

Browder Pamphlet States Communist Stand on Religion

Reviewed by
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RELIGION AND COMMUNISM,
by Earl Browder. Workers Li-
brary Publishers. 3 cents.

WHY are Communists opposed to any form of coercion on religious matters? How is it that Communism, which is irreconcilably opposed to religion, is yet the only social movement today that guarantees real religious freedom? On what basis can joint struggles be developed between the anti-religious revolutionary movement and socially conscious religious groups against the increasing brutality and reaction of decaying capitalism?

These are some of the fundamental questions treated by Earl Browder, General Secretary of the Communist Party, U. S. A., in the pamphlet, "Religion and Communism." The pamphlet is the record of a discussion led by Earl Browder, on February 15, 1935, with a group of students of the Union-Theological Seminary.

That theological students should invite the head of the Communist Party in the United States to lead such a discussion is in itself symptomatic of the penetration of religious circles by the world-wide ideological ferment, reflecting the world-crisis and breakdown of capitalism. It is one of many signs of the growth of social thought even within church organizations, as a result of the growing revolt of the masses and individual thinkers against the reactionary features of capitalism—features which become daily more pronounced, as the contradiction sharpens between the productive forces and the productive relations within capitalist society.

CONDUCTED in the form of questions and answers, the discussion brought out not only certain insufficiently popularized angles of the Communist position on religion, but revealed questions agitating those theological students who, under compulsion of the increasing revelation of capitalist chaos and inefficiency, are giving serious thought today to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

This double aspect of the approach to a fundamental subject makes the present pamphlet an invaluable guide for all Communists and sympathizers actively involved in united front movements in which church groups are included, or in contact with religious workers.

Placed in the hands of religious workers, this pamphlet will be a powerful aid in dispelling their prejudices against Communism inspired by the distortions of the Communist position on religious freedom by institutionalized religion.