

JOHN GATES . . .

By "immediate interests" I mean all those interests which come within the scope of the conditions that are brought about—that are caused by the capitalist system; that is, everything dealing with the effects of the capitalist system upon the standard of living of the people, their democratic rights and their peace. . . .

The purpose of the Communist Party in championing those interests or those demands, if you want to put it that way, is to win those demands. The purpose of the Communist Party in championing those interests is to prevent the working class and other sections of the population who are oppressed by the banks, monopolies, from sinking into the state of virtual slavery. . . .

The fundamental interests of those sections of the population have to do with the fundamental cause of the evils which they experience in their daily lives and that fundamental cause is the nature of capitalism itself. The fundamental interests of the working class therefore have to do with the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of socialism.

Q. Do you know whether the Communist Party teaches that there is a relationship between immediate interests and fundamental interests?

A. Yes, it does. It teaches that there is an inseparable relationship between the two, that the establishment of socialism is impossible without the greatest movement for the improvement of the living standards of the population, for the preservation and extension of their democratic rights and for the preservation of peace. . . .

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I said [before the Court took its recess] that the Communist Party of the United States first began to change its policies but it fully changed its policies after the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. The change consisted in the following: Prior to 1935 the Communists saw in the United States the main issue to be as between capitalism vs. socialism. . . . But with the victory of Hitler in one of the most powerful countries of the world, Germany, and with the terrible crimes that Hitler began to execute against his own people and other peoples we realized that Hitler fascism represented a danger to all people of the world, to all their democratic liberties . . . fascism could very well conquer the entire world, including the United States. And so we put the first thing in all of our activity the question of pre-

venting fascism and destroying fascism, and that since the fact that fascism had aroused the entire world in opposition to it we put forward the idea of the election of people's front governments which would have as its aim the prevention of fascism and the defeat of fascism; but as I stated before, governments which would not have as part of their program the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of socialism.

THE COURT: Now do you mean to tell us that before 1935 force and violence was in and after 1935 force and violence was out?

THE WITNESS: Not at all. Even before 1935 when we envisaged the main issue as between capitalism and socialism we did not advocate the forcible overthrow of the United States Government in order to establish Socialism.

Q. What did you advocate?

A. We advocated the winning of a majority of the American people for the establishment of Socialism. We sought a peaceful means of doing that and the only way that force and violence would come into the picture would be if the big corporations and financial interests of the United States would attempt to prevent the American people from instituting Socialism when they so desired.

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Q. Now will you tell us how, if at all, that slogan was taught, advocated or applied by the Communist Party during the period commencing with your return to the

United States from Europe in January, 1946, and July 20, 1948?

A. This section or this paragraph on page 167 [of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*] refers to an historical fact that the Russian Bolsheviks, the Russian Communists at the time of the First World War put forward the slogan of turning the imperialist war into civil war. We believe that that slogan and that war was an historically correct slogan. It was the slogan that finally brought an end to a war which was reactionary, which was imperialist, which was a war which was carried on for plunder and for conquest, a war which President Wilson called a war of industrial and commercial rivalry. As a matter of historical fact the war of 1914-1918 was finally brought to an end as a result of the Russian Revolution of 1917, November 1917, and as a result of the German Revolution against the Kaiser in November of 1918. But this does not mean to the Communist that the slogan "turn the imperialist war into civil war" must necessarily be put forward in all imperialist wars. . . .

Now, what we Communists of the United States learned from the way that the Russian Communists used this slogan in 1914-1918 and what we learned from reading and studying the Marxist-Leninist principles as embodied here in the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* is the following, and that is, that there must be uncompromising opposition on the part of

the peoples of the world to imperialist war, but the exact slogans that must be used, which will express this opposition, the exact forms that this opposition will take will depend upon the different circumstances and times which will be in effect.

What we learned and how we applied the teachings of Marxism-Leninism on the question of imperialist war and on just and unjust wars is that the war that is now being prepared by the Wall Street financial interests in the United States is a war that has no other purpose than that of plunder and world domination in the interests of those banks and corporations, and that the people, neither of the United States nor anywhere else in the world, have anything to gain from such a war.

And the way we apply the teachings of Marxism-Leninism is, at the present time, that we will do everything possible to prevent the outbreak of such a war.

Furthermore, if, however, such a war should break out despite all the efforts of the Communists and the peoples of the world to prevent it, then our policy is to seek to bring that war to an end as quickly as possible on the basis of a just and democratic peace. And the way that we envisage that that will be done is to build up a coalition in the United States, an anti-war and peace coalition consisting of all those sections of the working class, the Negro people, of the farm population, of the middle classes of the country, a

coalition of these class forces and a grouping together of all organizations and political parties that will want to bring such a war to an end, and the formation of a people's peace government, a government which will have as its aim the establishment of peace and not the establishment of Socialism. That is what we have envisaged at the present time as the solution to the problem of war, and we don't put forward at the present time the slogan of "turn the imperialist war into a civil war" because we do not feel that the circumstances in the United States warrant the putting forward of that slogan. . . .

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I believe that the main issue that confronted the American people in the present historical stage of development is the danger of war and fascism and the necessity to preserve and to extend democracy and peace to insure lasting peace. We do not believe—I do not believe that the question of socialism is an immediate issue because of the fact that the majority of the American people are not yet convinced of the necessity for socialism as the solution to the problems of war and fascism. We advocate therefore that the prime necessity that faces the American people in preventing war and fascism is to build a coalition. . . .

We advocate or we advocated in the years of the indictment, the period covered by the indictment, the building of a coalition which would

consist of a united front of the working class, of the Negro people, of the middle classes, and of those sections of the capitalist class which were convinced of the necessity to prevent war and fascism. In order to carry out the aims of such a coalition, we advocated in the years of the indictment the legal and peaceful election of an anti-fascist, anti-war government, a government which would represent the coalition that I have mentioned, which would have as its aim to place restrictions upon the monopolies which are the main cause of war and fascism, but a government which would not be a socialist government, that is, a government which would not be for the abolition of the capitalist system, and we envisaged that with the formation of such a government in the United States that we would point out to such government that in order to prevent the overthrow of that government by the reactionary interests, that is, the Wall Street monopolies and possibly overthrow that government by force and violence by those interests, that this government would have to take drastic measures to curb these monopoly interests, to prevent them from sabotaging the work of this government and eventually to completely destroy the power of these monopoly capitalist interests, so that what we envisage in this way [is that] the development of socialism

would be assured in our country and what we seek and advocate is a peaceful development in this country of socialism. We cannot predict and we did not predict the exact conditions and circumstances under which socialism would come into power in the United States of America. We anticipate that on the basis of the past history that undoubtedly the Wall Street financial interests and the big corporations in this country would use every possible measure, including force and violence, to prevent such a government from coming to power or to overthrow such a government once it came to power.

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Q. What did the Communist Party teach and advocate during the same period concerning the avertability or inevitability of another world war?

A. We believe that the relationship of forces in the world has so changed in favor of peace that the peace forces of the world have become so strong in the world in relationship to the forces that are working for war that for the first time I would say in world history it has become possible for the peoples of the world, if they unite their forces and conduct an energetic struggle against the war makers—that it has become possible for the first time in history to prevent, to actually prevent the outbreak of another imperialist world war....