

PEACE WITH RUSSIA

MAY 1st PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY THE AMSTERDAM SUB-BUREAU OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

STRIKE ON MAY DAY 1920!

Peace with Russia! What does it mean? Is there such a thing as peace between a Soviet Republic and World Capitalism?

No! A real peace is impossible under capitalism. A real peace for Russia means the victory of the world revolution and nothing else.

Therefore, revolutionary action of the Workers to force peace has to be a struggle to develop power to such a degree, that World Capitalism will be prevented from making war upon Russia in one form or another.

First, open warfare must be stopped, by refusing not only to fight, but also to make or transport arms, munitions, equipment, etc., for those who might use them to fight Soviet Russia.

Second, the Workers must prevent and counteract all machination, plotting and underground action against our proletarian comrades, or exposing those responsible for it, by preventing money to be expended in such work and by not believing any of the lies in the capitalist press. This latter is very important. If we pledge ourselves not to believe any capitalist statement with regard to Soviet Russia, any report about alleged barbarities, any so-called facts about internal troubles and chaos or external policy of conquest, etc., we are not likely to be fooled again just as most of us were fooled in 1914.

Third, to strive in other countries towards Soviet Republics as the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This inspiring aim we must always bear in mind, in all our deeds, all our actions. We must fill our minds with revolutionary thoughts—we must dare to hope in the midst of our misery—we must understand more and more that the breakdown of capitalism is in full process, we must be willing to destroy the weapons of our enemies, we must have confidence in our constructive power. All this we can achieve in a constant fight with our exploiters by giving this fight a general revolutionary character. It means a complete break with bourgeois civilization, bourgeois morals, bourgeois supremacy.—IT MEANS LABOR AS THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF SOCIAL AND MORAL LIFE.

What about the peace proposals of the enemies of Labor?

They have become methods to destroy Soviet Russia from within and may be supplemented at any time by methods from without, if the workers should weaken for a moment. Russia is willing to accept such a peace, knowing full well what it means. But they need railway material and machines so badly they are willing to take a chance upon intrigue, corruption, counter-revolutionary plots and murder, confident that the workers in Western Europe will draw power from a closer contact with the Russian Revolution, confident that capitalism will break down before it can strengthen itself from the treasures of the Russian soil.

Russia might feed Europe, might supply it with the most valuable raw materials and it will, no doubt, give some immediate relief to the exhausted nations of Central Europe. Even from this narrow point of view, peace with Russia is in the direct interests of the workers. But if a capitalist peace with Soviet Russia really meant the recuperation of capitalism throughout Europe, this would be detrimental to the interests both of Soviet Russia and the World Revolution. We are confident that the relief will be of such a character that it will not give capitalism a new chance for temporary recovery and preparations for a new world war, that it will come too late anyhow. It is our duty and our only salvation to back up Russia by our action, to such an extent, that it can secure a peace that will strengthen the first proletarian state more than it will her enemies.

If a new attack is forthcoming, we have to fight this new crime; if peace is on the way we have to fight even harder, for the result will depend upon the kind of peace and the willingness of the workers to use this temporary truce for their own revolutionary purposes. And remember well: What is true for Russia, to-day, may become true for Soviet Germany or any other Soviet Republics tomorrow.

Therefore, under all circumstances, the action to support Soviet Russia must be uppermost in our minds, must form part of all our proletarian action. And to make it clear to the world, this is a paramount international issue, the idea of an international demonstration strike must be propagated and prepared in all countries.

Such a demonstration cannot be successful unless the class struggle creates and intensifies a feeling of international solidarity, unless in all our mass movements we include Peace with Russia in our

demands. But even when incomplete, a demonstration for a workers' peace with Russia contributes towards strengthening the forces of Internationalism.

The Amsterdam Bureau of the Communist International considers it its main task to further international unity, not only of thought but of action as well. It therefore submits for consideration to all Communist groups and revolutionary organizations, workers' committees, etc., the possibility of a DEMONSTRATION STRIKE in favor of peace with Soviet Russia on an international scale.

The First of May was always intended to be a day of general strike, the world over, but till now it never succeeded in realizing the general revolutionary character that its promoters wanted it to bear. On the contrary; in the last decade before the war, the First of May more and more lost all revolutionary significance. Capital did not feel any threat to its existence in the parades and demonstrations held on that day by millions and millions of people, and the bourgeois state incorporated these demonstrations in its normal life, like it did trades-unions, the Social-Democratic parties, etc.

To the Third International has fallen the historical task to perform what the Second International only planned—to realize the visions that its predecessors only talked about. It is bound to realize internally and externally, the international unity of the world-proletariat, its unity of doctrine, of organization and of tactics. It must teach the workers to form a world-front that Imperialism is already developing despite of its internal deviations and dissensions.

In suggesting, that in 1920, the First of May be used for an international demonstration strike in favor of Soviet Russia (no matter whether at that time the imperialists talk peace and plan war) we want to avail ourselves of the traditions of working-class solidarity and action in favor of peace, already attached the MAY DAY, and to use those traditions as a means of bringing on a new, vigorous effort in the direction of international unity of action. We think the times are ripe for an effort of this kind.

