

THE COMMUNIST PARTY LINE

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FOR THE

SUBCOMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY
ACT AND OTHER INTERNAL SECURITY LAWS

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
September 23, 1961.

Resolved, That the document entitled "The Communist Party Line" prepared by J. Edgar Hoover for the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee be printed as a Senate document and that fifty thousand additional copies be printed for the use of the Committee on the Judiciary and that one hundred and three thousand additional copies be printed for the use of the Senate.

Attest:

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THE COMMUNIST PARTY LINE

By JAMES O. EASTLAND, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U.S. Department of Justice

The term "party line" is frequently used by Americans or talking about Communism. The phrase has become a shorthand expression following a pattern that has been established by the Communist Party in its communications literature. The party has been fighting a long and bitter battle to win the support of the American people. It has been successful in many instances and has gained many converts to its cause. This is the Communist Party's "party line".

FOREWORD

The combination of anti-Free World actions embodied in the phrase "Communist Party line" involves all Americans because that united effort is directed at eventual conquest of the United States, and with it the entire world. Despite frequent use of the term, many do not have a precise understanding of its workings.

A short time ago, I asked the distinguished Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, John Edgar Hoover, to prepare a short analysis on this subject for the use of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. The study he subsequently furnished, which is printed on the following pages, is the wisest and most penetrating treatment of the "party line" that I have ever read. Its brevity makes it doubly valuable, because only a few minutes' reading time is needed to acquire this essential information.

JAMES O. EASTLAND,
Chairman, Internal Security Subcommittee.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY LINE

By John Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U.S. Department of Justice

The term "party line" is frequently used by Americans in talking about communism. Too often the term is used loosely to denote "following a certain line of action" or set of party demands.

In communism, however, the party line plays a highly significant and specific role—a vital part in the party's program for the revolutionary overthrow of our form of government. We, as Americans, should know more about the party line. What is it? How is it formed? How does it operate? As citizens we should know how to understand and interpret the party line—realizing that it is a hypocritical and deceitful technique to hoodwink and beguile us. The great danger today is that the constant reiteration of the party line by Communists—day after day—may cause their demands to be accepted as valid and truthful.

The party line, in fact, is the sum total of all party demands at any given time. These demands, whether they are local, national, or international in nature, are designed to promote the Communist revolution. However vehemently the Communists may campaign for the various proposals which compose the party line, they are not genuinely interested in "reforms" or improving our society. For the party, reforms are useful only to the extent to which they advance the ultimate revolution. The party regards reforms as temporary, transitional adjustments which can be achieved during a period when the party has not yet attained sufficient strength to risk direct revolutionary action.

It is only in this light that the following summary of the 1961 line of the Communist Party, USA, must be viewed. Based on authoritative Communist publications, it has been prepared to summarize the position taken by the party on the major current issues of international and national interest and to show how the Communists attempt to exploit popular, legitimate issues for their own advantage.

PART I

Foreign policy

In the field of international relations, the party line can be summed up as "made in Moscow." Completely exonerating the Soviet Union, the party attempts to place the blame for all international tension on the United States. The Berlin situation, according to the party, is a "crisis artificially created by Washington" in order to justify increased military spending and to stampede the American public into a war hysteria. It is the "aggressions and intrigues" of the United States which are allegedly making it impossible to arrange for a cease-fire in Laos. Cuba is cited as a flagrant example of "American imperialism," and the United States, in the party's eyes, is responsible for the murder of Patrice Lumumba and other "African patriots" because it created the conditions which led to these events.

"Wall Street," a traditional Communist whipping boy, is accused of reviving Hitlerism and militarism in Western Germany as a prelude to using West German military forces as possible "mercenary troops" for war against the Soviet Union. The U.S. policies of refusing to grant diplomatic recognition to Communist China and of opposing its admission to the United Nations are derided as "ridiculous." The military dictatorship which recently seized power in South Korea, allegedly with American support, is accused of using the issue of anti-communism to destroy democracy in that nation.

In contrast, the Soviet Union is hailed as being "extremely patient" in its efforts to resolve all international tensions peacefully. The Vienna meeting between Soviet Premier N. S. Khrushchev and President John F. Kennedy is cited as a typical example of the desire of the Soviet Union to negotiate all outstanding differences between the two nations.

Thus, while the party, in line with the current Soviet peaceful coexistence strategy, describes the preservation of world peace as "the supreme task of our period," it is evident that this peace could be achieved only by complete capitulation to every Soviet demand.

Domestic issues

The Communist Party, U.S.A., confident of its ability to survive and grow, is expressing its conviction that history is on its side, as the world is marching "irresistibly" toward socialism after clearly rejecting capitalism because of its failure to eliminate poverty, oppression, and insecurity. All attacks on communism are condemned as "undemocratic," and the party views the growth of "rightwing" organizations as evidence of a trend toward fascism in the United States. The "unjust" distribution of wealth in this country is cited as the explanation for what the party claims is practically a complete "moral and ethical breakdown" which has developed into "a major national catastrophe." The vaunted American standard of living, according to the party, has always been exaggerated and, due to the cost of the cold war, is steadily declining.

