

Stop Fascism In America!

Will Father Coughlin Become Dictator of the United States?

By JOSEPH HANSEN
(NINTH INSTALLMENT)

Who Is This Father Coughlin?

There are hundreds of organizations in the United States which have studied the rise of Fascism and Nazism with the greatest admiration.

So far as is known Big Business has not seen fit to call any of them into active struggle against the labor movement. Big Business still depends on its labor spies, its strikebreakers, its professional thugs who combine with the police in shooting down workers.

Yet there are significant indications that these organizations, students at the feet of Hitler and Mussolini, are receiving funds vastly out of proportion to the size of their membership.

Largest of these movements is that led by Father Charles E. Coughlin, who calls himself the *Radio Priest*.

In line with the tree-stump American political tradition, the *Radio Priest* comes to the worker and the small merchant and farmer, not seeking office or pelf, god forbid! But only to give free fatherly advice as a sincere exponent of the political and economic doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.

He thinks the real cause of the ills afflicting America is—Big Business? Hardly. Father Coughlin has pondered long and deeply about certain experiences in Europe, and he has at last arrived at the real cause. . . Nothing less than the "non-religious Jews," who won't join him in denouncing "Bolshevik" leaders in such trade unions as the C.I.O. and the A.F.L.

No one in the country—except perhaps Roosevelt whom he helped place in office—sympathizes with the poor, the oppressed, the unemployed, the young people out of school, the farmers, those facing bankruptcy, those who are hungry, with more eloquent, beautiful, poetic, and moving language than the *Radio Priest*.

In his fatherly interest in the trade unions, the *Radio Priest* asks the membership to throw out their "Bolshevik" leaders who "Make Troops Necessary" by striking, and who are "milking" the union members of their dues in cahoots with none other than the "international bankers," and "loan capital," which boils down to—the "non-religious Jews."

Father Coughlin, the *Radio Priest*, began originally as an obscure Roman Catholic priest from Canada speaking over one radio station in Detroit. When the depression hit America he blasted rights and lefts into a shadowy bogeyman he called the "reds." Overnight he boomed into national prominence via the reactionary capitalist press.

In the few short years since then he has tried his hand at stock speculation, organization of company unions, stump speaking for Franklin Delano Roosevelt and especially the New Deal in silver in which he made a tidy little fortune speculating on silver futures. He built himself a million dollar Shrine of the Little Flower at Royal Oak, Mich., during the worst part of the depression (using scab labor for which he was denounced at the 1934 convention of the American Federation of Labor), began publishing a sleek magazine which is filled with expensive photographs but not a line of advertising except a few announcements of Catholic Church expeditions to his Shrine. He broadcasts over more than 48 radio stations, and pays, he claims, the regular commercial rates, which makes each broadcast costly enough to set up any one of his listeners in comfort for the rest of his life.

During the last six months his organization has spread the streets with literature on a scale so wide, sudden, and prosperous that it must have received a series of high-powered financial shots in the arm from some mysterious source, most probably certain Big Business men and Bankers whom Coughlin has lauded at times in a discreet way.

Followers of the *Radio Priest* have spread his magazine far and wide. Lately they have begun a series of small actions, beating up a worker when they catch him alone, stabbing a school teacher, attempting to break up an American Labor Party meeting, raiding a workers' school, stabbing a guard at a labor headquarters which they attempted to crash. And even a larger action—an attempt to break up a meeting of 18,000 people at Madison Square Garden in New York.

If the *Radio Priest* is following the principles laid down by *Il Duce* and *Der Fuehrer*, his movement is not yet large enough to blossom in colored shirts or arm bands; nevertheless, a movement as serious as this deserves to be studied more closely.*

Coughlin's Program

The *Radio Priest* is not an agent of either Hitler or Mussolini, despite the fact that he speaks well of them, especially Mussolini.

He does no more than admire their strategy, their propaganda, and their success.

The *Radio Priest* in fact says right out in public that he opposes both Fascism and Nazism.

He gives his movement a good American name, *Social Justice*.

In Italy it was necessary to give the Fascist propaganda a strongly anti-capitalist tinge. In Germany *Der Fuehrer* even came out in his program for socialism.

