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The 18th Anniversary of the Founding
of the Communist Party

THE Communist Party of the United States celebrates today the eighteenth anniversary of its foundation. Youngest of America's political parties, it is receiving so much attention from a hostile press that millions of people are interested in knowing more about it from its own spokesmen. Since Al Smith accused President Roosevelt of being a Communist, probably most of the 27 million who voted for the President would like to know more exactly of what they are accused. We take this opportunity of our birthday to speak to the country about our Party.

Founded in Chicago 18 years ago today, the Communist Party must trace its history much further back, because it is really a continuation of the old Socialist Party founded almost 40 years ago by Eugene V. Debs, Victor L. Berger and their associates. At the convention of the Socialist Party in 1919, the majority of the membership were expelled by the leadership which controlled the organization; it was this majority that founded the Communist Party. How truly the Communists represented the movement of Debs is demonstrated by the fact that the Socialist Party, since that time, never recovered from the blow inflicted upon it by its leaders; it is now only a shadow of its former self, while the Communist Party is emerging as a growing and significant force in American politics, to which all thinking men must give attention.

At this moment the Communist Party stands alone among all the minority parties of the country in the publication field, with ten daily newspapers and some twenty weekly and semi-weekly publications. At this moment we are raising a

great fund to launch two more daily newspapers in the English language, one in Chicago and the other in San Francisco. These, with our *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*, published in New York, will constitute the first newspaper chain in America owned and controlled by a working class political party. Supplementing this news press, our Party issues a growing flood of books, pamphlets and magazines, all of which find a ready and growing market. It is conceded even by our enemies that the publications of our Party exert a great and growing influence upon the country, and that they are models of efficient organization.

What is the message that this powerful voice of the Communist Party is giving to America? First of all, it is the message of the need for the great mass of the people, the workers and farmers, to organize for their own self-protection against those forces of greed and exploitation, collectively known as Wall Street. Trade unions of the workers, and the various forms of organization of the farmers, and co-operation between these two groups, receive from the Communist Party its undivided attention and support. Our Party trains its members to be the most effective organizers and helpers in building the organizations of the people. In this tremendous and difficult task it is no small thing to have a compact, disciplined and well-organized party helping in every way to solve the complex problems that arise. Many hundreds of thousands of workers have learned to value the work of the Communist Party in this field, and to trust our Party.

Secondly, the Communist Party works untiringly to unite all the organizations of the workers, farmers and oppressed middle classes, for effectively fighting for those governmental measures of social and labor legislation needed to meet their immediate difficulties. It was the Communist Party, for example, which brought forward the first proposal for Unemployment, Old-Age and Social Insurance, and organized a mass movement in its support, which enlisted millions and paved the way for those small beginnings toward this end enacted into law by the Roosevelt Administration. It was the

Communist Party, alone of all political parties, which helped the farmers to fight against evictions at the depth of the crisis, and which supported *completely* every legislative demand of the farmers for relief from their burdens. Only the Communist Party, no other, officially supported the demand of the war veterans for the bonus, a demand forced to fulfillment over the leaders of all other parties. It was the fight organized and led by the Communist Party on behalf of the unemployed which finally brought from a reluctant Congress those measures of relief and work which saved America from catastrophe. Millions of Americans took part in these fights, who were not Communists; but the only political party which helped them, and which brought about national unity and organization of the battle, was the Communist Party.

Thirdly, it was the Communist Party, alone among political parties, which saw the crying need for America to put an end to the disgraceful rule of lynch-law and special persecution of the Negro people, and which made a practical day-to-day struggle for this purpose. Thus it was the Communists who took up the fight for the Scottsboro boys, finally won the release of four of them, saved the lives of all, and brought the whole country to consciousness of a national disgrace which must be wiped out. It was the Communist Party which, by winning the freedom of Angelo Herndon from 20 years on a Georgia chain-gang, won a victory for the whole Negro people. It was the Communist Party which alone raised the banner of full and complete citizenship for the Negroes, although a hypocritical promise of these rights has been written into the Constitution for generations.

