
JULY 4th—BIRTHDAY OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

BY FRANCIS FRANKLIN

JULY FOURTH is the anniversary of the coming to manhood of the American nation. The Declaration of Independence indicated the conscious maturity of the movement for national unification and for the self-determination of the American people.

All the tasks so boldly enunciated by this Declaration have still not been realized. Therefore, July Fourth can be celebrated truly only by *renewed* declaration of the effort to realize in their entirety its aims of freedom and equality. The Communist Party, inheritor of the revolutionary democratic tasks of the great molders of the American people, proudly proclaims its determination to fulfil these tasks in its major slogan: Communism Is Twentieth Century Americanism!

The "long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object . . . to reduce them under absolute Despotism," from which our forefathers suffered, is not altogether dissimilar from the "long train of abuses and usurpations" which *we* have been suffering from the sixty families who now dominate our country and who, in one way or another, are seeking to undermine the principles of the Declaration of Independence

by imposing upon us all the evils of Big Business fascism.

EVENTS LEADING TO THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Great Britain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was dominated by merchant capitalists. *The theory of mercantalism*, in operation during these two centuries, expressed the class interests of the merchants, and led to all the tyrannical acts against which our forefathers fought. This theory was that the prosperity of the Empire depended upon having an excess of gold coming into the mother country over the amount leaving the country. In order to insure a favorable balance of trade, the state power was used to force the colonies to buy British goods in British ships and to prevent competitive manufacturing in the colonies. Only raw materials were to be produced in the colonies, and these were to be shipped to Britain for British manufacturers. Thus, the English government seriously hampered the economic development of the American nation. In order to enforce this policy, the merchant capitalist class greatly strengthened the power of the state. Great Britain likewise sought to restrict Westward expansion

in order to protect her fur trade and to make rebellion more difficult. Heavy taxes were imposed upon the Americans to help pay for all these acts of restriction. Thus began the long succession of acts of "*taxation without representation*."

By one despotic act after another, the government of George III sought to enforce its colonial legislation. British ships were stationed in American ports. Standing armies were sent to America, and laws were passed to force Americans to give the British soldiers free lodging in their houses. When colonial legislatures protested against the tyrannical acts of the British government, they were dissolved repeatedly by the royal governors. When the citizens demonstrated against the presence of these hostile troops, fights developed, and in 1770 the British soldiers fired at Boston citizens, killing five, among them the Negro, Crispus Attucks. This "Boston Massacre" more than nearly any other act helped intensify the hatred of the American people for their British tyrants.

When the citizens of Boston in 1773 protested against the tax on tea by dumping a boatload of British tea into the ocean, the British government replied by closing the Boston port. This oppressive act rallied the American colonies in closer unity as a means of aiding their sister colony in distress.

THE LIBERTY-LOVING TRADITIONS OF THE BRITISH AMERICANS

The English have always been a liberty-loving people. Their whole history has been a long record of struggle against tyranny and for a

democratic constitution. The British Americans of 1776 were inheritors of that tradition just as the settlers from Ireland, Germany, France, and other lands inherited the revolutionary struggles of their peoples.

The earliest inhabitants of the British Isles showed their sturdy love for independence by their strong resistance to the conquest of Julius Caesar. Subsequently, the Anglo-Saxons fiercely fought against their conquest by William of Normandy. The Norman conquerors never succeeded in shackling the institutions of feudal serfdom on all the hardy English yeomen. In the forests of "merrie England" dwelt many a band of outlaws like the legendary Robin Hood, who preferred to "rob from the rich and give to the poor" than to live under feudal oppression.

The long fight for constitutional democracy commenced under the rule of that worst of British tyrants, the unspeakable King John. It was under his despotism that the British people won their first great charter of human freedom, the famous *Magna Charta*, which granted to the English people the right of representative government. This was the foundation of the British Constitution, developed and extended throughout the long history of England.

There followed the struggles of John Ball and the peasants; the battles of the Scotch Presbyterians; and the Great Rebellion of 1648, in which Oliver Cromwell and his "Ironsides" overthrew and executed Charles I and established the Commonwealth.