To a superficial observer, the revolutionary struggle in Central and Western Europe may seem developing with the utmost slowness, or is even brought to a standstill, but if we look more closely and below the surface, we cannot but wonder at the tremendous changes going on in the minds and souls of millions and millions of men and women all over the earth—changes developing with the utmost rapidity. Thus, they believe that the fatal, immutable, everlasting domination of Capital is being shattered day by day. The idea of new forms of human life, of general comradeship and culture for all, and the common ownership of the means of production presents itself as an approaching reality for the first time since society was divided into a dominating and a dominated class,—for the first time it takes hold of the masses. The outward facade of the bourgeois state and society still exists, but it may fall to pieces at any moment, although a long and severe struggle will doubtless still be necessary, as much to finally crush the bourgeoisie as to effectuate in the mass of the people the moral and intellectual transformation that will make them able to institute the Communist Commonwealth, and render them fit to live in it.

All the same, we must always keep before our minds the fact of the enormous changes going on below the surface of things. We are convinced that any little thing, some minor circumstance may now, at any moment cause the countless elements of the new revolutionary consciousness floating all over the world, to unite into a new body and manifest themselves with unexpected force, thus becoming the motive-power of renewed strife and welcome upheaval. In the present days there no longer exists unfavorable situations for action in the old sense of the word; the times for the passing-away of Capitalism are ripe and any dead calm may be the forerunner of new social storms rising unexpectedly.

Prompted by these considerations, we lay before all labor unions, all extra-union mass organs, all groups and parties, this suggestion of a general strike of May First 1920 in favor of Soviet Russia, and we beg them to inform us if it will have their support.

For The Amsterdam Bureau of The Communist International

H. Roland Holst.

APPEAL TO THE BRITISH, FRENCH, AND BELGIAN PROLETARIAT

COMMUNICATION OF THE PROVISIONAL BUREAU OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Proletarians:

In a magnificent onrush the German proletariat has swept away the counter-revolution of the Kapps and the Lüttwizes. The reaction of the Junkers has been crushed by the dauntless courage of the masses who rose like one man. These working masses, divided against themselves starved and miserable, trodden down by the Noske regime, lacking arms, deprived of their ablest leaders, have united in superb fighting movement and have displayed in the decisive instant the most splendid courage and initiative. Without an instant's hesitation the German proletariat has left the factories and stopped the means of transport and the public services; it has procured itself the arms it needed and by means of guns as by means of strikes, combining the two great methods of the class-struggle at the disposal of the working class, it has achieved victory. From the first day, in the midst of the battle against the counter-revolution of the Junkers, another battle defined itself like a flame burning with a fiercer glare in the core of a vast blaze. This flame was the war against the bourgeois regime served by the social-democratic government, the war against capitalistic tyranny and oppression, the war for the deliverance of labor from exploitation, for the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the suburbs of Berlin, in Saxony, in Thuringia, in Wurtemberg in Bavaria, in all Germany, but especially in the Rhine district and the Westphalia, workshop-councils spring up and endeavour to seize the power. The proletarians arm, and form Red Guards. The industrial cities of the West change into as many fortresses, where the social revolution organizes and increases its forces. At the same time the revolutionary wave sweeps upon the rural districts: agrarian disturbances break out in Pomerania and Mecklenburg, whilst part of the army, some naval divisions and part of the police refuse to fight against the revolution.

The Ebert Government mad with fear, sees the real enemy, sees Spartacus overthrown, decried,

crushed over and over again, again raising its head more terrible and threatening than ever. It sees the large masses of the Independent Socialist Party fight on one front with the Communist vanguard. It even sees in many places members of the social-patriotic party unite with them for demonstrations, strikes and the armed struggle. And the fear of the government deepens as it sees the attitude assumed by the bureaucracy of the syndicates which, however much against their will, and only to avoid being submerged by the revolutionary tide, demand the immediate socialization of the mines, the disarming of the troops, the formation of a militia, the participation in the power of the Central commission of the industrial unions;—demands that, although in reality a manoeuvre of the trade-union bureaucracy, shows the concessions this bureaucracy is obliged to do, in order to satisfy the aspirations of the masses towards the system of Soviets and, unhesitatingly, the Ebert Government decides to fight to the end for the maintenance of the capitalistic system. It gathers its forces, it makes front against the Left, to beat down Spartacus. Noske, whose dismissal was announced, is still maintained a few days longer in office by the majority of the social-democratic delegates to the National Assembly. He calmly allows the counter-revolution of the Junkers take up its quarters and gather its forces in Silesia and Eastern Prussia, the Vendée of Germany and Noske the hangman, Noske the butcher concentrates all the faithful troops at his disposal against Westphalia and the Rhine district, the flaming hearts of the Social Revolution, where by the hour it is gaining strength and splendor. It is there that the battle between Past and Future will be decided. It is there that either German Capitalism will receive a mortal stroke, or the grand attempt of the working classes to seize the power, will be drowned in a deluge of blood. And whilst tens of thousands of workers in those numerous cities of the Rhine district which form the single immense industrial agglomeration already are sketching out the political forms of the

TO THE COMMUNISTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

COMMUNICATION OF THE AMSTERDAM SUB-BUREAU OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

The Sub-Bureau of the Communist International is under the impression, that some misunderstanding prevails about the attitude of the Bureau towards affiliation of Communist groups and parties to the British Labor Party.

