

**Father  
COUGHLIN**

**Fascist  
Demagogue**

25

*by Joseph Hansen*

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# Father Coughlin

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## *Fascist Demagogue*

### ***The Rise of the "Radio Priest"***

In the summer of 1926, an obscure Catholic priest began broadcasting over the radio in Detroit.

For three years he spoke steadily without gaining any following beyond a local one. His speeches were not particularly striking. He said nothing to distinguish himself as *different* from hundreds of others who performed for America's loudspeakers.

Then the 1929 crash ushered in the worst depression United States capitalism had yet experienced.

Something *different* did occur then. The obscure priest launched a series of violent attacks against "communism." His name zoomed into the national spotlight.

He began broadening his activities like a business man who has succeeded in selling a huge issue of stock for a newly formed company.

In the lowest depths of the depression, he built himself a million dollar shrine. He began publishing a sleek magazine that carried not a line of advertising, yet sold for only a dime—an editor's day dream come true. He organized a wide political movement. He added radio stations to his network until today forty-eight are broadcasting his speeches—at an estimated cost of \$8,000 each—to an audience that may number millions.

Big Business tycoons count him an intimate. Many Congressmen consider him the greatest political force outside the White House. Fascists the world over hail him as among the chief of their dark number.

The labor movement has denounced him repeatedly.

This is the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin.

### ***Political Checkerboard***

The political program he has followed is as astounding as his rise from obscurity.

At first the "radio priest" urged his listeners to put their trust in President Herbert Hoover, the "great engineer." As late as January 11, 1931, he declared that "we have lost no faith whatsoever" in President Hoover and his cabinet.

Then he switched to the New Deal and supported it so eloquently that he became one of the most influential spokesmen for the Roosevelt Administration.

"*Roosevelt or Ruin*" was his slogan.

Millions believed him and chose *Roosevelt*.

On November 11, 1934, shortly after the rise of Adolph Hitler to power in Germany, he launched his organization, the National Union for Social Justice. He wrote the program for this organization himself. It has never elected him as its leader or constituted itself on democratic lines. Political discussion at its unit meetings is strictly forbidden. Coughlin is self-appointed supreme dictator.

In the 1936 presidential campaign he switched from the New Deal and supported William Lemke for president.

When Lemke was beaten at the polls, the "radio priest" retired from public life. But his retirement was only temporary.

He came back on the air with a new twist to his political program—*against the Jews . . . revolution . . . prepare for violence . . .*

Now his movement is spreading from coast to coast. In every city unemployed youths hawk his magazine *Social Justice*. He is conducting an essay contest with prizes amounting to \$16,000.

Many people consider him the only hope, the only way out of the depression. Many others consider him the most dangerous menace yet to appear on the American political scene.

### ***Father Coughlin Promises***

The magazine and the radio speeches, copies of which Father Coughlin mails out free by the hundreds of thousands, are designed to appeal to those who have been crushed by the depression—the millions of unemployed, youth who see only a blank future, farmers facing ruin, those who see no more hope in Roosevelt's New Deal.

"I am for a just annual living wage," he declares. "I am for labor's right to organize. I am for the cost of living being maintained on an even keel; and I am for preferring the sanctity of human rights to the sanctity of property with government's chief concern for the poor."

Who could be against a program like that?

But Father Coughlin was not the first man to stand for labor's right to organize, nor the only one to point out the high cost of living. Father Coughlin is not the first orator to round out pungent and stinging phrases about the sanctity of human rights.

Why should a program so commonplace as that create such excitement and clamor, and out of an obscure priest create a national political figure with apparently unlimited funds at his disposal?

*Because that is not his real program.*

### ***Coughlin and the New Deal***

At one time, if your memory goes back as far as Presi-

dent Roosevelt's election campaign, the New Deal promised these very same things.

And Father Coughlin backed the New Deal one hundred per cent.

"The international bankers are on their way out," he promised, side by side with Roosevelt. "The prosperity identified with the year 1926 is not too far distant."

"March 4th, 1933! What a memorable day that was! It was the birthday of the 'new deal.' On that date a voice went ringing around the world announcing a new Declaration of Independence. Before the minds of the millions who listened there was revived the drama of Christ as He lashed the money-changers from the Temple." (The New Deal In Money, p. 36.)

Father Coughlin described Roosevelt to his rapt followers as the "*New Lincoln*," the "*protector of the common people*," and he declared himself ready to follow "*our leader to the end*."

"I still proclaim to you that it is either 'Roosevelt or Ruin.' I support him today and will support him tomorrow." (Radio Speech, March 11, 1933.)

Father Coughlin even held a number of secret conferences with "New Lincoln" Roosevelt himself. The nature of those conferences has not been divulged to this day. Frequently he called the President's personal secretary over long-distance telephone.

High, wide, and handsome, Coughlin rode the great wave of popularity that swept Roosevelt into office amidst golden promises.

Roosevelt was going to end the depression, put everybody to work, give everybody an annual wage, permit labor to organize, and MAINTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTY.

