

The Communist Party Manifesto

*Adopted and Issued by the Convention of the
Communist Party*

The world is on the verge of a new era. Europe is in revolt. The masses of Asia are stirring uneasily. Capitalism is in collapse. The workers of the world are seeing a new life and securing new courage. Out of the night of war is coming a new day.

The spectre of Communism haunts the world of capitalism. Communism, the hope of the workers to end their misery and oppression.

The workers of Russia smashed the front of international Capitalism and Imperialism. They broke the chains of the terrible war; and in the midst of agony, starvation and the attacks of capitalists, of the world, they are creating a new social order.

The class war rages fiercely in all nations. Everywhere the workers are in a desperate struggle against their capitalist masters. The call to action has come. The workers must answer the call!

The Communist Party of America is the party of the working class. The Communist Party proposes to end Capitalism and organize a workers' industrial republic. The workers must control industry and dispose of the products of industry. The Communist Party is a party realizing the limitations of all existing workers' organizations and proposes to develop the revolutionary movement necessary to free the workers from the oppression of Capitalism. The Communist Party insists that the problems of the American worker are identical with the problems of the workers of the world.

THE WAR AND SOCIALISM.

A giant struggle is convulsing the world. The war is at end, but peace is not here. The struggle is between the capitalist nations of the world and the international proletariat, inspired by Soviet Russia. The Imperialisms of the world are desperately arraying themselves against the onswEEPing proletarian revolution.

This international struggle is directed by the League of Nations and the Communist International, one for the capitalists, the other for the workers.

The League of Nations is dividing the world financially and territorially. It is directing the fight against the workers. It is the last effort of Capitalism to save itself.

The reactionary League of Nations is the logical result of this imperialistic war. And the war was the product of Capitalism.

Capitalism oppresses the workers. It deprives them of the fruit of their labor—the difference between wages and product constituting the profits of the capitalists. As the capitalists compete with each other, while exploiting the workers, new and more efficient means of production develop. This compels the concentration of industry which results in monopoly. Under monopoly there is rapid accumulation of capital, producing a surplus which it is necessary to export for investment. This export of capital, together with the struggle to monopolize the world's sources of raw materials and to control undeveloped territory for purposes of investment, is the basis of Imperialism.

Imperialism produced the war. The war now being at an end, the victorious nations are concerned almost exclusively with these economic, territorial and financial problems. The United States was vitally concerned in the war, the issue being world power; and its capitalism, having secured a position of financial supremacy, had a direct imperialistic interest at stake.

The war made a shambles of civilization. It proved the utter incapacity of capitalism to direct and promote the progress of humanity. Capitalism has broken down.

But the Socialist movement itself broke

down under the test of war. The old dominant moderate Socialism accepted and justified the war. It acted against the proletarian revolution and united with the capitalists against the workers. Out of this circumstance developed the forces of revolutionary Socialism now expressed in the Communist International.

Socialism had repeatedly emphasized the menace of war. It had urged the workers to act against the war. The Socialist congress at Basle in 1912, when Europe was on the verge of a general war, condemned the war as imperialistic and as unjustifiable on any pretext of national interest. It urged using the crisis of war to "rouse the masses and to hasten the downfall of Capitalism."

The war that came in 1914 was the same imperialistic war that might have come in 1912. But upon the declaration of war, the dominant opportunistic Socialist parties accepted and justified the war of plunder and mass murder!

This was a direct betrayal of Socialism. It was an abandonment of the class struggle. The class struggle is the very heart of revolutionary Socialism. Unless the Socialist movement wages the class struggle under any and all conditions in its revolutionary implications, it becomes either Utopian or reactionary. But moderate Socialism accepted the war and the "unity of the classes", and united with the capitalist governments against the working class.

The Socialist parties accepted the war as a war for democracy — as if democracy under Imperialism is not directly counter-revolutionary. They justified the war as a war for the independence of nations! Not the proletarian class struggle, but nationalism, social-patriotism and social-imperialism determined the policy of the dominant Socialism. The coming of Socialism was made dependent upon Imperialism and the war of plunder, upon the workers cutting each others' throats in the struggles of their own ruling class!