During this revolutionary period in English history, the famous philosopher John Locke answered the argu-

ments of those who claimed that the monarch had absolute authority over his subjects, and propounded the theory, later set forth in the Declaration of Independence, that men are by nature born free and equal; that they establish governments in order to safeguard the possession of life, liberty, and property; that for the public welfare governments must not be changed for light or frivolous causes, but that when a long train of abuses indicates that government has ceased to fulfil its function and has become a despotism, then it is the right and duty of the people to throw it off. Locke was the champion of religious and civil liberty. Thomas Jefferson was steeped in these theories of John Locke, and it was Locke's *Second Treatise on Civil Government* which was the fountainhead for the doctrines enunciated by the Declaration of Independence.

THE GROWTH OF THE MOVEMENT FOR INDEPENDENCE

Revolutionary sentiments do not arise all at once. They are always slowly and painfully developed. It is only "a long train of abuses" which by their accumulated impact finally arouses them. There are always the revolutionary pioneers who see further than the masses, who see in what direction events are leading, but who know how to bid their time and how to organize and educate the masses for the immediate struggle for which they are ready, thus preparing the way for the really decisive struggle toward which events are leading. Such pioneers of social change are never Utopian dogmatists, but always practical revolutionary politicians. At

last, there comes the time when the "long train of abuses" reaches the breaking point, and the spirit of revolution which has been maturing so slowly suddenly flares up in a flame. Then, as Lenin says, populations learn in weeks or even days what formerly they could learn only in decades. And the revolution is on.

So it was in America. America had been at war with Great Britain for more than a year before she declared her independence. When the war commenced it was merely a *rebellion* against the Navigation Acts, the curtailment on industry and Westward expansion, taxation without representation, the quartering of troops in America, the closing of the Boston port, the dissolving of the Colonial Assemblies.

The outbreak of actual war was preceded by a long series of protests. There were the Stamp Act Riots, petitions to the King and to Parliament, refusal to pay salaries to local governors, agitation and pamphleteering by such men as Samuel Adams and Patrick Henry, the organization of mechanics and artisans into such groups as the Sons of Liberty, the holding of protest meetings. But few were they, like Samuel Adams, who throughout all these events cherished the aim of independence. Even after the war had commenced, the Continental Congress addressed humble letters to "his majesty, George III," petitioning him as "faithful and obedient servants."

The ground was prepared by acts of protest from the local Colonial Assemblies or township meetings or by the convocation of local conventions; just as today the ground is being prepared for the democratic front

by the local and state elections. Finally, through the efforts of men like Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry these local movements began to be coordinated through the formation of *Committees of Correspondence*. At length, the time was ripe for beginning to unify the colonies through the convocation of the *First Continental Congress*, to which delegates were elected by the colonial legislatures or by special conventions.

The past may always be learned best by reading the actual words of the men who helped make history. In preparation for the Virginia Convention to elect delegates to the First Continental Congress, Thomas Jefferson wrote a series of resolutions, which he mailed to the Williamsburg Convention, from which illness prevented his presence. These resolutions, then considered too radical by most of the delegates, were published in a booklet entitled *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*.

Speaking of the overthrow and execution of Charles I, Jefferson wrote:

"A family of princes was then on the British throne, whose treasonable crimes against their own people brought on them afterwards the exertion of those sacred and sovereign rights of punishment reserved in the hands of the people for cases of extreme necessity, and judged by the Constitution unsafe to be delegated to any other judicature."

Showing that he had some conception of the class struggle, he wrote:

"History has informed us that bodies of men, as well as individuals, are susceptible of the spirit of tyranny."

Denouncing the oppressive acts

under which Americans suffered, he declared:

"By an act passed in the fifth year of his late majesty King George II, an American subject is forbidden to make a hat for himself of the fur he has taken perhaps on his own soil; an instance of despotism to which no parallel can be produced in the most arbitrary pages of British history."

Further, he wrote:

"Can any one reason be assigned why 160,000 electors in the island of Great Britain should give law to four million in the states of America, every individual of whom is equal to every individual of them, in virtue, in understanding, and in bodily strength? Were this to be admitted, instead of being a free people, as we have hitherto supposed and mean to continue ourselves, we should suddenly be found the slaves, not of one, but of one hundred and sixty thousand tyrants, distinguished too from all others by this singular circumstance, that they were removed from the reach of fear, the only restraining motive which may hold the hand of a tyrant."

Showing that Jefferson applied his democratic theories to the slaves, he declared:

"The abolition of domestic slavery is the great object of desire in those colonies, where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state. But previous to the enfranchisement [Note that Jefferson calls not only for the freedom, but the *enfranchisement* of the slaves—*F.F.*] of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa; yet our repeated attempts to effect this by prohibitions have been hitherto defeated by his majesty's negative: thus preferring the immediate advantages of a few African corsairs to the lasting interest of the American states, and to the rights of human nature, deeply wounded by this infamous practice."

