

**THE
NEW
FASCIST
DANGER**

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IN THE RECENT period acts of fascist violence have become common in many capitalist countries, including those which vaunt their "traditional democracy." Fascist-type organizations have grown in number and become more brazen, in some cases frankly proclaiming their intent to seize power. This growth on a national scale and the consolidation of fascist forces internationally against the background of an increasingly reactionary capitalism have disturbed broad sections of the public. People cannot help but remember the 'twenties and 'thirties, when Mussolini came to power in Italy and Hitler in Germany.

The analogy, of course, is relative. The situation today differs vastly from that of 30 years ago. Above all, the balance of forces is different. But for all that, the fascist trend in a number of capitalist countries, especially in the USA, France and Federal Germany, reminds us of the fearful price mankind had to pay for not stopping Hitler in time, all the more so since the current fascism holds out the threat not of an "ordinary" but a nuclear war. Due account should, therefore be taken of the tragic lesson of the past and all forces rallied to prevent any repetition.

FASCISM — A CREATION OF THE MONOPOLIES

The reason for the growth of the fascist danger lies in the present condition of capitalism, now in the third stage of its general crisis. Features of

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this stage are: the advance of socialism, embodied in the socialist world system, which has become the decisive factor of human progress; the successes of the working-class and democratic movements in the capitalist world; the upsurge in the popular struggle for peace; the disintegration of the colonial system; the shrinking of the sphere of capitalism, and the exacerbation of the contradictions between the handful of monopolies and the people generally.

But the monopolies, unresigned to the objective march of history, are exerting every effort not only to regain the lost ground but also to strengthen their positions. For this they employ in their internal policies two inter-linked methods of propping up their class rule. The first is limited concessions to one or another section of the population in order to save the system as a whole, accompanied by lip service to democracy. The second is naked suppression of the masses and involves curtailment and abolition of democratic institutions. With the growth of state-monopoly capitalism and militarism and the general weakening of its position, imperialism gravitates more and more towards political reaction and extinction of bourgeois-democratic freedoms. Hence the heightened activity of fascist organizations and especially the fascist trend in the state and social system.

Precisely because of this *the danger lies not only in the openly fascist organizations*, such as the John Birch Society in the United States, the OAS in France, and the neo-Nazi associations in Federal Germany, *but also, and primarily, in the entire policy of the ruling monopoly circles and in the anti-democratic pattern they are trying to impose on society*. Although, for reasons which we shall discuss below, the pro-fascist imperialist bourgeoisie is reluctant to scrap the traditional democratic institutions completely, it is turning them more and more into a cover for policies running counter to the interests of the people. This aspect was noted in the statement of the 1960 meeting of the Communist and Workers' parties. "In a number of countries," the statement says, "fascization is developing in new forms; dictatorial methods of government are combined with fictitious parliamentary practices, stripped of democratic content and purely formal in character." France is a case in point. Although France is formally a parliamentary republic, the composition of the Parliament in no way reflects the will of the electorate. And even this falsified Parliament has been all but stripped of its power. Moreover, Article 16 of the Constitution gives the President unlimited powers in the event of a "threat" to the republic

(clearly, the powers that be can discover such a "threat" any time they want).

The same trend is evident in the persecution of Communists, and other democrats in the USA by the Kennedy Administration and indeed, in the very existence of the pra-fascist Smith and McCarran Acts and other laws. Under the McCarran Act, for instance, any progressive can be thrown into prison without investigation or trial. And notwithstanding Adenauer's protestations that he is an anti-fascist, the banning of the Communist Party in Federal Germany is part of the same picture. Measures to which mainly fascist governments resorted before the Second World War (emergency laws, banning democratic organizations, persecuting their members, preparing military aggression, etc.), are now employed by the imperialist ruling circles within the framework of bourgeois "democracy" and "freedom." Time and again the state machine of the "democratic," capitalist countries has committed acts of fascist terror. In West Germany, for example, it is enough to speak up for peace and democracy to be sent to prison.