The *Radio Priest* slants his program to appeal to Amer-

*Elsewhere I have analyzed Father Charles E. Coughlin's program in greater detail. See "Father Coughlin—Fascist Demagogue," Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, New York City, 5 cents.

Roosevelt to Provide Britain, France with Credits for War

Jumps Over Legal Hurdles to Aid So-Called 'Democracies'

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cleared a path for the warring "democracies" straight to the massive bronze doors of the U. S. Treasury. Theoretically, Mr. Jones' institutions can finance exports to either side. Actually, the Export-Import Bank many months ago turned down several cotton and commodity deals with Germany on political grounds. Therefore, in the restrained phrase of the N.Y. Times, "the presumption is that Great Britain, France and countries allied with them would be the only beneficiaries of the bank's underwriting in case of war."

The machinery has been in motion for some time. Mr. Jones revealed, in passing, that President W. L. Pierson of the Export-Import Bank has been in Europe for the last three months "developing new outlets for American surpluses." At last reports, he was in Paris, about to entrain for Warsaw.

Spinning the Web This is merely one strand in the complex web which the War Deal has already begun to spin across the Atlantic, a web of economic interest which will eventually—and this time perhaps in a matter of months rather than years—draw this country irresistibly into the holocaust.

In 1914-1917, this dirty job was done by the bankers of Wall Street, headed by J. P. Morgan & Co. This time, however, it is the government itself which is taking the lead. The banks are playing second fiddle to the War Deal in this devil's symphony.

Shipping is of primary importance in the Administration's imperialistic plans. Not since 1918 have so many ships been under construction in American shipyards, almost all of them heavily subsidized with Federal funds.

1918 Shipbuilding Tempo Several days ago, as the armies of Europe took up their jumping-off positions, Mrs. Roosevelt smashed a bottle of champagne against the prow of the biggest liner ever built in this country—the \$17,000,000 *America*, built with government money for the government-controlled U.S. Lines.

Assisting in the ceremonies was Rear Admiral Land, chairman of the U.S. Maritime Commission, who declared the vessel "fulfills the highest requirements of our country's foreign trade and national defense." He read a letter from the President, which was equally explicit: "You and I know, from our work during the war, the disabilities of a navy which lacks an adequate merchant fleet. . . The launching of the *America* gives me the greatest personal satisfaction."

The Bremen Episode Under the National Defense Act, passed in 1917, the President has wide powers over markets, shipping, banking, communications, and a dozen other fields of economic life. These powers—according to an amendment passed in the early days of the New Deal, to allow the President a free hand with the banking system—can be invoked whenever the President declares the nation to be in a "state of emergency." How soon President Roosevelt will issue such a declaration, no one

can ways of thinking, and here socialism has not yet become a popular idea. Indeed, there are innumerable misconceptions concerning socialism. Seizing advantage of this, the *Radio Priest* announces to his audience that capitalism and socialism are two varieties of the same thing, which is like saying that war and peace are two varieties of the same thing!

The well-known reluctance with which American workers approach political action provides the *Radio Priest* with yet another variation from the program of European fascism to fit American prejudices. Unlike Hitler and Mussolini he can come out quite frankly for Private Property.

In fact Father Coughlin, the *Radio Priest*, advocates the preservation of PRIVATE PROPERTY in his public program. (Point No. 4 of his Sixteen Principles of Social Justice.)

"Private ownership? Yes; the Catholic Church will stand by it and die for it if necessary." (Discourse entitled "Come, Follow Me," Father Coughlin's Radio Discourses, 1931-1932, p. 27.)

Father Coughlin, the *Radio Priest*, believes too, in a CORPORATE STATE.

"In plainer words, this nation must become United States, Incorporated." (Discourse entitled "Plenty for All," February 18, 1934.)

"Do you boys (the ex-service men) realize that with one more battle you can make this country safe for financial democracy? You can make this country the United States of America, Incorporated." February 25, 1934.)

(To be continued in next issue)

knows. But two things are already clear: he will issue it, and he will use his powers to enmesh the nation still more deeply into the Allied cause.