Denouncing landed privileges, which he claims were forced on England only by the Norman Conquest, Jefferson angrily declared, "America

was not conquered by William the Norman, nor its lands surrendered to him, or any of his successors."

Speaking proudly as an American, Jefferson wrote:

"These are our grievances, which we have thus laid before his majesty, with that freedom of language and sentiment which becomes a free people claiming their rights, as derived from the laws of nature, and not as the gift of their chief magistrate: let those flatter who fear; it is not an American art."

The First Continental Congress consisted of many debates over procedure. A Declaration of Rights was adopted, and a petition was sent to the King. After debate from the conservative Dickenson, this was couched in the most humble terms. Finally, a resolution for the non-importation and non-consumption of British goods was adopted.

In order to enforce these decisions, *Committees of Safety* were established in all the colonies. These developed into local organs of the Revolution.

On April 18, 1775, the war commenced. The patriots in Massachusetts received word that the British troops were to attempt to seize their military supplies in Concord that night. During the night, riders went throughout the countryside, informing the population to be ready and mobilizing the "minute men," sturdy farmers who had been training to be ready for action at a moment's notice. When the British began to proceed along the highway to Concord, they found themselves under fire from patriots in ambush. Behind every tree was a sniping "minute man." There followed the battles of Lexington and Concord. The war was on.

However, it was a war of rebellion.

Not until after a year did it become a war for independence. Even leaders such as Washington were not then ready for complete separation from England. The real revolutionists used the utmost tact and diplomacy, and made no effort to force slogans upon the masses for which they were not then ready to fight. They united the masses around the slogans for which they *were* ready. And in the process of the war, the patriots learned from their experience that they must go all the way and fight for complete severance from the British Crown.

The writing of Thomas Paine helped to crystallize the growing sentiment for independence. His *Common Sense* came like an electric shock to the colonists. For six months before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, it was read throughout the entire country.

Paine declared:

"Volumes have been written on the struggle between England and America . . . but the period of debate is closed. Arms as the last resource decide the contest, the appeal was the choice of the King, and this Continent has accepted the challenge. . . .

"The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a City, a Country, a Province or a Kingdom; but of a Continent—of at least one-eighth part of the habitable Globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest . . . even to the end of time.

"We have boasted the protection of Great Britain. She did not protect us from *our enemies on our account*, but from *her enemies on her own account*. . . . America would have flourished as much, and probably much more had no European power taken any notice of her. . . . France and Spain never were nor perhaps ever will be our enemies as *Americans* but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain*.

"Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. . . . Europe and not England is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. . . . We claim brotherhood with every European Christian. . . . Not one-third of the inhabitants, even of this province [Pennsylvania—*Ed.*] are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobe the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous. . . ." *

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

On June 7, 1776, the resolution for independence was introduced into the Second Continental Congress by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia. At that time, some of the delegations were not ready for the decision, so the supporters of independence decided not to press for an immediate vote. A committee of five was appointed to draft a declaration of independence to be brought back to the Congress. This Committee consisted of Franklin, Adams, Sherman, and Livingston. Jefferson was made chairman and was asked to write the Declaration.

There could have been no more suitable person to draft this famous document than Thomas Jefferson, then thirty-three years of age. Jefferson's father was a sturdy independent farmer in the Piedmont section of Virginia, which was then the frontier, considerably removed from the big plantations of the Tidewater. From his father, Jefferson came naturally to his independent, democratic principles. As William E. Dodd declared in his *Statesmen of the Old South*:

"It is not difficult . . . to see how the great principles of Jefferson's life—absolute faith in democracy—came to him. He was the product of the first West in American history. Jefferson loved his backwoods neighbors, and he, in turn, was loved by them."

The young Jefferson was sent to William and Mary College, where he came in contact with the liberal and revolutionary thought of the period and where he could listen to the fiery speeches of Patrick Henry in the Virginia House of Burgesses in the adjoining town of Williamsburg. Shortly after completing his study of the law, Jefferson was sent to represent his county in the House of Burgesses. There he soon won the reputation of a radical. He introduced resolutions against slavery and landed privilege, and began to win the hatred of the planters around Williamsburg. He was ever in the thick of the fights with the royal governor. So intent was he in carrying out reforms in his own state that, after the passage of the Declaration of Independence, he left the Continental Congress to return to the Virginia House of Burgesses to continue the fight for the breaking up of the big estates and for a more equitable distribution of land. Like most Virginians, he was intensely devoted to his own state, even though an internationalist.