Coughlin was a key man in the propaganda machine that deluded the people into supporting Roosevelt.

Father Coughlin, the Detroit spell-binder, was a fellow-traveler of Roosevelt's, a high pressure salesman of his

wares. When he abandoned the job it was taken over by Stalin's Communist Party.

Of course, Coughlin has since turned against Roosevelt. His reason was very simple.

Highly sensitive to the moods of the masses, Coughlin understands that Roosevelt's answers no longer satisfy the people, especially the unemployed. They are restlessly seeking a way out. Coughlin is not blind to the finger writing Roosevelt's doom on the wall.

The obscure "radio priest" of 1926 has come a long way. The future seems bright for his particular talents. Strife and dissension, wars and rumors of wars, these ring a sweet clangor in the ears of Father Coughlin.

### ***Capitalism is Bankrupt***

One of the surest signs that a social system is mortally sick is the existence of a large body of permanently unemployed workers. Greek civilization toppled amidst the frenzied despair of her unemployed. The broken pillars of the Coliseum in Rome still stand as a monument to the tyrants of the mighty Roman empire who vainly attempted to trick the hordes of unemployed out of their hunger. During the death agony of feudalism, all Europe was wracked by wandering bands of desperate and starving unemployed.

American capitalism is mortally sick.

For ten years, since 1929, capitalism has cast off an increasing number of people whom it can never employ, whom it *cannot even feed*—despite the fact that the land is bursting with food and crops are rotting on the ground.

Each year an estimated 500,000 youth reach employable age and are thrown into the ever-swelling ranks of the unemployed. These hungry, ill-clothed Americans number now almost 17,000,000—a colossal figure!

At first they listened to the promises of Roosevelt's

New Deal and these promises sounded good. He was going to feed them, clothe them, give them jobs and security.

Now they know that he lied. Now they know that he cheated them, that he had nothing to give them but increased misery.

The unemployed stand for the moment, uncertain what road to take next. They are starving in the richest country in the world. Warehouses are crammed to the roof with goods. Billions in gold lie idle in the banks. Factory gates are shut. Machines are silent. Crops are plowed under.

Using the LIE that private industry will provide jobs, Roosevelt's *slash. relief* program hurls fresh million after million of Americans into the streets. There they may eat garbage—if they can find any left in the garbage pails—while they hunt for a job in private industry.

All about them they see incalculable wealth monopolized and enjoyed by a miserable handful of parasitic stockholders.

The unemployed go hungry.

They are bewildered, but one basic truth they do understand: *This situation is intolerable.*

They are ready for action. No more postcards to Congress! Already they feel in their minds the thing that is coming . . . *revolution . . . three square meals a day . . . clothing . . . a decent home . . . plenty for all . . .*

Democratic capitalism is doomed. Coughlin knows it. Big Business knows it. Roosevelt knows.

Everybody knows it but that wooden skull minority composed of John L. Lewis, William Green, Earl Browder, an idiot or two, and a handful of old maids of both sexes who were left over from the last century. This minority still believes that democratic capitalism will continue indefinitely to punch its meal ticket!

In America apt students have watched the rise to power

of Mussolini and Hitler. They understand that only one road is left open to capitalism that has become sour and rotten with old age. In Italy Mussolini called it fascism. In Germany Hitler called it Nazism. We do not yet know what name a similar movement in America might bear. Perhaps in America it will be called—*Social Justice*.

### ***What Is Fascism?***

Fascism is a combination of two things.

First, it is a wide mass movement of farmers and small business men who face bankruptcy, of youth denied a future under capitalism, of sections of the unemployed. All these layers of the oppressed who are seeking desperately to put their hands on the surrounding plenty become hypnotized by the silver-plated promises of a demagogue who regiments them into blindly obedient shock troops.

Secondly, it is financed and controlled by the very capitalists who above all are anxious to keep the revolutionary violence of the masses from turning against them. In America—the DuPonts, the Morgans, the Rockefellers—the Sixty Families.

To the rank and file followers of fascism, at first it seems a genuine revolutionary way out of their misery. They discover the truth *too late*.

The capitalists provide the money. The dictator provides the powerful slogans, the stirring names, the demagogic program, the organization, the lieutenants, and the *oratory*.

### ***Father Coughlin's Real Program***

A few years ago it was very difficult to prove that Father Coughlin was *consciously* plotting to build a fascist movement in the United States. But now he has come out more in the open. He has had time to make slips in his public and private utterances. It is only necessary to read his speeches and his magazine *Social Justice* with a little

care to discover Father Coughlin's REAL program.

Only one month before he launched the National Union for Social Justice he said to Paul Weber of Hearst's International News Service (*Detroit Times*, October 10, 1934): "I am devoted to capitalism."

Among his sixteen points for Social Justice he calls for the *preservation of private property*.

Devotion to capitalism and preservation of private property—this is the holy Bible of fascism.