The Administration has shown it knows how to get along well enough, for the present, without emergency powers. Thus last week, as the war crisis reached its bursting point, the North German Lloyd liner, *Bremen*, which is worth \$20,000,000 and is one of the two biggest vessels in the German merchant marine, was prevented from sailing for two full days while U.S. customs officials, marine inspectors, and Treasury agents went over her from stem to stern. The purpose of this search was not clear. There was talk of contraband, of secret arms, and the President spoke darkly of "privatizing." Nothing whatever was found, except for one camera which had not been properly declared.

The result of the search was patent to all, however: when the *Bremen* was finally permitted to sail, the chances of the British Navy capturing her had been greatly increased, and, in fact, as this is written, there are rumors that she has been intercepted. To prove its impartiality as a "neutral," the government insisted on likewise searching, and delaying, the *Normandie* and the *Aquitania*, thus putting them in grave danger of being captured on the high seas by the bottled-up German Navy.

Credits and Neutrality When England and France begin buying raw materials and—if the President has his way about the repeal of the Neutrality Act—munitions, the first step will be to cash in the billions of dollars worth of American securities held by Allied subjects. Some days ago, the British Government took steps to keep such selling safely in its own hands, and forbade all individual selling of foreign securities.

Its plans were drawn up only after full discussion with officials of the U.S. Treasury, and, furthermore—"It is understood that U.S. officials will cooperate in British plans for the mobilization and orderly liquidation of American securities held by British interests." It is, of course, necessary for any bourgeois government to take such steps to protect its own security markets, and it is no special sign of friendship for England that the New Deal thus cooperates. But the fact is that such cooperation is one more thread binding us to the Allied cause, a link which, this time as in 1917, doesn't exist with Germany since German holdings of American securities are comparatively negligible.

Roosevelt Outstrips Wilson

The total amount of British holdings of American securities is estimated at about \$2,000,000,000, which will finance purchase of American materials and munitions for many weeks. After that, it will be necessary to set up credits over here for the Allied nations, if they are to continue to buy American goods on a big scale.

In the last war, these vital credits were supplied by the American financial community under the leadership of J. P. Morgan & Co. The Nye Senate Committee revealed in detail how, as the golden chain that bound Wall Street to the Allies grew longer, the pressure from Wall Street on the Wilson Administration for intervention on the side of the Allies increased.

This time it is much simpler, more direct. The Federal government itself is laying plans to extend credits to the Allies, and hence will be in a position to bring pressure on itself to enter the war when the proper moment comes.

There are two main reasons for this change: (1) control over the nation's credit and banking system has been centralized in Washington; (2) the Roosevelt Administration is acting in this war crisis more openly as the agent of big business than the Wilson Administration ever dared.

U.S. Entry into War Closer as President Talks "Peace"

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BRITAIN TAKES ANOTHER STEP IN DEMOCRACY

As a major step in their war plans, the British rulers on Friday pushed through Parliament the Government of India Amendments Act.

This is more familiarly known as the Indian Federation—a section of the new constitution for India.

Under the terms of this act, a virtual one-man dictator now rules the vast sub-continent of India with its 375,000,000 people.

The British-appointed Viceroy has life-and-death powers. He can decree any law he sees fit; void any law that has been passed by the Federal and provincial bodies; throw into prison anyone objecting to British rule, etc.

He will have powers that might well be envied by the German Fuehrer.

Were the Indian people consulted before this Act was adopted? Not once! Was this new constitution put to a democratic vote? No!

Only a handful of native Rajahs and Princes—all of them puppets of the British—were consulted and asked for their "vote."

The British and Native States' areas of India will be welded together by this Act. But British-appointed officials will dominate the newly Federated India. Reactionary Princes, British army officials, political dictators—these are the men who will attempt to keep India in line during the Second World War.

For every Englishman in India there are 1,300 Indians! The hatred of 1,300 people, result of 200 years of imperialist oppression, falls on the head of each British oppressor.

The Labor Party members of Parliament voted with Chamberlain for this iniquitous act, thereby demonstrating once more their role as agents of imperialism.

PACT SHAKES YCL MEMBERS

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) MINNEAPOLIS—The evening of August 30, the Minneapolis Young Communist League held an open meeting on the subject of the Stalin pact with Hitler. The speaker was Carl Ross who is . . . National Public Relations Secretary of the YCL! About fifty YCL members and sympathizers attended the meeting, held at 19 South 7th Street.