The modesty and simplicity of Jefferson were revealed by his utter contempt for all offices or positions of honor. In his epitaph, which he wrote himself, he never mentioned that he had been Governor of Virginia, Secretary of State, and President of the United States; but mentioned simply that he was author of the Declaration of Independence, author of the Vir-

* "Common Sense," Thomas Paine, *Selections From His Writings*, pp. 28-29, International Publishers, New York.

ginia Statute of Religious Liberty, and Founder of the University of Virginia. Jefferson had the most intense faith in education, which he wanted to be scrupulously separated from the church. Concerning slavery, he wrote in his *Autobiography*:

"Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people (the slaves) are to be free."

He always spoke of the enslaved Negroes with the utmost respect, speaking of them, as we do today, as a people, and showing by his speech that he regarded them as equals. Learning from his own experience that their freedom and enfranchisement were not to be obtained in his own day, he looked to the young generation to take up the fight for their emancipation. His *Notes on Virginia* contained biting attacks on slavery. He was anxious to get this book into the hands of the young men in the schools, writing:

"It is to them I look, to the rising generation, and not to the one now in power, for these great reformatations."

The longest paragraph in Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration of Independence was a burning attack on the African slave traffic. The passage follows:

"He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of *infidel* powers, is the warfare of the *Christian* King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where *men* should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for sup-

pressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the *liberties* of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the *lives* of another."

This passage, however, was too strong for the rich planters, many of whom were themselves profiting from the African slave-traffic; and much to the disgust of Jefferson, it was deleted from the final text.

Jefferson's draft, after considerable discussion and some rephrasing, was adopted on July 2, 1776, and was finally signed by the delegates on July 4.

On July 8, it was first announced to the people. The citizens of Philadelphia were called together by the ringing of the Liberty Bell in Independence Hall. The Declaration was read to the joyous group by Colonel John Dixon. Immediately thereafter, the crowds rushed to the State House, tore down the king's coat of arms, and burned it. Bells rang and bonfires burned till midnight. Throughout the land, the Declaration was read everywhere. In New York, the crowds tore down the leaden statue of George III, and its lead was cast into bullets "to assimilate with the brains of the enemy."

When Earl Browder spoke recently at the University of Virginia, he was asked how he could compare the Bolsheviks, who killed the Tsar, to our American revolutionists. Browder's reply came readily: "It was a lucky

thing for George III that he was on the other side of the ocean." These deeds of the American patriots show the truth of this remark.

The Declaration of Independence, together with the Bill of Rights, is the very heart of true Americanism. These documents form the American Magna Charta.

REPLY TO THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY BRITISH TORIES

Shortly after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, there appeared the official reply of the British throne, presented as though coming from a mere subject. This volume was entitled *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress* by Jonathan Lind.

It opened by declaring,

"Ill would it become the *dignity* of an insulted sovereign to descend to altercation with revolted subjects. That would be to recognize that equality and independence, to which subjects, persisting in revolt, cannot fail to pretend. . . .

"Easy as it were, and fit as it may be, to refute the calumnies contained in that audacious paper, it could not be expected that his Majesty or his Ministers should condescend to give it any answer."

The reply sought to answer each of the charges leveled by the Declaration against the king. In answer to the charge, "He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people," Jonathan Lind declared that the Americans could complain as easily of such "just punishments" as could the *pirate*, Captain Kidd.

"One difference there is," declared this reply, "between the present rebels and the ancient pirate: the latter did not adopt the

regal stile. He did not talk of *our* seas, *our* coasts, *our* towns, and *our* people."

Indignant at the boldness of the Americans, he declared:

"Had an Angel descended from Heaven with terms of accommodation, which offered less than independence, they would have driven him back with hostile scorn."

After dealing with the particular charges, this spokesman of George III turned to the preamble:

"In this preamble however it is that they attempt to establish a *theory of government*; a theory, as absurd and visionary, as the system of conduct in defense of which it is established, is nefarious. Here it is, that maxims are advanced in justification of their enterprises against the British government. To these maxims, adduced for *this purpose*, it would be sufficient to say, that they are *repugnant to the British Constitution*. But beyond this they are subversive of every actual or imaginable kind of government.

