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THE COMMUNIST

ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS!

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA

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Program of the Communist Party of America

ADOPTED AT ITS SECOND CONVENTION

The Communist Party of America is the conscious expression of the class struggle of the workers against capitalism. Its aim is to direct this struggle to the conquest of political power, the destruction of the capitalist state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a Soviet Government, as the only means of introducing the Communist society.

The Communist Party maintains that the problems of the American working class are identical with the problems of the workers of the world. The Communist Party realizes the limitations of all other existing workers' organizations and determines to develop the revolutionary movement necessary to free the workers from the oppression of capitalism.

The Communist Party—the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat—prepares itself for the proletarian revolution in the measure that it develops a program of action expressing the mass struggles of the proletariat and builds a strong, centralized and well-disciplined political party capable of carrying Communist propaganda and agitation to the masses and leading the workers to the final struggle against the capitalist state.

The Communist Party is fundamentally a party of action. It brings to the workers a consciousness of their oppression, of the impossibility of improving their conditions under capitalism. The Communist Party directs the workers' struggle against the capitalist state, developing fuller forms and purposes in this struggle, culminating finally in revolutionary mass action—armed insurrection and civil war.

Political and Mass Action

The Communist Party maintains that the class struggle is essentially a political struggle; that is, to conquer political power, destroy the bourgeois state machinery and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a Soviet Government in the transition period from capitalism to Communism.

In those countries in which historical development has furnished the opportunity, the working class has utilized the regime of political democracy for its organization against capitalism. In all countries where the conditions for a proletarian revolution are not yet ripe, the same process will go on. The use of parliamentarism, however, is of secondary importance—for revolutionary propaganda and agitation only.

But within this process the workers must never lose sight of the true character of bourgeois democracy. The capitalist class considers it advantageous to veil its deeds of violence behind parliamentary votes, and it has at its command, in order to gain its end, all the traditions and attainments of former centuries of capitalist class rule, multiplied by the wonders of capitalist technique—lies, demagogism, persecution, slander, and bribery. The proletariat cannot yield itself to the artificial rules devised by its mortal enemy but not observed by the enemy. To do so would be to make a mockery of the proletarian struggle for power, a struggle which depends primarily on the development of separate organs of working class power.

The revolutionary epoch forces upon the proletariat the application of such militant methods which concentrate its entire energy, namely, the method of mass action with its logical resultant, direct collision with the bourgeois state machinery in open combat. All other methods, as for instance, the revolutionary use of the bourgeois parliament, has to be subordinated to this aim.

Mass action is the proletarian response to the centralized power of the capitalist class—the control of the state machinery, by means of which it can impose its will upon the workers. The power of the capitalist class lies in its possession of the state machinery, with its army, navy, courts, police, bureaucracy, etc.

Mass action develops as the spontaneous activity of the workers massed in the basic industries; the mass strike is one of its initial forms; in these strikes large masses of the workers are unified by the impulse of the struggle, developing new tactics and a new ideology. As the strikes grow in number and intensity, they acquire political character by coming in direct conflict with the state, which openly employs its machinery for breaking the strike and crushing the workers' organizations. This culminates in armed insurrection and civil war aimed directly at the destruction of the capita-

list state and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.

Unionism

The older unionism was based on the craft divisions of small industry. The unions consisted primarily of skilled workers, whose skill is itself a form of property. To-day, the dominant unionism is actually a bulwark of capitalism; it is merging in imperialism and accepts State capitalism.

The concentration of industry and the development of the machine process expropriates of their skill large numbers of skilled workers; but the unions still maintained the ideology of property contract and caste. Deprived of actual power by the ineffectiveness of its localized strikes as against large scale industry, trade unionism resorts to dickerings with the bourgeois state and accepts Imperialistic State Capitalism to maintain its privileges as against the unskilled proletariat.

The concentration of industry produces the machine workers. Those workers massed in the basic industries, constitute the militant basis of the class struggle. Deprived of their skill and craft divisions, the old petty, isolated strike is useless to those workers. These facts of industrial concentration developed the idea of industrial unionism.

The Communist Party recognizes that industrial unions are a more efficient weapon for

moderate Socialist conception of the gradual "growing into Socialism."