There is a close link—and hence also a division of labor—between the capitalist state machine and political organizations of a patently fascist type. It is common knowledge that the ultras helped to put de Gaulle in power. In turn, the policy of the Gaullist government gives an impetus to the fascist movement in France. Among the heads of government departments, and in the government itself, there are those who are connected with the OAS. Moreover, the men behind de Gaulle are using the OAS menace to intimidate the public and thereby facilitate the implementation of the government's reactionary policy. The situation in the USA, West Germany and Japan is similar in many respects. *Conditions for the spread of fascist trends are created by unbridled anti-communism, which has become not only the chief ideological weapon of the monopolies but also the cornerstone of the official policy of capitalist states.*

Although fascism has always stood for the interests of the finance oligarchy, at the initial stages of its emergence, when the fascist organizations had not yet revealed their direct contact with the monopolies, they managed for a time to pose as a popular movement (Italy, Germany and Spain). *But the fascist organizations of today have been openly associated with the most reactionary monopoly capitalists and financed by them from the very beginning.* For instance, the founders of the John Birch Society, the biggest fascist organization in the USA, include three ex-presidents of

the National Association of Manufacturers, the general staff, so to speak, of U.S. monopoly capital; according to press reports, nearly half the Association's members have joined the Birch Society. Among the tycoons financing the U.S. Right extremists we find men like Alfred Sloan, former President of General Motors, and the Texas oil king Haroldson Hunt, to mention only two.

In West Germany the monopoly interests which put Hitler in power are also backing the fascists today (above all the Flick group and the Dresdner Bank). The OAS is financed by many of the monopolies and also by the big landowners in Algeria. An illuminating sidelight is the advice given by M. Watteau, general manager of the Bank of Algeria, a subsidiary of the Bank of France, to some leading French firms with branches in Algeria—to pay the OAS blackmailers whatever they demand. And when the struggle against the "security treaty" with the USA was at its height in Japan, the Right-wing organizations in that country received from the monopolies, according to official figures, no less than 500 million yen.

Fascism has always been closely linked with the military. Today this link is stronger than ever. *What is happening now may be called a fusion of fascism and militarism.* This is an outgrowth of the fact that state-monopoly capitalism with its unprecedented militarization of the economy has accentuated the role of the military caste, who are more and more insistently laying claim to a decisive role in shaping government policy, plotting the establishment of military-fascist dictatorships.

Many of the top-ranking officers of the U.S. armed forces are closely associated with ultra-Right organizations. Well known, too, is the militarist nature of the revanchist associations in Federal Germany and of fascist organizations in Japan. In France, Portugal, Spain and Belgium, fascism is largely the product of colonialism. Well-nigh the majority of the members of the fascist organizations in these countries were schooled in wars and punitive expeditions against the people of Vietnam, Algeria, Angola and the Congo.

With the general leftward swing among the masses since the Second World War, and with the link between the fascist organizations and monopoly capital becoming more and more patent, *the chances of winning mass support for a fascist movement have diminished.* Today fascism can count only on the backing of the big capitalists, as well as on the middle and, in some cases, the small bourgeoisie directly linked with them. The American

historian H. S. Commager notes that the spread of fascist ideas in the USA has affected mainly the middle and upper classes. This, of course, does not exclude the possibility of some ideologically unstable sections of the working people succumbing to fascist influences under certain circumstances. There is the fact, for instance, that a considerable part of the working people of European origin in Algeria and South Africa have been infected with racist views.

As before, the fascists rely largely on demagogy in their efforts to build up a following—a refurbished demagogy designed to appeal above all to those segments of society on which they pin their hopes. And since these segments are already poisoned by anti-communist propaganda, the anti-communism of the present-day fascist organizations is especially vicious. The pseudo-socialist, anti-capitalist phraseology with which their predecessors camouflaged themselves, is now often discarded though there still are instances where, in order to delude the masses, the fascists pay lip service to “struggle against the finance magnates” and “fight for the working people’s demands.” In many countries, however, including the USA, they openly extol private enterprise and denounce all forms of “collectivism,” even state-sponsored public education.

Clerical slogans are particularly characteristic of the pro-fascist bourgeoisie of today. It is not fortuitous that the Nazis in Federal Germany have found a haven in the ruling Christian Democratic Union. In postwar Italy the Christian Democrats Right-wing tried to establish an authoritarian system. In Japan the fascists propagate the religious cult of the emperor. And in the United States many fascist organizations have taken over the religious terminology of the crusades—a fact reflected even in their names.

Fascism remains the ideology of extreme chauvinism and racism. Suffice it to mention the outrages committed by the French ultras against the Algerians, or the lynchings in the USA. But as a rule the organized fascists of today lay the emphasis not so much on the superiority of one race or nation as on defense of the “free” (meaning capitalist) world against the “world communist menace.” *Blind hatred of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries is a feature of fascism.* Precisely because of this the fascists support the aggressive imperialist blocs and plans for uniting the forces of the capitalist countries, in particular the idea of European “integration.”

