist Workers Party to the fascist gangs. The Coughlinite hooligans were held at bay by the Labor Defense Guard while speaker after speaker shot stern bars at the fascists. The effective protective ring about the platform stopped the Coughlinites from rushing the speakers, although they clearly outnumbered the organized anti-fascists.

It was learned from workers stationed among the Coughlinite hecklers that the fascists attempted at various times throughout the meeting to organize a rush to the speaker's stand. That they were frustrated speaks well for the adequate protection afforded the meeting by the Labor Guard.

Parade Follows Meeting

After the meeting disbanded, the anti-fascist workers staged a parade along Fordham Road, then went to the Bronx headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party. Thousands of workers along the route of march heard the band of over a hundred workers shout, "Down with Anti-Semitism," "Build the Labor Defense Guards," etc.

At the headquarters of the S.W.P., two militant Italian workers joined the party.

Max Mont, organizer of the Bronx branch, announced that the successful demonstration attests to the future successes of the workers against the fascists. Another workers' action in the Fordham Road district is planned for the immediate future.

## Brooklyn Businessman Gives S.W.P. Lesson In "Americanism"

The workers of Boro Park had an excellent example of "Americanism" at work last Friday night when the Socialist Workers Party and the Y.P.S.L. were holding their customary open air meeting at 46th St. and 13th Avenue in Brooklyn.

The meeting was repeatedly interrupted and heckled by Raphael Raymond, executive secretary of the Boro Park Chamber of Commerce and editor of the Boro Park Herald. This patriot demanded that the

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