The Communist Party recognizes that the American Federation of Labor is reactionary and a bulwark of capitalism. But the Communist party rejects the idea, as advocated by the I. W. W. of "smashing the A. F. of L." in order to reconstruct the trade unions. At the present time—in this revolutionary epoch—such apolitical would necessitate the concentration of an enormous amount of the energy of the revolutionary movement to the purely reformistic policy of changing the form of the economic organizations, thus ignoring the most pressing and important task of the Communist movement, namely—the propagation of Communism to the masses. That is the supreme task of the Communist Party, and all their work, such as building better economic organizations for waging the struggle against their employers for higher wages and better conditions etc. is secondary. The Communist Party will encourage any movement of the workers seeking to construct new or better economic organizations for the workers in the shops, but it will constantly point out the limitations of such organizations and keep before the workers the idea of proletarian revolution by means of mass action with its logical resultant, open, armed conflict with the capitalist state, and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only means of destroying the bourgeois state, abolishing capitalism and introducing the Communist society.

The Communist Party recognizes trade and industrial unions as a field for the propagation of Communism to the masses. Our task is to inculcate and crystallize Communist understanding among the masses over the heads of the union bureaucracy. Wherever the workers are, whether in the A. F. of L. or similar organizations, or in the I. W. W., there the Communist Party must constantly agitate, not for industrial unionism, but for Communism. Just as we enter the bourgeois parliaments for our revolutionary propaganda, so must the Communist Party enter the most reactionary unions for Communist propaganda and agitation.

Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

"Between capitalist and Communist society there lies a period of revolutionary transformation from the former to the latter. A state of political transition corresponds to this period, and the state during this period can be no other than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." (Critique of the Gotha Program, by Karl Marx.)

The proletarian revolution comes at the moment of crisis in capitalism, of a collapse of the old order. Under the impulse of the crisis, the proletariat organize separate organs of armed working class power—Soldiers', Sailors', and Workers' Councils of Deputies (Soviets), and by the use of force acts for the conquest of political power, the destruction of the bourgeois state machinery and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship. The proletarian state, like every state, is an organ of suppression and coercion, but this machinery is directed against the enemy of the working class. Its aim is to break the desperate resistance of the exploiters, who use all the power at their command to drown the revolution in blood; its aim is to make this resistance impossible; the proletarian dictatorship which openly places the working class in a privileged position in society, is on the other hand, a provisional institution. When the resistance of the bourgeoisie is broken, when it is expropriated and gradually absorbed into the labor strata, all classes vanish, the proletarian dictatorship disappears, and the state dies out.

The bourgeois parliamentary state is the organ of the bourgeoisie for the suppression and coercion of the proletariat. Parliamentary government is the expression of bourgeois supremacy, the form of authority of the capitalist class over the working class. Bourgeois democracy is nothing but the concealed dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The "national will," "united nation," etc. are only fictions. In reality, the classes exist—the classes with opposite, irreconcilable interests. But as the bourgeoisie is a small minority, it needs the fiction of "national will" and similar pleasant-sounding phrases to strengthen its domination over the laboring classes and impose its will upon the proletariat. The main power of bourgeois democracy lies in its purely formal declaration of "rights" and "liberties,"

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One Day's Pay

Resolution adopted by Second Convention of the Communist Party of America.

"We recommend that the Convention issue a call for members to contribute one day's pay for the party organization."

In accordance with the decision of the Convention, the C. E. C. issues this call to all members of the Communist Party to contribute one day's pay for the national organization.

Comrades, the need is great. You know it. We need not waste time and space telling you about it.

The Communist Party is unified and solidified on the basis of principles and tactics as never before in its history.

There are difficult tasks ahead of us—organization, education, propaganda, and agitation.

The spirit, the will, the determination the energy exists to carry on this highly important work.

BUT WITHOUT FUNDS WE CANNOT CARRY ON!

Comrades! Rally to the support of the Communist Party!

GIVE ONE DAY'S PAY TO MAKE THE PARTY A PARTY OF ACTION.

waging the struggle of the workers for better conditions and higher wages under capitalism. But industrial unionism in itself is not revolutionary. Industrial unionism cannot conquer the power of the state. It cannot train and mobilize the workers for the proletarian revolution. Industrial unionism, as advocated by the I. W. W. and similar organizations, rejects the basic principles of the Communist International—mass action, proletarian dictatorship and Soviet power. It rejects the idea of armed insurrection and the use of force in the time of revolution. Such industrial unionism aims only at the direct seizure of industry by the workers after the great majority of them will have been organized into industrial unions, and rejects the necessity of destroying the capitalist state. Moreover, industrial unionism at present, does not actually construct the forms of the Communist administration of society. Only potentially, after the conquest of power, after the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship the industrial unions may become the starting point for the Communist reconstruction of society. But the concept that the majority of the working class can be organized into conscious industrial unions, and construct, under capitalism, the form of the Communist society ("building the new society within the shell of the old"), is as utopian as the