Although fascism is a creation of monopoly capital, the term is applicable not to all manifestations of imperialist reaction but to its extreme

forms. The Program of the CPSU has reaffirmed the definition first given by the Thirteenth Plenary Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in December 1933: *fascist rule is the open terroristic dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialistic elements of finance capital.*

The aims of these elements are clearly set forth in the program of fascist organizations. Take the "political program" of the OAS. Its principal points are: no agreement with the Algerian national-liberation movement; perpetuation of French rule in Algeria; a government of "public salvation" consisting of "leaders of the French nationalist movement and sympathizers in the army"; military dictatorship; tribunals with broad powers and the right of summary trial; dissolution of political parties; expulsion of the Communists from all elective posts and administrative offices; a purge of the state apparatus and educational system of all suspected of adhering to democratic views; dissolution of Parliament and the trade unions and their replacement with corporative organizations similar to those set up by Mussolini.

The John Birch Society has put forward these demands: no disarmament; withdrawal from the United Nations; no diplomatic relations or other contacts with the USSR or the other socialist countries; not negotiation but orientation on war, immediate military intervention in Cuba; all-out struggle not only against the Communists but also against all Communist "sympathizers," who, the fascists claim, include 70 percent of all government employees; resistance to racial integration and social security benefits. *Outright suppression of every vestige of democracy, tyrannical rule, enslavement of other nations and reliance on nuclear war are the planks of the fascist platform.*

Taking into consideration the changed balance of forces on both a national and global scale, some influential monopoly groups hesitate to rely solely on naked terror. Hence their frequent professions of support for "democracy" and "peace" and opposition to "extremes" in politics. Typical of this trend is, for example, Senator Mansfield, the Democratic leader in the U.S. Senate, who, while supporting the reactionary policy of the administration, urges an end to the hysteria whipped up by the Rights on the grounds that they present a grave threat to the interests of the USA.

In his report (1935) to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International Georgi Dimitrov said that "fascism usually comes to power in the

course of a struggle, sometimes even a bitter struggle, with the old bourgeois parties or a certain part of these parties, and even in struggle fought inside the fascist camp itself." These words are equally true today. Dimitrov also pointed out that it would be a mistake to qualify as fascism "all the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie, or to call the entire non-communist camp the fascist camp." Precisely on these grounds the Communist Party of the United States, while exposing the increasingly reactionary policy of the Kennedy Administration, holds, as Gus Hall has put it, that the Left and progressive forces in the USA should "make the proper differentiation between Kennedy and the ultra-Right."

The growing fascism now under way bears out N. S. Khrushchev's statement in his report to the Twenty-First Congress of the CPSU: "Fascism may revive in new forms, and not in those which have already been discredited in the eyes of the peoples." The forms this process takes today vary far more from country to country than in the past and therefore merit close examination.

The USA, the citadel of world reaction, is emerging more and more as the international center of fascism. Even before the Second World War, U.S. imperialism gave economic support to Hitlerism and Japanese militarism. Today it is the organizer of all the aggressive military blocs, aimed not only against the socialist countries but also against popular movements, and it backs the most reactionary regimes in the world. In recent times the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency has had a hand in organizing fascist uprisings in Algeria (the ultras) and in Lebanon (the so-called Syrian People's Party). U.S. fascists, and in particular the John Birch Society, have formed branches in Japan and Mexico, and are contacting their counterparts in other countries. The present upsurge of fascism in the United States can be largely traced to the setbacks suffered by the U.S. monopolies — the self-appointed "saviors" of world capitalism — and especially the failure of the intervention in Cuba. It is against this background that the extremists have come out with their promises to extricate the country from the "morass," to "save it from humiliation" and to restore its "prestige."

While fascism in France is openly colonialist in character, the West German fascists take particular pains to camouflage themselves, especially because Federal Germany is closely watched by anti-fascists all over the world as the breeding ground of "classical fascism." But for all that, in no capitalist country are there so many fascists in the administrative appa-

ratus, the judiciary and the school system as in West Germany.

At the same time fascist regimes of the "classical" type have been preserved, though modernized, in Spain and Portugal. Specific colonial forms of fascism have emerged in South Korea, South Vietnam and elsewhere.

Concerning the circumstances in which fascism could come into power, the Program of the CPSU points out: "*The financial oligarchy resorts to the establishment of fascist regimes, banking on the army, police, and gendarmerie, as a last refuge from the people's wrath, especially when the masses try to make use of their democratic rights, albeit curtailed, to uphold their interests and to end the all-pervading power of the monopolies.*" In other words, fascism is the monopolies' last reserve. And since the growing struggle of the working people against the omnipotence of the finance oligarchy is confronting imperialism with critical situations more and more frequently, the latter is now drawn more than ever to fascist methods.