The atmosphere of the meeting was heavy, and the speaker's gloomy attempt to justify the pact did little to lighten the general tone.

Avoids Questions At the close of the meeting, the chairman permitted the audience to write out questions on slips of paper, which were passed to the speaker. Only members and sympathizers of the YCL wrote out questions. They were natural questions, honest questions: How will the pact save Poland from Hitler? How will the pact save peace? Won't Japan turn to the United States or Great Britain for an agreement against Russia? etc.

Yet the speaker, Ross, went into a frenzy at most of the questions, describing them as "Trotskyist" questions. He evidently thought that the two Socialist Workers Party members present had turned in the questions; but this was not the case. The more Ross raved around and sought to justify the pact by "dialectics," the more puzzled the YCL'ers became.

Finally one of the SWP comrades arose and was recognized by the chair, who did not recognize this comrade. The comrade started to speak, said he understood Ross' failure to perform the difficult task of justifying or explaining the Stalin-Hitler pact, and suggested—perhaps a debate—At this point the chairman banged the gavel, announced the meeting ended, and herded the faithful out of the hall.

No Longer Faithful But it is certain that the "faithful" are faithful no more. Unquestionably, the rank-and-file Communist Party members and sympathizers are deeply shaken by the Stalin-Hitler pact.

These people do want socialism, they do want to defend the Soviet Union, and they are just beginning to awaken to the fact that they cannot obtain these things with Stalin but rather against him. Communist Party members and sympathizers have shown themselves very receptive to the teachings of our Party in the last week.

THE NEGRO QUESTION

"LABOR WITH A WHITE SKIN CANNOT EMANCIPATE ITSELF WHERE LABOR WITH A BLACK SKIN IS BRANDED"—KARL MARX.

By J. R. JOHNSON

Negroes and the War

In Europe the war has begun. Like Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt says that he will try to keep America out but we know that he has been making every preparation to drag America in.

This is the situation that faces the American people and the great masses all over the world. The Negroes, here as elsewhere, know that great decisions are being made which will affect their whole future. What are they to do? What does this war mean to Negroes? What must they think about it?

Negroes, brothers and sisters, comrades and friends, it is no use merely whispering to one another that it is a white man's war. The stand you take today will help to decide the fate of the world and your own fate for many many years to come. Roosevelt's war propaganda has been screaming at you and the other workers and farmers of America for the last two years. Now, as the hour comes nearer when your parsons, your Elk leaders, your Republican and Democratic Negro bosses, the university professors, Communist Party leaders like Earl Browder and James Ford, all are going to turn on their loud speakers, wave their flags, and beat their big drums, to bewilder you and drive you into support of this war. But in your hearts, you, the masses of the Negro people feel that this war is not your war. You feel that once more you, your relatives and your friends all over the world, in America, in Africa and the West Indies, are going to be used and then flung aside. You are right, but only half-right. For this time you will not only be used, but by the support of this war you will be tying a thousand times tighter, the chains which now bind you as the pack-horse, the servant and the slave of capitalist civilization.

Why They Don't Appeal to the Negro

In America, in Africa, in the West Indies, over 150 millions of Negroes bear on their bent backs and sweating limbs, a burden greater than that of any people anywhere in the world. If this war is a great war for freedom and a better life, the Negroes should have been addressed before anybody else. They need a better life and freedom more than any other people. But just note how careful everybody has been not to address the Negroes directly on the war question. In all the propaganda that pours over us like a flood, there has been a great conspiracy of silence in regard to what part the Negro must play in the coming war.