On March 13, 1938, in a broadcast over his network, Coughlin urged the establishment in the United States of a "corporate state," which is the gilded way of describing Mussolini's fascist state.

**"A corporate state in which parties would be abolished and the President would be chosen by a House of Representatives elected by occupational classes was proposed Sunday by Father Charles E. Coughlin." (United Press dispatch in the New York World Telegram March 14, 1938.)**

But he has been more frank even than this. In a signed article in the February 13, 1939, issue of *Social Justice* (page 7) he declared:

**"I am beginning to understand why I have been dubbed a 'Nazi' or a 'fascist' by the Jewish publications in America; for practically all the sixteen principles of social justice are being put into practice in Italy and Germany."**

Like all true fascists he is bitterly opposed to the great majority taking power and favors the rule of a small minority—the capitalists. In an editorial in *Social Justice* (February 20, 1939) he stated:

**"The principle of mere 'majority-ism'—sometimes called democracy and sometimes Bolshevism—is not enough. The popular fallacy is that '50 million Frenchmen can't be wrong.' As a matter of experience and historic fact, 50 men are much more likely to be right than 50 million."**

In this case Coughlin can add TEN to his fifty men and make it the SIXTY FAMILIES.

During the 1936 election campaign, Coughlin clarified his position still further in an unguarded moment. In an interview at which Dale Kramer, former national secretary of the National Farm Holiday Association, was present, Coughlin stated that "*Democracy is doomed*" and "*I take the road to fascism.*" (*Coughlin, Lemke and the Union Party*, by Dale Kramer.)

### **Coughlin Opposes Social Security**

Yes, Coughlin is thoroughly devoted to capitalism. He opposes capitalism granting even the slightest concession to labor.

To guarantee food and clothing to a laboring man and his family when some sordid capitalist throws him out of a job would threaten the capitalist structure Father Coughlin thinks!

"Studying it (the Social Security Act) closely, one discovers that basically it is socialistic in its conception and aims. It is socialism of the old school; socialism that offers a remedy more disastrous than the threatened evil; socialism that demands we take from those who have and give to those who have not." (*Social Justice*, October 17, 1938.)

In the same editorial he advocates giving everyone an "annual living wage" *instead* of Social Security.

What Father Coughlin considers an "annual living wage" in dollars he does not state. It must be less than social security to gain his approval!

And what would be wrong with giving a *decent* annual living wage (not less than \$2,500 at present cost of living) *and* Social Security? A labor government could easily obtain that as a minimum for the workers in the richest land on the face of the earth.

## **Coughlin Favors Regimentation of Labor**

The industrial barons have long been struggling to enact changes into the Wagner Act which would benefit them. Coughlin backs up the changes they want. There must be "no conflict" between labor and the employers, Coughlin says. "National unity" is what he wants.

**"Make the United States Department of Labor a real power. Let it take over the functions of collective bargaining—the functions which the American Federation of Labor is now trying to fulfill. Let it supplant the A. F. of L. entirely." (Interview published in the Detroit Times, October 10, 1934.)**

Does this sound like giving labor the right to organize? What Coughlin advocates in the quotation above is exactly what Mussolini and Hitler advocated and *what they put into effect*.

Concentration camps, forced labor, prisons, starvation, endless hours of labor—this is what Father Coughlin's plan means.

## **Father Coughlin Favors War**

Father Coughlin claims that he is opposed to war. But close attention to his words shows that he is opposed only to war against Germany and Italy *at the present time*. And even on this point he will shift quickly enough when the war actually breaks. He supported Roosevelt's war program once before. It will not be difficult for him to flop back again during the war hysteria and cry sternly over his network: "*Roosevelt's War or Ruin.*"

There is no dearth of statements he has made on this point too, disclosing his *real views*.

On January 19, 1930, in the discourse entitled "Christ or the Red Fog," Coughlin attacked a Milwaukee students' conference for adopting a resolution opposing war. He condemned the students because:

**"They are unwilling to assist in building up a better navy and a stronger army to protect a country where Christ is still a King." (Father Charles E. Coughlin, p. 68.)**

Coughlin is no less devoted to capitalism and private property than Roosevelt. He too wants a big navy and a big army. He too wants unemployed youth marching behind bayonets.

### ***The Fine Art of Jew-Baiting***

So incensed are the American workers at the unparalleled brutality with which Hitler has persecuted the Jews, and so great has been the wave of sympathy for them that Coughlin has attempted to deny that he is a Jew-baiter.

**"We disavow all participation with those who hate Jews because they are Jews. . . ." (Social Justice, May 1 1939.) "If and when anti-Semitism shows its ugly head here, I shall be the first, without hope of receiving reward to condemn it both by voice and deed." Reprinted in Social Justice, May 1, 1939.)**

But a fascist movement if it is to be successful must have a scapegoat on whom the frenzied masses can vent their rage in place of the capitalists who deserve it. (Naturally the capitalists pay well for this service.) And so Coughlin too must have a scapegoat. Coughlin like Hitler and Mussolini has selected the Jew for his scapegoat.