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM.

The collapse of the Socialist International during the war marks the transition from the older moderate Socialism to the new Socialism of revolutionary practice and promise in the Communist International.

Moderate Socialism, which perverted the revolutionary Socialism of the First International, placed its faith in "constructive" social reforms. It accepted the bourgeois state as the basis of its activities and strengthened that state. It developed a policy of "class reconciliation", affirming that the coming of Socialism was a concern of "all the classes" instead of emphasizing the Marxian policy that it was the task of the revolutionary proletariat alone. There was a joint movement that affected the thought and practice of Socialism: on the one hand, the organization of the skilled workers into trades unions, which secured certain concessions and became a semi-privileged caste; and, on the other hand, the decay of the class of small producers, crushed under the iron tread of industrial concentration. As one moved upward and the other downward, they met and formed a political juncture to use the state to improve their conditions. The dominant Socialism expressed this compromise. It developed a policy of legislative reforms and State Capitalism.

The whole process was simple. The workers were to unite with the middle class and government ownership of industry was to emancipate the working class. Parliamentarism was to revolutionize the old order of

slavery and power, of oppression and destruction.

It was simple, but disastrous. The state, as owner of industry, did not free the workers, but imposed a sterner bondage. The capitalist state was made stronger by its industrial functions. The parliamentary representatives of the workers played at the parliamentary comedy, while Capitalism developed new powers of oppression and destruction.

But Imperialism exposed the final futility of this policy. Imperialism united the non-proletarian classes, by means of State Capitalism for international conquest and spoliation. The small capitalists, middle class and the aristocracy of labor, which previously acted against concentrated industry, now compromise and unite with concentrated industry and finance-capital in Imperialism. The small capitalists accept the domination of finance-capital, being allowed to participate in the adventures and the fabulous profits of Imperialism, upon which now depends the whole of trade and industry. The middle class invests in monopolistic enterprises; income now depends upon finance-capital, its members securing "positions of superintendence", its technicians and intellectuals being exported to lands in process of development. The workers of the privileged unions are assured steady employment and comparatively high wages through the profits that come in from the savage exploitation of colonial peoples. All these non-proletarian social groups accept Imperialism, their "liberal and progressive" ideas becoming camouflage for Imperialism with which to seduce the masses. Imperialism requires the centralized state, capable of uniting all the forces of capital, of unifying the industrial process through state regulation, of maintaining "class peace" of mobilizing the whole national power for the struggles of Imperialism. **State Capitalism is the expression of Imperialism**, precisely that State Capitalism promoted by Moderate Socialism. What the parliamentary policy of Socialism accomplished was to buttress the capitalist state, to promote State Capitalism, — to strengthen Imperialism.

Moderate Socialism developed while Capitalism was still competitive. Upon the advent of monopoly and Imperialism, Socialism emerged into a new epoch, — an epoch requiring new and more aggressive proletarian tactics. Capitalism acquired a terrific power in industry and the state. The concentration of industry, together with the subservience of parliaments to the imperialistic mandates and the transfer of their vital functions to the executive organ of government, made more clear the impossibility of the parliamentary conquest of power. The older unionism and parliamentary Socialism proved their utter incompetence for the new conditions of struggle. These conditions developed the concept of industrial unionism in the United States and the concept of mass action in Europe. Imperialism made it necessary to reconstruct the Socialist movement.

But Moderate Socialism itself did not change under the necessity of events. The consequence was a miserable collapse under the test of the war and the proletarian revolution in Russia and Germany.

In the Russian Revolution, the proletariat, urging on the poorer peasantry, conquered the power of the state after the first revolution had established the democratic parliamentary republic. It established a **dictatorship of the proletariat**. This proletarian revolution was accomplished in spite of the opposition of Moderate Socialism, represented by the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionists. These Moderates argued that