UNITED ACTION IS THE GUARANTEE OF THE DEFEAT OF FASCISM

Does this signify that history is bound to repeat itself and that the imperialist reactionaries will again put the fascists in power? In examining this question it should be borne in mind that the decision does not rest with the imperialists alone. *The dialectics of modern history is such that precisely those developments which impel the monopolies to extreme methods make this last recourse of theirs futile.* The futility was aptly underscored in *New York Times Magazine* by the journalist A. Bart, who characterized the U.S. fascists as being harbingers not of the future but of hopelessness and despair, a cry from the limbo of the past. Today fascism is confronted with obstacles which never existed before. It is not only a matter of the strength of the socialist camp, but also of the objective growth in the capitalist countries of an alliance of the overwhelming majority of the people, an alliance of diverse class forces which, increasingly, feel the impact of monopoly domination. These forces are the working class, the farmers, the urban middle strata, including the intelligentsia, and, to a certain extent, also the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. Their alliance, being anti-monopoly in nature, is the foundation of effective anti-fascist struggle, the guarantee of its success.

Needless to say, the nature of imperialism does not change, and so

long as it exists it is bound to give rise to the danger of fascism. But, *thanks to the developing anti-monopoly movement and popular struggle, the chances are now much greater of curbing various essential aspects of imperialism, of preventing the fascistization of the social system and, even more so, the victory of fascism wherever it may threaten.*

If openly fascist regimes have not been established in any of the leading imperialist countries in the postwar period, this is due precisely to the fact that the anti-monopoly alliance is taking shape. In Italy, for example, the monopolies tried in 1948, 1953, 1958 and in 1960 to install an authoritarian regime, but each time the popular resistance compelled a return to bourgeois-democratic methods. A wave of anti-fascist demonstrations in July, 1960 forced the Tambroni government to resign after its abortive attempt to engineer a reactionary coup. Now the monopolies have no choice but to set up a so-called Left-Center government.

It would be suicidal to wait, as some Social Democrats advocate, for a "critical moment" before taking action against the fascist danger. Experience has shown that it is vital to perceive in good time the danger of fascist movements and especially of swings toward undisguised reaction in the policy of the capitalist state. The very nature of fascism makes it imperative to nip it in the bud by not allowing a single reactionary act to go unpunished. It is to the everlasting credit of the Communists that they were the first to alert the peoples to the danger of fascism and to work out that strategy of democratic unity (at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935) on the basis of which fascism was eventually defeated.

The Communists have every right to say that in the postwar, too, they were the first to point to the resurgence of the fascist danger. The French Communist Party, for instance, raised the question of combating the danger immediately after the reactionary coup of May 13, 1958, and in the same year *World Marxist Review* (No. 2, 1958) published an article headed "Combating the Fascist Menace in France" which pointed out that "the regime now established in France may not yet be fascism but the fact cannot be overlooked that it opens the way to fascism." Four years ago many held that such statements were a gross exaggeration. Today we can see that the warning was fully justified.

The Communist parties of the USA, Japan, Federal Germany, Austria and other countries have long warned the public of the growing fascist danger. Our American comrades declare that the present fascist movement

in the USA "holds even a greater threat than the movement led by the late Senator Joe McCarthy."

At the same time the capitalist press is doing its best to conceal the existence of the danger. Its columns contain assurances that the "great American democracy" is immune to fascism, that not a trace of Nazism remains in West Germany.

The fact that the followers of the Right-wing Socialist and other reformist leaders are being taken by surprise by the rising wave of fascism is further evidence of sheer blindness if not deliberate betrayal on the part of this type of politician. The latter, of course, dissociate themselves from Franco, Salazar and Verwoerd, but it is enough for fascism to don a new mask for them not to see it altogether. They dismiss all the warnings of the anti-fascists as exaggeration, and while they may condemn one or another fascist organization, they regard the bourgeois state as being above suspicion.

A dangerous delusion spread by the ruling circles in France and other capitalist countries is that the matter of dealing with fascism should be left to the authorities. Some liberal anti-fascists, too, have been taken in by this argument. Seeing the passivity of the government and ignoring the only force capable of defeating fascism — the people — they arrive at the pessimistic conclusion that fascism is bound to win.

