

Earl Browder

Leader Whose Authority Rests On Respect for His Judgment

This is the fifth chapter of the life-story of Earl Browder, Communist candidate for President, by M. J. Olgin, Communist leader and editor of the Morning Freiheit.

Earl Browder is what is usually called a self-made man. But these American terms, when applied to Browder, have a different meaning. In fact, he rejects this term and says he is a party-made man.

He is a self-made man in that he taught himself, schooled himself, educated himself, acquired a wealth of knowledge by his own effort. He is a self-made man in that he had no assistance from the outside, no rich supporters to keep him in college, no inheritance to pay his expenses. All his life he had to do a hard day's work to earn his bread. He is a self-made man in that he has made himself one of the outstanding personalities of the United States by the force of ideas, perseverance, work. He has made good—but not in the sense that he has accumulated a fortune.

He earns less than many a skilled worker. He is not prosperous. In this respect he has not made good. But he never intended to. He made good in a larger sense. He rose to leadership in a great cause. He is the acknowledged leader of the Communist Party. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. He looms as a figure of international importance. His word is listened to by hundreds of thousands. His work is reshaping the American labor movement and through it the history of this country.

THE "AVERAGE" AMERICAN

Earl Browder made good—not for himself—but for the workers and toilers of our United States.

Earl Browder is the "average" American. He is deeply rooted in American soil. He is of the prairies and the woods, the mines and railroads, offices and country schools. He knows the grievances of the plain man. He is a plain man, himself, with all his high position in the Communist Party. He is plain-spoken. He is modest. He is even somewhat retiring. But the 50,000 members and the hundreds of thousands of sympathizers of the Communist Party hang on his every word.

His leadership is accepted, willingly, and with admiration. He is leader by dint of having the clearest judgment in the affairs of the Communist Party, of the labor movement and of the country as a whole. His advice is followed because it is the best advice. His word is respected because everybody knows that it flows from a profound knowledge and is given after mature deliberation.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

This is why, while there is nothing ostentatious about Earl Browder, he is noted everywhere. His words have a penetrating quality all their own. And while Browder never asserts his authority, everybody feels the strength of the views he puts forward, which are those of the Communist movement.

"I propose a man who comes from the very core of the American people, and remains of them, and who has already, in these times of mass distress, arisen to heights of leadership in voicing their hopes and aspirations,"—it was said when Earl Browder was nominated for the presidency. We have acquainted ourselves, very briefly, with the biography of the man. We have gained a little insight into his character. It is now necessary to ex-

plain why this man, Browder, as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, is voicing the hopes and aspirations of the American people.

BROWDER'S VISION

The man Browder has a vision of a new society under socialism. He says:

"We are firmly convinced that the majority of the American people will finally choose the way of Socialism, which is the common ownership and operation of the mills, mines, factories, railroads, banks—our whole highly organized economic plant—through a government really of, by, and for the people."

Under socialism the individual citizen is provided his share of the wealth produced, according to his services, to enjoy as he sees fit. This share will be the private property of the citizen.

But as far as the means of production are concerned: natural resources, factories and plants, railroads and steamboats, banks and the bulk of commerce—all this will be common property of the people and will be administered by the people themselves through their own democratically elected representatives and with the closest participation of the rank-and-file men and women.

In a socialist society everybody works and everybody is assured a job, a decent standard of living, a sufficient amount of leisure and insurance against the hazards of life. In a socialist society there is no exploitation of man by man, no unemployment, no depressions, no insecurity. Life is one great stream of work, cultural activities and cultural enjoyment.

DEMOCRACY VS. FASCISM

But Earl Browder is fully aware of the fact that in order to accomplish what he calls "the full program of the Communist Party" a revolution is necessary, a great upheaval of the workers and farmers of the United States against Wall Street, against the big manufacturers, the big financiers who hold the major wealth of the country.

The revolution, in Browder's belief, will come, because the people of America will ultimately realize that it is necessary to remove from power a few thousand of the biggest leeches in order that the people may be free. But, says Browder, "the majority of the American people are not ready this year for the revolution toward which the full Communist program leads."

That is why this year the Communist Party does not advance the slogan: "Capitalism or Socialism." This is not the issue for the elections of 1936, says Browder. Of course, the issue as between capitalism and socialism has by no means disappeared. On the contrary, the issue will always be developing as long as the capitalist system survives. But the American people this year face, as the chief issue, the choice between democracy and fascism.

(To be continued)