"They perceive not, or will not seem to perceive, that nothing which can be called government ever was, or ever could be, in any instance, exercised, but at the expense of one or other of those rights. . . . [*i.e.*, of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.]

"That men who are engaged in the design of subverting a lawful government should endeavor by a cloud of words, to throw a veil over their design; that they should endeavor to beat down the criteria between tyranny and lawful government is not at all surprising."

He proceeds to ask how the Americans can invade Canada, how they can deprive the Tories of life and liberty and force them to flee from their homes:

"In these tenets they have outdone the utmost extravagance of all former fanatics. The German Anabaptists indeed went so far as to speak of the right of enjoying life as a right unalienable. To take away life, even in the Magistrate, they held to be unlawful. But they went no further, it was reserved

for an American Congress, to add to the number of unalienable rights, that of enjoying liberty and pursuing happiness."

Were subjects to be allowed to pursue *any* kind of happiness, asked Lind. Were penal codes contrary to the laws of God and the unalienable rights of man? Were thieves, murderers, rebels not to be restrained?

TASKS OF THE DECLARATION OF
INDEPENDENCE LEFT UNFULFILLED
BY THE REVOLUTION

Even after the end of the war, the fight for the principles of the Declaration of Independence was by no means over. For many years, the "economic royalists" of that day under the Hamiltonian Federalists sought to subvert democracy in the broad terms in which it was conceived by Jefferson. The majority of the framers of the Constitution were not revolutionary Democrats of the type of Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and Samuel Adams. Jefferson heartily approved of the Constitution, as framed, with its guarantee of representative government, but was greatly disturbed by the absence of a Bill of Rights. He helped organize the demand for the inclusion of such democratic guarantees through the first ten amendments.

Throughout the rest of his life, he devoted himself to the defense of the principles of this Magna Charta of American democracy. In opposition to the counter-revolutionary Federalists, he founded the Democratic Party as a party of small farmers and all the oppressed. He clamored for extension of the right to vote, for absolute freedom of speech, press, and assembly, for universal education. He realized that democracy was of little value

without economic security. Thus he fought for land for the small farmers, for breaking up of the big estates. He secured the repeal of the laws of entail and primogeniture, which prevented this. Through the Louisiana Purchase, he secured vast tracts of land for distribution to homesteaders.

The battles for free or cheap land, for universal suffrage, for free public education, for security for the poor, were continued after Jefferson by the rugged Tennessee farmer, Andrew Jackson.

Subsequently, when the wealthy planters of the South had captured the Democratic Party, which they had hated so bitterly, the new Republican Party of Abraham Lincoln took up the fight for Jeffersonian democracy. Lincoln declared that since Jefferson's party had betrayed the principles of Jefferson, it became necessary for a new party to continue his fight. The early Republican Party first put into practice Jefferson's program for the abolition of slavery.

The task of securing freedom and equality for all Americans was nowhere more flagrantly denied than by the continuance of slavery, as Jefferson fully realized. It remained for four years of bloody Civil War to wipe out this stain upon American democracy. The enactment of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution further applied the principles of the Declaration of Independence and further extended the Bill of Rights.

"THE EARTH BELONGS TO THE LIVING
GENERATION"

New times and conditions impose new tasks upon the battle for democ-

racy. Jefferson, who fully realized this, wrote:

"No society can make a perpetual constitution or even a perpetual law. The earth belongs to the living generation."

The question of land as an economic base for democracy is just as burning today as it was in the time of Jefferson for the vast farm population of our country. The enormous growth of farm tenancy has made it even more burning. The recommendations of the President's Committee on Farm Tenancy have begun to tackle this problem in true Jeffersonian style. However, since Jefferson's day, the development of capitalism has brought about a thoroughgoing industrial revolution in our country. America is now predominantly industrial. The majority of our people no longer live in the country. Capitalism has reached its peak and fallen into general crisis. The last economic crisis gave way to chronic depression, and now a new crisis has commenced before we have fully recovered from the latter. The most burning problems of our era are, therefore, industrial problems. Obtaining economic security for the millions of industrial workers in our country is a prime necessity for giving a base to democracy.