Fourthly, the Communist Party is working for the unity of the working class and for the establishment of a common fighting front of the great majority of the people, in a permanent political coalition, a People's Front, against their enemies, the bankers and monopolists who dominate the Republican Party and control such a large part of the Democratic Party that in the last Congress they defeated the mandate of the 1936 election. We declare that the old party lines have become

meaningless, that the time has come for a new alignment, in which the progressives shall all unite on one side against the reactionaries on the other side. That is what we mean when we call for a Farmer-Labor Party, although we are not particular about what such a party should be called. We declare that the main issue before our country today is that of the choice between progress or reaction, between democracy or fascism. We of the Communist Party are fully and completely in the camp of progress and democracy. We are giving our best efforts to help unite in this camp the majority of the people to take the government out of the hands of Wall Street.

Fifthly, the Communist Party is fighting for a peace policy for the United States, for a policy that will keep America out of war by helping the peace-loving and democratic peoples of other lands to keep war out of the world. We condemn the stupid and hypocritical "neutrality" law, which is the most unneutral law ever written, and which threatens to drag America into a new world war by directly encouraging the war-making fascist powers. We propose that the U. S. should base its foreign policy squarely upon the Kellogg-Briand Pact of Paris, by which fifty nations have pledged us to refrain from war, and upon the Nine-Power Pact which guarantees peace in the Pacific; that whenever any nation violates these pledges so solemnly made, the U. S. shall register that fact, and throw the moral and economic power of this country into the balance against the war-makers by severing economic connections with them (but not with their victims) until peace is restored and their pledges made good. We propose the fullest co-operation of the U. S. with every nation which wants peace, for common restraint of the war-makers, and for the Pacific—a Pacific Pact of Non-Aggression. We hold that war anywhere in the world is a disaster for all and threatens the peace of all. We hold that only international co-operation along these lines holds any hope for preserving the peace of the world. We give our efforts to organize the people of America to urge such a policy upon our government.

Finally, the Communist Party tells the people of America

that all our troubles arise from the private ownership of our economic resources, the factories, mills, mines, railroads, banks, by a small—and increasingly smaller—number of rich families, the monopolists and financiers known as Wall Street. There is no complete and final solution of our problems so long as the monopolists and financiers retain the ownership and control of our economy. It will finally become necessary for the people to take over this ownership and control, through their own government, and operate our economic life for the common good of all, instead of the private profit of the few. Such a change is what we call the change from capitalism to socialism—from the rule of the capitalist to the rule of the socially-organized producers, the working people of the country. We point out the successful operation of this principle in the Soviet Union, a land formerly among the most backward, unfortunate and poverty-stricken, which is now through a few years of socialism achieving miracles of economic, cultural and social progress which has already caught up with and surpassed Europe, and which is now second only to the United States. How much more quickly and completely could we in the United States, where all the necessary material foundations have already been laid, achieve plenty and prosperity for all, once we break the fetter of capitalist monopoly!

Finally, the Communist Party tells the people of America that all these good things, these necessary things for the life of the people, can only be won if there is a strong, clear-headed, disciplined Party of the workers which organizes the people to fight for them, which day in and day out, year after year, is guiding the struggle and finding the solutions for all problems—only if the best, most loyal, most energetic, and most intelligent from among the workers, farmers and middle classes unite themselves for these purposes in the Communist Party.

On its eighteenth anniversary the Communist Party is conducting a recruiting campaign for new members. We invite into our ranks for organized common work to achieve our common ends, all who agree with our basic program, who have

learned to trust and respect our Party. We want to add to our present 50,000 active dues-paying membership, within the next few weeks, at least another 50,000 who we know are prepared to join our ranks when the invitation is put squarely before them. The growth of the Communist Party is the greatest blow against the rule of monopolists and financiers; it is the greatest guarantee against reaction and fascism; it is the hope of democracy and progress; it is the promise of a future America with peace and prosperity for every man, woman and child.

Broadcast over a coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company, September 1, 1937.