Labor and industry

According to the party, the close relationship between "big business" and the Government has now developed into state monopoly capitalism, resulting in the complete subordination of the state "to the rule of the monopolists." The party alleges that unemployment is one of the "inherent ills" of capitalism which can be eliminated only under socialism. American labor leaders are derided as a "labor aristocracy" and a "reactionary clique" because of their support of American foreign policy and because of their refusal to exchange labor delegations with the Soviet Union.

Agriculture

The party's appeal to American farmers is based on the claim that the large monopolies are responsible for what the party describes as the "chronic agricultural crisis" in which the small farmers are gradually being driven from the land as a result of steadily declining farm income. Migratory farm workers are described as "slaves" working in "sweatshop factories in the fields," and the party is calling for greater solidarity between farmers and workers to promote their mutual interest.

Colonialism

According to the party, the United States has now become the "biggest international exploiter" and the "chief exponent of neo-colonialism," which achieves the usual colonial goals but in a more indirect, subtle manner. The United States is blamed for supplying the arms with which Portugal is "butchering" Africans in Angola. The Alliance for Progress, the recently adopted 10-year, multi-billion-dollar program aimed at the economic development of Latin America, is condemned as an effort to enable the United States to dominate the political, economic, and social life of Latin America even more completely than in the past. The party even lists Canada among those nations which are struggling for their independence—in Canada's case economic independence—from the United States. While conceding that "imperialism" is still strong, the party alleges that the demonstrated economic strength of the Communist nations and the growing economic strength of the newly emerging nations are transforming it into a dying force.

Legislative and judicial affairs

Since the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court upholding the constitutionality of the membership clause of the Smith Act¹ and ordering the party to register under the provisions of the Internal Security Act of 1950² vitally affect its future, the party reacted strongly. These decisions were castigated as a complete disregard of traditional constitutional liberties by the Supreme Court, and the party, at the same time, proclaimed its intention to defend its right to continue functioning. Party propaganda is stressing that the application of these laws against the Communists is the first step in the abrogation of the rights of all Americans. In addition, the party is leveling its guns against the prosecution of its members under the provision of the Landrum-Griffin-Kennedy Act which prohibits Communists, or anyone who has been a Communist for the preceding 5 years, from holding union office. The party is also demanding amendments to our immigration laws to make deportation more difficult, the enactment of civil rights legislation, and the abolition of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Armed Forces

The issues of disarmament, on Soviet terms, dominate this phase of the party line. The party lists general and complete disarmament as the first step toward ending the arms race. The party charges that the present administration is using the "myth" of the threat of communism to justify the increased military spending, which, according to the party, is benefiting only the "financial warlords."

Minority (national and racial) groups

Historically, the party has exploited minority groups. It hypocritically clamors for an end to discrimination while, at the very same time, it shamelessly practices racial discrimination within its own ranks. While the party continuously attacks the Armed Forces of

¹ In brief, the membership clause of the Smith Act prohibits membership knowingly in any organization whose goal is the overthrow of the Government by force or violence.

² In brief, the Internal Security Act of 1950 would compel the party not only to register its members but also to disclose its finances.

the United States, it nevertheless demands that the Army be used to enforce the party's own civil rights views.

Education

The party exploits the theme that the American educational system is steadily deteriorating as a result of low teachers' salaries, mounting tuition fees, and insufficient Federal and State assistance. The party is also critical of American educational methods for failing to present a "true" picture of slavery and the history of minority groups. While minimizing the influence of conservative campus groups, the party finds considerable encouragement in the growth of what it describes as "liberal student political parties" and "Marxist- and Socialist-oriented groups" on college campuses throughout the country.

Culture, science, and religion

For the party, the United States is "a vast cultural desert" because of racial discrimination and discouraging financial prospects for young people entering the arts. The space flights of Gagarin and Titov are being exploited to extoll the superiority of Soviet science. Concern is expressed over "hate" literature being issued by what is termed "the 'religious' wing of the Fascist network."

Women

The party praises the role of women in the "struggle for peace" but emphasizes the need for far more women to participate in the international peace movement. The treatment of women in the United States, where Communists claim they are barred from high-paying jobs as a result of discrimination, is contrasted unfavorably with the treatment of women in the Soviet Union, for whom the party claims far greater opportunities exist.

Youth

The party expresses encouragement over what it detects as a gradual awakening of American youth to its social responsibilities as evidenced by increased participation in the struggle for Negro rights and academic freedom. However, the party stresses the lack of employment opportunity for youths and calls for an end to "the burden of military service."

PART II. ANALYSIS OF THE PARTY LINE

In its never-ending struggle for power, the Communist Party, USA, uses a wide variety of tactics, all designed, in one way or another, to strengthen the party's influence and, at the same time, to divide, weaken, and confuse the anti-Communist opposition.