In order to maintain that he is not anti-Semitic, he divides Jews into two categories. Five per cent of them are *religious*, he postulates. This five per cent he favors—and if they are ever persecuted, he declares, you will find him in their front ranks! The other ninety-five per cent, he says, are *not religious*. They are communists, socialists, atheists, international bankers, and dealers in gold. In fact Father Coughlin does not pause at words far more lurid than these in marking the Jews for victims on the reeking altar of capitalism.

At the very height of Hitler's persecution of the Jews,

when the whole world watched horrified, and even reactionaries scurried to place themselves on record as opposing this persecution, Father Coughlin defended Hitler's bloody pogrom and attacked the Jewish victims. (Radio speech, November 20, 1938.)

*Social Justice* from one end to the other is crammed with insinuations and innuendoes attacking the Jews. In issue after issue, Coughlin published the infamous "Protocol of the Elders of Zion," which was proved a vile forgery years ago.

In the December 19, 1938 issue of *Social Justice*, Coughlin attempted with the following lurid allegation to blacken the Chinese who have been defending themselves against the attack of Japanese imperialism:

"Abraham Cohen, who has been variously known as General Ma and General Moi Sha, is the power behind the Nationalist government."

Even if it were true, there would be nothing wrong in a Jew fighting with the Chinese against the oppressing Japanese armies. But not even Japanese propaganda claims that such a person exists.

Outside his editorial page, Coughlin does not pay the slightest attention to differentiating the religious Jews from the ones HE *thinks* are non-religious. They are ALL *Jews* in the news articles.

For example, in the issue of *Social Justice* for June 5, 1939, he attacks Leslie Hore Belisha as "the only *Jewish* member of the British cabinet." (Who certainly as Minister of War is devoted to capitalism, and cannot be dubbed a "communist" by the wildest stretch of the term.)

"Dissatisfaction within the British Army over the fact that England's military arm is led by a Jew, fed by a Jew, and now clad by a Jew, despite severe censorship to hush up the matter," the article asserts.

In his fantastic efforts to prove that there is an "inter-

national plot of Jewry" to enslave the world, Coughlin stops at no lie or distortion of the truth. That is one of the things he must accomplish: construct a hook-nosed wolf with golden fangs and label it JEW, if he is to succeed in becoming Fascist Dictator of America.

With all the deliberate intent of a fascist demagogue who knows exactly what he is about, Coughlin has charted the moves which he hopes will bring him to power.

What does Father Coughlin hope to accomplish by his Jew-baiting?

Split the labor movement into warring camps.

Hack and chop these camps into splintered bits.

Grind these bits into dust.

That is the purpose of Jew-baiting.

First the Jews, then the militants, then the trade-unions, each in turn will be sucked into the ravenous maw of American fascism; each of them tagged: "agent of international Socialist Jewry."

That is the purpose of Jew-baiting!

### ***Coughlin Supports His Fellow Fascists***

In an editorial in the January 2, 1939, issue of *Social Justice* Father Coughlin attacked a proposal that the Red Cross ship wheat for distribution to starving victims of the civil war in Spain, both Loyalists and Fascists.

He gave as his reason that since there was greater need in the territory then held by the Loyalists, most of the wheat would go to feed starving Loyalists.

When five hundred thousand refugees began pouring into France, fleeing from the advance of fascist warlord Franco after being betrayed by Loyalist army leaders who had been put into power and supported by Stalin's Communist Party and the Social Democrats, Coughlin cynically declared:

"The hordes clamoring for escape at the border are not Spaniards. Thousands upon thousands are Russian reds."  
(*Social Justice*, February 13, 1939.)

Coughlin approved Hitler's seizure of Austria.

Coughlin approved Hitler's seizure of the Sudetenland.

Coughlin approved Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia.

Coughlin approved Hitler's seizure of Memel.

Coughlin approves Hitler's bristling war threats.

In his broadcast of March 24, 1935, Coughlin declared:  
*"Today the outposts of Germany are the frontiers of our civilization."*

When the work week was lengthened arbitrarily by decree in France, Father Coughlin hailed the act.

In the Far East Coughlin supports Japan and describes this militaristic dictatorship where all civil liberties have been suppressed in blood for years, as "the sole barrier against the menace of communism in the Far East." The "victory of China," he assures the reader, would mean victory for communism in China." (*Social Justice*, December 19, 1938. See also the issues of December 26, 1938 and March 6, 1939.)

When Mussolini invaded Ethiopia (a Christian nation incidentally) Coughlin broadcast a speech attacking the Ethiopians and justifying Mussolini's criminal war. (*A Series of Lectures on Social Justice*, April 1936, by Rev. Charles E. Coughlin, pp. 17-19.)

Coughlin applauded Mussolini's seizure of Albania, calling it a "rescue," for the "benefit" of its million inhabitants.