The fallacy of this conclusion, however, is obvious. *Experience has shown that only popular struggle can curb the reactionaries and prevent fascism from seizing power.* The example of Italy cited above is a case in point. The failure of the extremist putsches in France in 1960-1961 and the virtual retreat of the government in February 1962 were the result of the resolute struggle of the people as expressed in anti-fascist strikes and demonstrations in which millions took part. Although the anti-monopoly and anti-fascist movement in the United States has still to say its decisive word, its reserves are great. This is evident from the wave of protests against the persecution of Communists and the response evoked by prominent members of the Communist Party who have spoken at American universities on the invitation of students' organizations. In February, for instance, several thousand students of the University of Oregon came to hear Gus Hall. The demonstrations for peace and disarmament held in March in Washington and New York with large numbers of young people taking part will, no doubt, give added impetus to the anti-fascist movement. Incidentally, the youth are active in the struggle against the fascist danger not only in the

USA. This is a gratifying factor.

Needless to say, it is *the proletariat — the class most consistently opposed to the monopolies — and its Party that are destined to head the anti-fascist struggle of the masses*. The Communists expose the real nature of fascism and rally the people to fight it. Fully aware that a negative program is not enough to defeat it, the Communists make it clear that there can be no simple return to the past. The anti-fascist struggle is a constructive struggle; the social energy accumulated by the people in the course of the fight will continue to make itself felt after the fascist threat has been removed. *The Communist parties advance a program aimed not only at eradicating the fascist menace, but also at destroying the soil which nourishes it — the dictatorship of the monopoly bourgeoisie*. The French Communist Party, for example, is fighting for a program of the "restoration and regeneration of democracy," which presupposes not only disbanding the organizations of the ultras, purging the police apparatus, thorough democratization of governmental bodies and the guarantee of democratic freedoms, but also nationalization of industries belonging to the monopolies.

The Communists seek to prevent democratic institutions from being used by the monopolies as a camouflage for reactionary policies. They want these institutions to carry real weight, to function under public control, and develop further. An example of activity in this direction is afforded by the Italian Communist Party which is pressing for implementation of an anti-monopoly program and adherence to the Constitution.

It goes without saying that the struggle against fascism and for democracy in public life is, by virtue of its very nature, inseparably linked with the struggle for peace, disarmament and the liberation of the oppressed peoples. For fascism feeds on war preparations, stockpiling of armaments and colonial adventures.

The people can be rallied to the struggle against fascism only by ensuring unity of action among all anti-fascists, and above all among the working class. Experience has shown how invaluable a role can be played in this by non-party unions and anti-fascist committees, as well as mass forms of struggle, such as meetings, demonstrations, strikes, etc. The Communists are working tirelessly for this unity. Maurice Thorez has again emphasized that the French Communist Party stands for joint action at all levels with all who want to put an end to the fascist conspiracy, establish peace in Algeria, and secure democracy and a foreign policy of peace.

The Communists extend the hand of solidarity to all sincere anti-fascists irrespective of their political affiliation. They attach particular importance to cooperation with the intellectuals who are alive to the fascist danger.

The main obstacle to democratic unity is anti-communism. The leaders of many bourgeois and Social Democratic organizations not only refuse to join efforts with the Communists but call for struggle on two fronts — against fascism and communism — alleging that the Communists fight fascism only to seize power themselves.

This, incidentally, is the argument used by the fascists. It stood them in good stead once before in Italy, Germany and other countries — a fact which should put public opinion on its guard against the idea of “struggle on two fronts.” Further, in a country like France, where the fascist danger is real and where democratic institutions are being closed, the choice, as the French Communist Party has pointed out, is not between capitalism and communism but between fascism and democracy. In combating fascism, the Communists are upholding the interests of the nation, for fascism threatens all democrats, all rightminded people. Whose homes are the OAS *plastiqueurs* bombing? Who are the victims of their attacks? The long list of names includes men and women of diverse political affiliations and from different sections of society.

One of Guy Mollet's “arguments” against unity of action with the Communists is that such an alliance would throw the army into the camp of the OAS. Actually the contrary would happen. Joint action by the Communists and Socialists would ensure the unity of the working class and strengthen its links with other sections of the people. As for the army, the overwhelming majority of servicemen are workers and peasants who are opposed to the OAS (as was shown by the events of April 1961). And the stronger the anti-fascist front, the sooner it will be joined also by the officers who may still be wavering.

When the masses rise to fight fascism they will eventually remove the soil which breeds fascism — the domination of finance capital. But when this happens, it will be the result not of “Communist intrigues” but of the experience of the masses themselves. Perhaps it is this that the Right-wing Socialists and other splitters fear! Their anti-communism is prompted by the fear that the masses might be drawn into political activity. *“Better the OAS than the People's Front” — such is the practical meaning of the slogan*

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