A favorite—and frequently effective—Communist tactic is the policy of "partial" or "immediate" demands. These are the short-term or temporary demands which the Communists advance in order to create favorable conditions for future revolutionary action. The pages of the Worker, Political Affairs, Mainstream, and other Communist publications are filled with these demands. The public speeches and statements of party leaders are largely based on them. Indeed, these demands play a vital role in the Communist Party line at any given time.

The immediate demands which the Communists advance vary greatly in scope and objective. They may be local, regional, na-

tional, or international in range. They may be of interest to a large majority of the population or only to a limited minority group. They may involve economic, social, political, or cultural issues, and they may vary in significance from a proposal relating to world peace to a demand for improved low-cost housing in a specific slum area. There is probably no significant section of the American public—regardless of age, race, social standing, occupation, or political orientation—whose interests have not coincided, on occasion, with one or more of the Communists' immediate demands.

In itself, each of the immediate demands proposed by the party may be entirely legitimate, or even popular, in nature, representing the desire for a limited and specific reform within the framework of our present system of government. Very frequently, these demands do not originate with the Communists at all but in wholly non-Communist segments of the population.

It goes without saying, of course, that the immediate demands put forward by the party at any given time must be in close accord with the fundamental strategy of the world Communist movement during that particular period. Thus, while many partial demands are almost perennial planks in the party's platform—higher wages, lower taxes, et cetera—a considerable number of them are extremely short lived. This is particularly true of those demands which deal with international affairs and which, therefore, must follow every shift in Soviet foreign policy.

The Communists derive a number of advantages from their immediate-demands tactic. Urging specific reforms in which many non-Communists are legitimately interested helps the Communists to identify themselves with the "masses" and to foster the image that the party is a progressive, enlightened, humanitarian organization which is acting in the best interests of the American people. At the same time, the Communists are afforded the chance to pose as the "champions" of the poor and the oppressed, and, whenever the occasion requires, offer tangible "evidence" of their working-class "leadership."

The immediate-demands tactic also serves as a convenient disguise behind which the party can carry on its ceaseless agitation against our free economy. More important still, the immediate-demands tactic enables the party to subtly instill a feeling of "class-consciousness" among employees, to promote a general feeling of unrest and discontent among large sections of the population—in the words of the Communists themselves, to "radicalize" and to "politicalize" the masses. At the same time, Communists appeal to employers to do business with Communist nations.

For this reason, the party's strenuous campaign for immediate demands is never allowed to subside. As soon as one set of demands is met, the Communists immediately propose new and stronger demands calculated to provoke a new controversy and to act as a new source of social friction and unrest. The substitution of fresh demands for those which have been satisfied or outmoded in one way or another continues in a never-ending cycle with the aim of gradually convincing the "masses" of the need for a revolutionary transformation of society.

In addition, the immediate-demands tactic provides party members with frequent opportunities to work among the "masses" and to gain

valuable experience in agitating, organizing social discontent, and guiding large numbers of people in the "class struggle." The fight for specific reforms enables the party to test its leadership, discipline, and organizational ability in practical situations. In effect, the struggle for immediate demands serves as a small-scale model of, and a dress rehearsal for, future revolutionary action, thereby affording the Communist "vanguard" invaluable experience.

The cumulative aim of the party's immediate-demands tactic, therefore, is to condition the entire social climate for eventual revolutionary action. If these tactics are successful, the Communists will have been accepted as the leaders of the "masses" who, in turn, will be led to believe that there is a need for a drastic transformation of the entire social system; and non-Communist opposition will have been weakened and divided to the point of hopeless confusion. In short, the party will have successfully laid the groundwork for launching the actual revolution.

This is the real meaning of the Communist Party line, which promises all things to all men. It is skillfully designed to appeal to people from every walk of life, and, at the same time, to confuse the public by blending proposals ostensibly sponsored by the Communists with those of legitimate organizations.

The uninformed citizen is thus doubly misled. He may accept the party line at its face value, without realizing that it is just another Communist tactic, and erroneously conclude that the party is a legitimate political group which is sincerely interested in promoting these issues. Or, he may make the equally dangerous assumption that anyone who advocates proposals similar to those which make up the party line is automatically a Communist.

Because communism thrives on turmoil, the party is continuously attempting to exploit all grievances—real or imagined—for its own tactical purposes. It is, therefore, almost inevitable that, on many issues, the party line will coincide with the position of many non-Communists. The danger of indiscriminately alleging that someone is a Communist merely because his views on a particular issue happen to parallel the official party position is obvious. The confusion which is thereby created helps the Communists by diffusing the forces of their opponents.

Unfortunately, there are those who make the very mistake the Communists are so careful to avoid. These individuals concentrate on the negative rather than on the positive. They are merely against communism without being for any positive measures to eliminate the social, political, and economic frictions which the Communists are so adroit at exploiting.

These persons would do well to recall a recent lesson from history. Both Hitler and Mussolini were against communism. However, it was by what they stood for, not against, that history has judged them.