*Why is Father Coughlin so enthusiastic about the foreign fascists?*

Let it be understood once and for all, that Father Coughlin is not an *agent* of the European dictators. Far from it. He is their *disciple* and *admirer*. But on the day

that war breaks out between the United States and any one of these nations, which Coughlin now lauds, he will turn against that nation as savagely as a cannibal on his aged grandfather.

What Coughlin desires is that the *methods* and the *ideology* of these fascist plunderers *sink deeply into the minds of his followers*.

Coughlin wants to organize a state *similar* to the Nazi and the fascist—a *corporate state*, and the REAL masters of that corporate state, the masters to whom he swears devotion and whose interests he represents, are *America's* parasitic SIXTY FAMILIES.

### ***The Fascists Hail Coughlin***

When the Socialist Workers Party led 50,000 demonstrators in protest against the February 20 meeting of the German-American Bund in Madison Square Garden, the 18,000 members of the Bund, meeting under protection of the biggest concentration of police in New York history, were heiling Fuehrer Fritz Kuhn, Fuehrer Hitler, and Il Duce Mussolini. But the biggest ovation of the evening, next only to that accorded La Guardia's police, was the ovation given Father Coughlin.

*Significant that the German-American Bund followers of Hitler should be so enthusiastic over Coughlin!*

An Associated Press dispatch from Rome on January 17, 1939, stated that the radio priest "received fascist praise and thanks today from the *Regime Fascista*, the newspaper that has led attacks on the Vatican in the dispute over the Italian anti-Semitic measures."

In a Berlin dispatch dated November 27, 1938, Otto D. Tolischus reports in the *New York Times*:

**"The German hero in America for the moment is the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin because of his radio speech representing National-Socialism (Nazism) as a defensive**

front against Bolshevism.”

The *acknowledged* advocates of fascism in America are not less enthusiastic.

George E. Deatherage, leader of the Knights of the White Camellia, who insists that fascism as a movement began in America with the Ku Klux Klan long before it was copied by the Nazis, declares :

“He is not the leader we are looking for, but America has produced no greater voice: and when the time for the showdown comes, Father Coughlin will have behind him and us, ten million mobilized followers.” (*Saturday Evening Post*, May 27, 1939.)

William Dudley Pelley, Fuehrer of the Silver Shirts, another mysteriously financed “Christian” who openly proclaims his desire to Hitlerize the United States, declared in the November 14, 1938, issue of his magazine, *Liberation* :

“This past week the aggressive Father Coughlin went on the air over a New York radio station and delivered what amounted to the prize Silver Shirt speech of the year.”

It is not difficult to understand the brotherly love between the openly acknowledged fascists and the “radio priest” who has risen so rapidly from obscurity.

### ***Father Coughlin, Speculator and Stockholder***

When Coughlin was supporting Roosevelt and the New Deal during the honeymoon first term, he pronounced a series of discourses over the air on the silver question.

The burden of these speeches was, briefly, that to save the forgotten man, increase world trade, give everybody a job, and “thaw out money,” it was necessary only to raise the price of silver.

“The restoration of silver to its proper value is of Christian concern. I send you a call for the mobilization of all Christianity against the god of gold.” (Quoted in the *Churchman*, June, 1939.)

Eventually Roosevelt did raise the price of silver.

And then Secretary of the Treasury, Morgenthau revealed in April 1934 that the largest holder of silver futures in the state of Michigan was *one Amy Collins, secretary to Father Coughlin.*

She held 500,000 *ounces*, costing 40 cents an ounce at the time of purchase, but purchased at 10 per cent margin, or \$20,000. Every time silver went up 1 cent it meant \$5,000 *profit for the holder of the 500,000 ounces.*

On an investment of \$20,000, Coughlin made 500 PER CENT PROFIT.

It was this revelation of his silver speculations which turned Coughlin so savagely against Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau. Even the Bund since then curses Morgenthau regularly in its ritual. Not long afterward, Coughlin switched his support from President Roosevelt to William Lemke.

In 1935 the *Detroit Free Press* revealed in a series of articles that in 1929 and 1930 Father Coughlin had speculated in stock of the Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Co. and the Packard Motor Car Co., that in one transaction alone he paid as much as \$30,110.89 for Kelsey-Hayes stock and lost nearly \$14,000 in another venture. The *Free Press* also revealed that Coughlin manipulated three bank accounts, one in the name of C. E. Coughlin, one in the name of the Radio League of the Little Flower, and a third in the name of Ste. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish, and that he used these funds for speculative purposes.

Father Coughlin's interest in the stock of certain automobile companies sheds an intensely illuminating light on his early ventures into the labor field.

### ***Father Coughlin, Labor Hater***

Besides having his printing done in a non-union shop,

Father Coughlin constructed his million dollar Shrine of the Little Flower by hiring an open-shop contractor who paid his men 25 to 40 per cent below trade union rates. In this way Coughlin showed what he means by a "living annual wage"!

As a result, the A.F. of L. at its 1934 convention at San Francisco unanimously adopted a resolution condemning Coughlin for his anti-labor policies.