A resolution passed at the February Conference in Amsterdam and two letters written to comrades of the I. L. P. have been interpreted differently. It is for this reason, that we wish to accentuate our opinion briefly as follows:

I. In accordance with the resolution mentioned above we are of opinion, that Communists should not be affiliated either directly or indirectly to political organizations that accept the principles of the Second International. For England such an organization no doubt is the Labor Party.

II. We are convinced that the policy of the Labor Party especially if this policy should be successful, will lead to a betrayal of the cause of the workers similar to the betrayal of Ebert-Noske, mutatis mutandis.

III. We have stated that affiliation with the Third International of groups that participate in the Labor Party is possible, as is shown by the B. S. P. in so far as they accept Communist principles and tactics, which involves a persistent struggle within the Labor Party against the policy and tactics of this body. We are convinced, that participation in the I. P. if accompanied by Communist criticism and action will only be temporary.

IV. Since we agree with those Communists in England, that object to participation in the Labor Party, we are of opinion, that they should not give up their attitude on the plea of unity. **Such as we would like to see a united Communist Party in England it may be better to postpone this ideal than to compromise on important issues.***

V. We strongly appeal to our English friends to unite on the basis of no affiliation to the Labor Party, as we clearly see the catastrophe that will follow the coming into power of a parliamentary Labor Government. Warning in advance may help to unite the workers after the failure will become evident, under the banner of Communism. To achieve this result it is necessary however to clearly define our attitude towards the methods of the Labor Party. A compromise in such a way that local organizations are allowed a policy, that is considered objectionable as a general method, must lead to confusion when accepted by a united Communist Party.

For The Amsterdam Sub-Bureau of The Communist International
D. J. Wynkoop,
H. Roland Holst,
S. J. Rutgers.

* Italics are ours.—To this particular paragraph we call special attention of all our advocates of "unity at any price." The general principle underlying this paragraph is, in our opinion, applicable and must be applied to the Communist movement in any country, including also the United States, Ed.

new society, whilst they restore order, start anew the public services, organize the first Red Army in Western Europe, the chargé d'affaires of Britain and France congratulate the Ebert-Noske Government on its victory over the "reaction" and offer their support towards the destroying of the nascent Communist Republic, even as Bismark, all but half an age ago, offered his support to Thiers toward the destroying of the Commune.

In face of the common enemy, the social revolution, conquerors and conquered forget their disjunctions. The antagonism of their interests disappears before the universal interest of the capitalistic class, before its instinct of selfpreservation.

Already Lloyd George, Millerand and Vandervelde have wiped out the score of their differences with the German bourgeoisie. Nay more: in order to save it they are prepared to shed the blood of the British, the French and the Belgian people.

Already British troops at Solingen have helped to crush the Spartacist insurrections.

Already the commanders of the Entente troops have deliberated at Mayence, Foch presiding, on the measures to be taken against the Communist movement in the Ruhr valley.

Already the British chargé d'affaires has informed the German Vice-Chancellor Schiffer that the Entente would not furnish any food-stuffs or raw materials to a German Soviet Republic.

Already the Entente has allowed the troops of the government to traverse occupied territory on their march against the Communist insurrection, and to make use of this territory as a base of operations in the concentrated attack against the Red Army.

The solidarity which unites all bourgeoisies, all militarisms is proclaimed openly, cynically, without any attempt to gloss the matter over. It behooves to proclaim as openly as energetically solidarity of the proletariat.

British, French and Belgian proletarians, will you let your ruling classe make use of you to trample to death the German revolution?

The German revolution—that is just a way of speaking of traditional expression. To speak the truth, there is no German revolution, no more than there is a Russian, or a British, or a French, or an Italian, or a Spanish revolution.

There is only one Social Revolution, as there is only one capitalistic oppression, as there is only one Socialism, one hope of the oppressed and exploited of all countries.

Our rulers know that the Republic of Workers' Councils established in Germany means the accord of Germany with Soviet Russia, that is, the marvelous development of the industry and the technique of the one, and the immense resources in agrarian products, in fertile land and in raw materials of the other uniting, melting one into the other, founding each other. They know this accord means the proletarian Revolution, invincible henceforth by the blockade as by the steel. They know that this accord means the rapid and assured evolution of the Communist production and culture, its radiance growing day by day more luminous, more serene, more irresistible, towards the countries where foul capitalism stinking with corruption and sweating blood, still struggles in a horrible agony. They know that the triumph of the Revolution in Germany will immediately start revolutionary movements in Yugo-Slavonia, in Poland, in the Balkan, in Italy, etc. They know that when capitalism crashes in Central Europe, capitalism in Eastern Europe is mortally wounded. They know that Social Revolution is one, and that crushing it in Germany means crushing it in the germ in their own country.

French, British and Belgian proletarians, will you once more suffer yourselves to be gullied by your

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