The unprecedented growth of the labor movement since the full force of the crisis of 1929-33 fell upon us has resulted in new gains for labor, and these are at the same time new gains for democracy. The right of labor to organize and bargain collectively through the union of its own choice, as officially recognized in the Wagner Labor Relations Act, and the establishment of the National Labor

Relations Board as a means of enforcing this right mean that, in our day, labor is, by growing strength and unity, actualizing significant aspects of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, applying those fundamental principles of American democracy to the new conditions of our own day.

Under the influence of labor, the progressive wing in the Democratic Party has now advanced a broad legislative program which would considerably supplement labor's recent achievements. This program, some of which has begun to be enacted into law, stands for social security legislation, minimum wages and maximum hours, price stabilization, tax reform to remove the burden from the poor, abolition of farm tenancy, regional planning such as the T.V.A., soil conservation, judicial reform, educational reform, recovery through work-relief projects, etc.

Against this program, the "sixty families," who play the same role as that played by the "160,000 British tyrants" in Jefferson's day, are girding for battle. In the very name of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, Big Business is today undermining the principles of these American documents by seeking to curb labor's civil liberty to organize, by seeking to discredit Roosevelt and organized labor through intensification of the new economic crisis, by conniving with foreign fascist powers, and seeking a way to establish Big Business fascism in America.

The "sixty families" are not only working through the Republican Party. They are also seeking to utilize the reactionary Democrats as a means

of preventing the Democratic Party from becoming a party of progress. That is why the present Democratic primaries are so important.

Similarly, the reactionaries hope to confuse the issue through such movements as that of the LaFollette National Progressive Party, whose willfully vague program says nothing about the burning problems of the day, but which contains an *attack* upon the one burning need of Roosevelt's Recovery Program, and which thus coincides with the program of the fascist-minded reactionaries.

The growth of the democratic front today continues the battles of Jefferson and his followers for freedom and equality and for the rights of man. Through the legislative program, outlined above, it seeks to apply the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights to America of the twentieth century with its huge industrialization and dominance by sixty families of monopolist finance capitalists.

These struggles today are worldwide even as were the struggle of 1776. Spain's present efforts to maintain its republic are meeting with the furious resistance of the fascists as did the American Republic at the hands of the "fascists" of 1776, as Roosevelt recently called the supporters of George III. *Americans, however, must hang their heads in shame that, while monarchist France came to the aid of our young republic, democratic America has so far failed to come to the aid of the young Spanish republic.*

Against such isolationism as that through which the modern fascist-

minded reactionaries hope to aid their worldwide assaults on democracy, Jefferson was most outspoken, as indicated by his unqualified support to the young French republic when it was under attack from all the feudal powers of old Europe.

Throughout the world, the independence of the small, "backward," or democratic nations is being threatened. Ancient China is fighting a war for independence as we did in 1776, although on a far vaster scale. Ethiopia in Africa has not given up the fight for freedom. Austria is now confronted with the same task. Czechoslovakia must defend herself from the fate of Austria. In all these assaults upon democracy by the modern monster of fascism the British Tories under Chamberlain are playing the same reactionary role which they played under George III. Schooled in methods of colonial oppression throughout centuries of rule, they are aiding and abetting the new menace of fascism in every possible way.

The crying need of the hour is for all who have faith in democracy to unite in a solid worldwide coalition of all democratic forces to prevent the fascist finance capitalists of the world from destroying the fruits of whole centuries of popular struggles for democratic rights.

Meanwhile, the growth under the new Stalinist Constitution of the Soviet Union of a democracy hitherto unequalled in the history of mankind has indicated that, under modern conditions, only socialism can afford an economic base capable of giving permanent support to the funda-

mental principles of Americanism as contained in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights.

Just as in Jefferson's day all those who were ready for struggle against British tyranny were not ready all at once to go the full length of the struggle for independence, so today all those who are ready to struggle for democracy have not yet drawn the logical conclusion that they can win their goal completely only through socialism. Just as in Jefferson's day the struggle for immediate reforms strengthened and consolidated the American forces and helped pave the way for the fight for complete independence, so today the building of the democratic front will unite and con-

solidate the American people and will pave the way for the achievement of complete democracy through the establishment of socialism.

We celebrate July Fourth, for on that day a challenge was hurled at international tyranny; a challenge which was given scientific precision by the greatest teachers of democracy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Fortified with their teachings and applying them to the present conditions of American life, the Communist Party, under the leadership of Earl Browder, sets itself the aim of giving body and form to the principles of the July Fourth Declaration in the America of today.