Father Coughlin favors the company union :

"Had the motor manufacturers been in the least intelligent, they would have helped to organize a friendly and efficient union years ago." (*Eight Lectures*, p. 125.)

Father Coughlin is opposed to strikes (exactly the way Hitler and Mussolini are opposed to strikes!):

"The National Union for Social Justice contends that strikes and lockouts are absolutely unnecessary." (*Sermon*, December 2, 1934.)

In 1935 a semi-company union, the Automotive Industrial Workers of America, was organized. It was known as the "Coughlin union" because of the blessing Coughlin gave it.

It was organized in order to prevent the formation of a real fighting union which would gain better conditions, better wages, and shorter hours for the workers.

But the "Coughlin union" despite its blessing, decided to strike against the intolerable conditions in the Motor Products Co. and downed tools on November 15, 1935.

In the vicious strike-breaking campaign that followed, the strikers asked Father Coughlin for help.

*He REFUSED to see their delegation.* He refused to broadcast in their behalf. He refused to speak a single word in their cause.

Let it not be forgotten, that *many of the leaders of this strike were members of Father Coughlin's organization, the National Union for Social Justice.*

The police, the armed scabs, the organized company terror—these, *combined with the Judas kiss of Father Coughlin*, broke the strike.

Yes, Coughlin promises many beautiful things to the oppressed, but when the crucial moment comes, *he is the first to plant the dagger in their backs.*

Since the formation of the C.I.O. Coughlin has assailed it venomously and incessantly.

When Governor A. B. Chandler of Kentucky ordered President Roosevelt's National Guard down to Harlan County with orders to *shoot to kill* if necessary to break the strike, Coughlin whitewashed the coal operators who have been notorious throughout the nation for half a century as one of the most tyrannical, bloody, and violent sections of the boss class.

**"The Union Leaders Made Troops Necessary." (Social Justice, June 5, 1939, p. 21, headline to article on Harlan.)**

**"To guarantee the men their right to work, Governor Chandler found it necessary to call out nearly 1,000 National Guard troops to stand guard over the mines. . . . Lewis defied the forces of law and order in Harlan County, Ky., where Governor Chandler said that 75 per cent of the mine workers desired to work, despite Lewis' command that they continue in idleness. The cry of revolt (against Lewis) was heard in other sections sickened by Lewis' one-man rule over their jobs, homes, and happiness." (Social Justice, May 22, 1939.)**

The coal operators, who are also the county officials, openly admitted that **THEY sent** for the troops to break the strike.

As a propagandist able and willing to paint up violence, terror, and intimidation of the bosses with the gentle colors of the lily, Coughlin has no equal—in America.

The Memorial Day massacre, in which Republic Steel Corporation shot down unarmed workers in the back is

blamed by Father Coughlin *on the workers*. He characterizes the massacre as a "bloody riot" and asserts that it will be easy for the Republic Steel Corporation to "prove to any jury that it cost them" the \$7,500,000 for which they are suing the workers they attacked. (Editorial in *Social Justice*, June 5, 1939.)

The editorial continues with a vicious attack on the C.I.O. To Father Coughlin any militant worker is a "red," a "socialist," a conspirator in the ring of "international Jewry."

When he retired "forever" from the air and public life in 1936, he returned in less than two months, January 1, 1937, with an attack on thousands of striking General Motors workers.

(His civil liberties record is no better than his labor record.

In the March 13, 1939, issue of *Social Justice*, for example, he opposes anti-lynching legislation.

In the December 19, 1938, issue, he attacks the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, which exposed the million dollar labor spy racket and the widespread use by powerful corporations of thugs, machine guns, poison gas, intimidation, terror, and violence against their workers.

Father Coughlin does not like *investigations* or *exposures* such as those conducted by the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee.

Let the fools and the suckers bite at the gaudily feathered hook Father Coughlin dangles! Labor's right to organize? Father Coughlin believes in it the same way Tom Girdler and Henry Ford and the Harlan County coal operators do. Just let the workers dare to carry a card in a genuine union! There are ways of changing those workers' minds—Memorial day Massacres, multi-million dollar

damage suits, rifles and bayonets of the National Guard, a spray of machine gun slugs in the back. . . .

## ***Who Is Behind Father Coughlin?***

What Father Coughlin's secret files at the Shrine of the Little Flower would reveal as to his financial backers can only be imagined.

Hitler's movement, when it was in the same stage as Father Coughlin's, was *secretly* backed by powerful financial interests—the steel magnate Thyssen and other powerful German capitalists.

Occasionally Coughlin will mention certain capitalists favorably in his radio broadcasts—Henry Ford, Walter P. Chrysler, James Rand. Father Coughlin stayed at the *San Simeon ranch of William Randolph Hearst* while on a visit to California. Mr. G. A. Richards, president of WJR is a generous financial backer mentioned by Coughlin. He mentions too in one of his broadcasts (*Father Charles E. Coughlin*, an official biography, p. 107.) the visit of Harris and LeBlanc to his shrine for intimate conversations, Robert M. Harris of the New York Cotton Exchange—a southern bourbon well-known as a cotton and silver speculator, and George LeBlanc described by Coughlin as “perhaps the world's foremost gold trader” (*an international banker!*).