Republican Party, Democratic Party, Communist Party, all carefully avoid making direct references to the Negroes and the war. They will talk and write about Negroes and relief, about Negroes and the WPA, about Negroes and the New Deal, about why the Negroes used to vote for the Republican Party and why they now vote for the Democratic Party. The Republican Party appoints a commission to find ways and means to win back the Negro vote. The Communist Party points out why Negroes must hate Japan and Hitler, why the Negroes must vote for the New Deal, why the Negroes must be anti-fascist, why the Negroes must oppose those who attack Jews. But about Negroes and the war, what Negroes must do when the drums begin to beat and the bugles begin to blow, not a direct word all these months. They have been trying to smuggle the Negro into the war as a section of the American people. They have not dared openly to explain to you, why you, as Negroes, should take part in the war. They do not dare to start the discussion. They know their arguments would stick in their throats. Today, and still more tomorrow, they will seek to sweep you into the war under cover of the general slogan: Our democracy is in danger. One party, however, the Socialist Workers Party, has no tricks to play on the Negroes or anybody else on this life or death question of imperialist war. Clearly, simply, and without possibility of being misunderstood, we say that this coming war, like the last one, is a war that will be fought by the muscles and blood and lives of the poor for the pockets and bellies of the rich. The poor have nothing to gain and everything to lose by supporting the rich in a war that will be fought exclusively for the benefit of the rich. And above all, the Negroes, the poorest and most oppressed people in every country where they live, would be the greatest fools to allow themselves to be deceived this time, as they were the last time. We are confident that the great majority of the Negroes who consider this question with the seriousness that it deserves, will come inevitably to the conclusion that they must fight against the war to the bitter end.

That is our position. The Socialist Workers Party has nothing to hide from the Negro. It says to him, as it says to the poor everywhere—whites, Negroes in Africa, Indians in India, "Brothers and sisters of whatever color, this war is not our war. We will not support it. We, the workers, the poor farmers in every country, white, black, and brown, are not going to kill one another at the command of Chamberlain, or Hitler at the orders of Roosevelt or of the Japanese Mikado. We shall fight for a fraternal unity between all the poor in every country against all the rich. That is the war we shall fight. Down with the imperialist war!"

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In Oslo, the work of peace done by the two presidents Roosevelt was praised at the opening of the interparliamentary union congress. Theodore Roosevelt was cited for his mediation of the Russo-Japanese war in 1904; Franklin D. Roosevelt for his peace appeal April 15 to Hitler and Mussolini.

MILLSTONE IN THE PATH OF PROGRESS: Aram Saroyan, Fresno agriculturalist, advanced a proposal to cut down the anticipated heavy surplus of grapes in 1939 by stripping the fruit from every second or third row of vines before it ripens.

Fund Drive Lags Behind Party Agitation Work

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the National Office!

Public Rallies The public rallies against the war and on the Stalin-Hitler deal continue across the country. Reading from east to west, here is a partial summary. (Branches should send announcements of public meetings into the Appeal for notice in our columns.)

BOSTON . . . Max Shachtman on September 8.

GARDNER, MASS. . . outdoor meeting on August 27, with a large attendance of Stalinist Finnish workers, who engaged in an earnest discussion with our comrades after the meeting.

NEW YORK CITY . . . the series of public meetings to cover the whole city is reported elsewhere in this issue. Some of the branches will be holding two outdoor meetings an evening in preparation for their indoor rally.

WASHINGTON, D.C. . . a combination meeting and social on August 26 at which Comrade J. R. Johnson was the speaker. Several Negro contacts were gained. Two new members have been recruited by the Washington branch and more are expected soon.

READING, PA. . . Outdoor meeting on August 28. "We sold out on Appeals," reports the branch, "and we could have sold more but did not have them." Another outdoor meeting on August 31.

YOUNGSTOWN . . . B. J. Widick, national labor secretary of the Party, at a public meeting on September 5.

AKRON . . . Widick on September 1.

CLEVELAND . . . Widick on September 8.

TORONTO . . . Shachtman on September 6.

TOLEDO . . . Widick on September 9.

FLINT, MICH. . . Mass meetings on September 6 with Genora Johnson and George Clarke as speakers.

DETROIT . . . Shachtman on September 5.

CHICAGO . . . An attentive audience of 400, including many disillusioned members and sympathizers of the Communist Party, heard Comrade Shachtman on the Stalinist Pact on August 31. Comrade Shachtman returned to Chicago on September 3 for a second mass meeting.

MINNEAPOLIS . . . Shachtman on September 1.

Notice

A special membership meeting of Local New York, Socialist Workers Party, has been called for Wednesday, September 6 at 8 p.m., in Victoria Hall, at Irving Plaza, 15th Street and Irving Place. In view of the seriousness of the present situation, no comrade will be excused from attendance. Admission by red card only. CITY COMMITTEE