

The Proposed C. P. Changes

"My readings of economic interpretations of the last 10 years led me to the belief that monopoly capitalism brought in fascism, because it couldn't solve the crisis any other way. That fascism was an attempt to keep monopoly capitalism in the saddle. Why then are we to lie down with it?"

By Robert Minor

First, the belief that monopoly capitalism brings in fascism. All monopoly capitalism? That wherever there is monopoly capitalism, it brings in fascism?

If that were true the United States and England would be fascist countries. Monopoly capitalism is in full operation in all of the advanced industrial countries of the world. Monopoly capitalism is invariably the highest stage of development of capitalism, no matter how much one may dislike the fact. The country of the largest monopolies is the United States. The United States is not a fascist country and no-one in his right mind thinks it is. Neither is England, nor was France prior to the German conquest.

Fascism began in Italy, though not in a form identical with that of Germany. Italy was not among the highest developed of monopoly countries. Poland, with a relatively weak development of industry, had a fascist state before Germany did.

If we thought monopoly capitalism necessarily brings in fascism, we would conclude that fascism inevitably comes to all highly developed countries. We should have to conclude that the only hope was in trust-busting, and since no trust-busting ever succeeded there would be no hope at all.

No Marxist holds any such opinion.

The most authoritative definition of fascism from the point of view of Marxism is that of Stalin—that Fascism is "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital." And, as George Dimitroff said, "the most reactionary variety of fascism is the German type of fascism."

So the Marxist view is not that "monopoly capitalism brings in fascism," necessarily, and not under all circumstances, but that fascism is introduced by an aggregation of monopoly or finance capital under certain circumstances and in certain relationships of forces. An example is to be found in something Dimitroff said in 1935: "One must be very partial to hackneyed schemes not to see that the most reactionary circles of American finance capital, which are attacking Roosevelt, are above all the very force which is stimulating and organizing the fascist movement in the United States."

That was true then, and is today. But President Roosevelt is not an opponent of capitalism; he is its

most skillful defender. That means he is the most effective defender of the present form of capitalism, finance capital. He is the "doctor" that pulled capitalism through an almost mortal illness in 1933-1937, and no patient is spontaneously affectionate toward the doctor that made him take the necessary medicine, after he thinks he has passed the danger; and there are many curses of "that doctor." But the fact remains that the largest and most powerful sections of monopoly capital are supporters of the only policies that can win the war, which are the President's policies.

Like it or not.

Second, is it true, as the questioner thinks that "monopoly capitalism couldn't solve the crisis any other way than by bringing in fascism."

If it were true in a general sense, we would have to conclude that there can be no solution of the present world crisis by the method adopted by the three great powers, the United States, Soviet Russia and Great Britain. We would have to conclude that a solution was possible only by at least two of these powers "bringing in fascism."

But that would be exactly what Hitler said.

We must avoid this type of fatalism. No inexorable law compelled German capitalism to go into fascism. For a long series of years after the First World War, a political struggle went on in Germany not only among the masses but also between two groups of monopoly capitalists—over foreign policy: one of these groups saw clearly that Germany could then have solved her immediate problem of postwar economic ruin by adopting a foreign policy of full economic cooperation with Russia; the other opposed that course and for 20 years pursued the policy of aiding in the "cordon sanitaire" against Russia in the hope of being given the role which Hitler describes even now as being entrusted with the "hegemony" of "the European family of nations" against the "Bolshevist colossus"—meaning, however, the opportunity of world-conquest.

Germany was pulled into "open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital"—not by the irresistible law of economic development by which her industries became monopolies, but by the outcome of a political struggle in which the popular masses were divided by the Social-Democratic party and diverted from support of the contrary policy; the party of the "open terrorist dictatorship" won.

But Germany, as a capitalist state, could have solved her immediate economic crisis of the 1920's by "another way than by bringing in fascism." That way could have been by a rapprochement of the German Republic of that time with Soviet Russia for economic cooperation.

Is it true, then, as the questioner

believes, that "fascism is an attempt to keep monopoly capitalism in the saddle?"

Not exactly, because that judgment expressed that way would seem to apply to a domestic situation independently of foreign policy. This doesn't happen in real life. As Stalin, in January, 1934, described the victory of German fascism, there was a situation in which the bourgeoisie was compelled in its foreign policy to resort to terroristic methods of administration—it must be taken as a symptom of the fact that it is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy, as a consequence of which it is compelled to resort to a policy of war." (My emphasis.) As he said on another occasion, "the imperialist rear cannot be strengthened without suppressing the workers. That is what fascism is for."

So, in the case of Germany, after the policy of large-scale economic cooperation with the then relatively weak Socialist state was excluded by the triumph of the section of finance capital that led the war party—then "monopoly capitalism couldn't solve the crisis any other way than by bringing in fascism." Then—within the orbit of anti-Russian policy—there was no choice for German monopoly capital but to resort to terroristic dictatorship for the purpose of war, as there remained no way out on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy.

The course was not fixed by fate, but determined by political struggle.

What if we were to give in to the other view? In that case there would be no struggle but a submission to "fate." And we would have to conclude also that the two great world powers which, aside from Germany have the most highly developed monopoly capitalism—the United States and Great Britain—cannot solve the present world crisis by the "other way"—which is the Tehran way.

Why do we "lie down with monopoly capital?" We are not lying down. The movement of present history is one of accelerated action, not passivity. The workers and the labor movement as a whole, economic and political, are not relinquishing their initiative, but developing and exercising an initiative larger than ever before in history.

In Wednesday's Daily Worker we will answer the last three of the seven questions asked by Mr. "One Who Thought Communists Marched Breat Forward." They are: whether "the Morgan interests still will fight trade unions," whether we have read certain books for "indications of the nature of monopoly capitalism," whether we think "one becomes a renegade because one does not agree" with us but considers our course "desperately dangerous,"—and, lastly: "How does Browder's class collaboration differ from Kautsky's which Lenin denounced so formidably?"