The forces in Coughlin's financial background are as sinister as the forces that directed the breaking of the Little Steel Strike.

## ***Coughlin's Program and the Fascist Program***

Coughlin's program as it now stands bears a remarkable resemblance to the programs of fascism and Nazism when they were at a similar stage.

Coughlin appeals to the dissatisfied and restless unem-

ployed workers and youth, and the farmers and small merchants who are facing bankruptcy.

Hitler directed his appeals to the same sections of the population.

Mussolini built his movement from similar ranks.

Coughlin, like his predecessors proposes a "just and living annual wage," "cost of production plus a fair profit to the farmer," etc. He attacks democratic capitalism just as Mussolini and Hitler did, and attacks it contemptuously.

He proposes "revolution" as they did, the use of force. He attacks the failure of the New Deal to solve unemployment. He attacks its war program.

Coughlin is attempting to divert these revolutionary layers of the oppressed masses, just as Mussolini and Hitler before him did, from striking at the very heart and core of the *system* that produces unemployment. He turns their rage against the "international bankers," the "Jews," the "money system." He proposes economic reforms chiefly in the realms of *banking and currency*. In this way, like Mussolini and Hitler, he attempts to dissipate the revolutionary energy of the masses against bundles of painted straw.

To the capitalists he makes clear exactly where he stands by expressing his devotion to capitalism and the private ownership of property. For certain public necessities and natural resources he advocates *nationalization*; but he *emphasizes* that he doesn't want nationalization of industry.

Some of Hitler's most prominent demands make interesting reading beside Coughlin's. The Nazi platform for instance called for "abolition of the domination of interest," "the complete confiscation of all war profits," and "participation in the profits of large concerns."

*These demands, of course, were NEVER carried out.*

**“Practically all the sixteen principles of social justice are being put into practice in Italy and Germany.” (Social Justice, February 13, 1939, p. 7.)**

Let that statement of Coughlin’s burn like fire on your memory!

And we might remind the lieutenants of Father Coughlin, that the secondary leaders in Hitler’s organization who insisted on carrying out the Nazi program were *“purged” in a ghastly blood bath.*

When fascism marches into power it smashes the trade unions, arrests the regularly-elected leaders and appoints fascist chiefs in their place who *dictate* the new rules and regulations. They confiscate the union treasury.

They confiscate the savings accounts and the insurance of the workers, if they have any.

They build barbed wire concentration camps and herd the unemployed inside at bayonet point.

They spread the industrial spy system throughout every city, town, and hamlet of the entire nation and intensify its grip a thousandfold.

Libraries are burned. Schools are shut down. Hours are lengthened. Wages are slashed. The speed-up is whipped up to new heights. Terror and torture are turned loose. The streets flow with blood. Strikes are punished with death. Racial minorities such as the Jews and the Negroes are nailed to the cross.

Fascism is hell for the workers and the unemployed. But it saves the profits of the small handful of capitalists who control the nation’s wealth. And some obscure figure becomes the all-powerful dictator of the nation’s fate.

To many good-hearted people it seems impossible that fascism could come to the United States.

But it is impossible to wish away 17,000,000 unemployed.

It is impossible to wish away the dizzy downward plunge of the rate of capitalist profit since 1929.

And it is impossible to wish away the storm-troopers being trained by fascist organizations right now in America.

In city after city, the fascist movement is spreading. Trained squads of Coughlinites, protected by the police, sell *Social Justice* in the busiest streets of every city, in workers' sections, in predominantly Jewish and Negro sections.

*Fights between workers and fascists break out almost every day.*

### **Can Roosevelt Stop Fascism?**

Father Coughlin is not alone among the representatives of Big Business who hears death's knuckles rapping at the door of democratic capitalism.

President Roosevelt, nearing the end of his second term in the White House sees his New Deal collapsing like a house of cards built from an old and very dirty deck.

Only WAR can save Roosevelt—and then only for the briefest of periods.

But for this brief period he will pay the price of millions of lives of the workers, the farmers, the youth. That is why he is buying battleships with the relief funds of the unemployed.

That is why he has poured money without precedent into a war machine that outstagers anything in the history of the country. He hopes to divert the attention of the desperate masses from *their* plight to a *foreign enemy*.

But even war is a temporary and unpopular expedient. The unemployed don't want bayonets. They want food and jobs. Roosevelt's war can only whip their fury to new heights. Father Coughlin knows all this very well. He

has read a lot of fan mail since 1926.

He knows too that Big Business, in its way is as desperate as the unemployed. Big Business fears the revolutionary might of the unemployed. It wants to preserve its clutches on national wealth. It wants to preserve the profit system.

Roosevelt's usefulness as a stop-gap for Big Business is almost at an end.

Roosevelt is capitalism's smiles and promises of last year.

Now the Sixty Families need a new demagogue with less smile and more promises.

General Smedley Butler has revealed that the Morgan-DuPont interests were ready to spend \$3,000,000 with a promise of \$300,000,000 more if necessary to finance a fascist army that would march on Washington behind the General.

General Butler turned the offer down. *Perhaps someone else did not turn that offer down.*

### ***Can the Trade Unions Alone Stop Fascism?***

The trade unions, bogged down with the bureaucracies headed by John L. Lewis and William Green, stand helpless before the terrible problems now facing the working class, the half-ruined farmers, the small business men, and the destitute unemployed.

The trade unions as fighting organizations of the working class won huge successes in the past, conquering many of the rights of labor and defending them during the upswing of capitalism. Today under the domination of Lewis and Green the trade unions if left *alone* and *without help* face disaster.

Father Coughlin understands the limitless strength of America's laboring people far better than do Lewis and

Green with their corner grocery outlook.

That is why he attempts to turn the unemployed, tooth and nail, upon those organized in trade unions.

That is why he denounces the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. over his radio network. That is why he calls strikers "idlers," and speaks of the "jobs they have left."

That is why he calls every militant trade unionist a "communist," a "socialist," a "Jew."

That is why he exerts every ounce of his voice and his pen to build up a terrible hate for the words: *communist, socialist, Jew.*

The trade unions *alone*, especially as they have been caught in the death grip which democratic capitalism has clamped upon Lewis and Green, cannot meet the situation.

A new force is needed and needed badly.

A new weapon of the working class must be forged.

An Independent Labor Party, a fighting militant political party of the working class charged with vision, with daring, with invincible *boldness* must be organized as the battering ram that will smash this entire trashy structure of New Deal politics and the poisonous fascist growths that swell upward from its rotting foundation.

### ***Fascism in America Must Be Stopped!***

We must not repeat the mistakes of the labor movement in Italy and in Germany which permitted forgers, sidewalk spielers, and sideshow adventurers like Mussolini and Hitler to take over power.

The first lesson to learn is not difficult: LABOR MUST DEPEND ON ITS OWN STRENGTH.

Labor must have its own independent political party.

Labor must have its own defense guards.

The greatest danger of all is to depend on the Roosevelts, the LaGuardias, the police, and the boot lickers of these former bosom friends of Coughlin and his ilk.

The first task that labor must perform in stopping the fascist movement in America is the organization of a *workers' defense guard*.

Every union local should begin the immediate organization of a guard to protect itself from the certain onslaught of the fascists in the near future.

The sooner these guards are organized the more efficient they will become in protecting the labor movement.

Trained, disciplined, and bold *workers defense guards* are the ONLY FORCE that can physically *stop* the fascists from overpowering the labor movement in America.

### ***The Final Answer to Coughlin***

Democratic capitalism is doomed in the United States.

It can offer nothing but war, unemployment, misery, death.

In its desperate dying struggles capitalism will attempt anything to survive.

That "*anything*" is *fascism*.

The whole fascist movement is built upon the collapse of "democracy" and complete scorn and rejection of democratic institutions, except where they can be utilized to further fascism.

The entire working class, employed and unemployed, youth and aged, and their brothers who toil on the farms, must unite in common struggle to throw out the present government which represents the capitalists and place in power a government that will *represent the workers and the farmers*.

First step in placing labor's own government in power is to organize labor's OWN POLITICAL PARTY.

Every worker must begin *thinking* INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY, *talking* INDEPENDENT LA-

BOR PARTY, *organizing* INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY.

This must be done immediately.

There is not a moment to lose.

ORGANIZE AN INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY.

### ***The Socialist Order of Plenty***

Democratic capitalism is doomed.

Although it loaded them with chains and branded them with irons, even a slave state could feed and clothe its slaves. But democratic capitalism can provide neither jobs nor food for those who toil.

It deserves no other fate but to be crushed by socialist revolution.

Clean away the rubbish of democratic capitalism!

GOOD RIDDANCE!

The productive system is ready to pour out fabulous riches.

Open up the vaults and the granaries!

Open up the bursting warehouses for every working member of society!

Harvest and distribute the crops that ripen in the fields!

Open the idle factories and man the machines that will produce undreamed quantities of wealth!

An end to the blind alley of despair in America!

Fight with the Socialist Workers Party for the SOCIALIST ORDER OF PLENTY!

# FASCISM

## On the March!

The history of Germany and Italy must not be repeated in this country.

We must not stand idly by while Fascism secretly arms and drills, and spreads its poison-seeds by the millions.

We must not wait until Fascism becomes strong enough to destroy workers' organizations; burn books in the public squares; raid homes; throw all who disagree into *Concentration Camps*; kill, maim, imprison trade unionists, Jews, Negroes—all in the name of "Americanism."

**WE MUST FIGHT NOW WHILE THERE IS STILL TIME!**

Help us publish literature exposing Fascism in its varied forms!

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**DO YOUR PART! HELP SMASH FASCISM IN AMERICA!**

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