

# Program of the Communist Party of America

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Capitalist society is distinguished from all previous forms of society by the production of commodities on the basis of capital; the private ownership of the means of production and exchange by a small group in society, the bourgeoisie; the reduction of the great majority of the people to the status of proletarians and semi-proletarians, i. e. the working class, who are compelled to sell their labor power to the owners of the machinery of production, to become wage slaves and to create by their labor, profits for the ruling and upper classes of society.

The development of machinery, means of communication and technique, during the last century, led to the extension of the capitalist system of production throughout the entire world, and to the formation of large industrial enterprises, which expropriated the small independent manufacturers, some of whom were reduced to the position of proletarians while the status of their whole class, the petit bourgeoisie in social, political and economic life was reduced to impotency.

The technical development and the increasing use of machinery in production and distribution, led to the division and subdivision of labor; the use of woman and child labor; the substitution of unskilled and semi-skilled workers for the craftsmen and artisans. The relative decrease in the demand for human labor on the part of the capitalists creates a condition wherein the supply of labor exceeds the demand; increases the dependence of labor on capital; and intensifies the degree of exploitation.

This state of affairs within the nation, together with the continual sharpening of rivalry in the world market, makes the sale of goods, the production of which continually increases, more and more difficult. Overproduction is the inevitable outcome of the development of productive power in capitalist society. As a result of overproduction, industrial crises occur which are followed by more or less lasting periods of stagnation. Crises and periods of industrial stagnation ruin the small manufacturers still more, increase the dependence of wage labor upon capital, and lead more quickly to a relative and sometimes to an absolute deterioration of the conditions of the working class.

The perfection of machinery is made compulsory for each manufacturer and is complemented by the constant displacement of laborers—the industrial reserve army. On the other hand the unlimited extension of production is also compulsory for every manufacturer. On both sides: tremendous development of productive forces; excess of supply over demand; overproduction, glutting of the markets; recurring crises;—a vicious circle. Excess, on one hand, of means of production and products, and on the other hand, of laborers, without employment and without means of existence. But these two levers of production and social well-being are unable to work together, because the capitalist form of production prevents the productive forces from working and the products from circulating, unless they are first turned into capital, which their very superabundance prevents. The mode of production rebels against the form of exchange. The bourgeoisie stand convicted of incapacity to further manage their own social productive forces.

As all these contradictions which are inherent in bourgeois society grow and develop, the discontent of the exploited masses with the existing state of things grows also; the number and solidarity of the proletariat increases and the struggle with their exploiters becomes keener. At the same time, as a result of the development of technique, the means of production are concentrated into fewer and fewer hands, and the process of labor becoming more collective, rapidly creates the conditions for the bringing about of a social revolution which provides the opportunity for replacing the capitalist system by the communist society which is the final aim of the Communist Party of America. Capitalism tends to overcome the social anarchy in production within each nation by the more complete organization of production, distribution and exchange. Instead of numerous rival employers, mighty corporations are formed (syndicates, trusts, etc.). Financial capital is combined with industrial capital. The whole economic structure is ruled by the financial oligarchy, which, because of its superior form of organization, becomes the dominant ruling power of the nation. Monopoly supplants free competition. The individual capitalist becomes the corporation capitalist. The anarchy of competition is replaced by organized capital, within each nation.

As competitive capitalist production was superseded by capitalist organization in each nation, the contradictions, the international competitive conflicts, the anarchy of world production and exchange became more acute. The competition between the highly organized imperialist states and groups of states led directly to the world war of 1914-1919. The greed for profit compelled and continues to compel the capitalist-imperialist national groups to fight among themselves for new markets, new fields for the investment of capital, new sources of raw materials for their industries, and for the cheap labor power of the colonial peoples.

The imperialist states, which had already divided among themselves the territory of the entire world, and had reduced to beasts of

burden, millions of proletarians and peasants in Africa, Australasia, Asia, and the Americas, met each other in mortal combat over the division of the spoils. Thus the imperialist world war originated.

This world war marks a new epoch,—the epoch of the collapse of capitalism and the beginning of the proletarian revolution. As imperialism breaks down, uprisings among the exploited masses in the colonies and in the small dependent nations take place. The disintegration of the imperialist armies; the unmasking of the ruling class, exposing their incapacity to longer direct the destiny of the world's working masses; armed insurrection of the proletariat resulting in victorious revolution as in Russia,—this is the present status of conditions throughout the world.

Humanity, its civilization now in ruins, is threatened with complete annihilation. There is only one power that can save it. This power is the proletariat. The old capitalist order is decaying; it can prevail no longer. The final result of the capitalist system of production is chaos, and only the great producing class, the working class, can bring order out of this chaos. To accomplish this the working class must destroy the capitalist state, root and branch, and by establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, based upon Soviet power, make capitalist counter revolution and imperialist war impossible; wipe out the boundary lines of states, and realize the brotherhood of man and the liberation of all peoples in the Communist Society.

Against the world revolution imperialism arms itself for the final conflict. Under the guise of the League of Nations it is making a last desperate effort to bolster up the remnants of the capitalist system, and directs all its power against the evergrowing proletarian revolution. In answer to this huge conspiracy of collapsing capitalism the proletariat must conquer political power and direct it against its class enemies setting in motion all the forces of social revolution.

To attain the victory of the proletarian world revolution, the fullest confidence, the closest unity and co-ordination is necessary. These conditions cannot be realized without a complete break with, and bitter opposition to, the bourgeois perversion of socialism which dominates the official social democratic and socialist parties.

One form of this perversion is the current of opportunism and social-chauvinism, socialist in name but chauvinist in fact, disguising the defense of the interests of the bourgeoisie under the false watchwords of the defense of the fatherland, particularly during the imperialist world war of 1914-1918. This current of opportunism is due to the opportunities created by the robbery of colonial and weak nations by imperialist capitalist states. The super-profits acquired by this exploitation by the bourgeoisie enables them to bribe the leaders of the working class and to place the upper strata of the workers in a privileged position by guaranteeing to them in time of peace a tolerable existence and by taking their leaders into the service of the bourgeoisie.

The opportunists and the social-chauvinists are the servants of the bourgeoisie and the direct enemies of the proletariat, especially now, when together with the capitalists they are suppressing the revolutionary movement of their own and other countries.

The other form is the so-called "centre," which is also a bourgeois perversion of socialism. This current is observed in equal degrees in all capitalist countries, and it fluctuates between the social-chauvinists and the communists. The "centrists" no longer able to revive the Second International, which has now become a stinking carrion, attempt to preserve unity with the opportunists and social chauvinists by striving to organize a spurious international of their own.

The Communist International alone conducts the struggle of the proletariat for its emancipation, and the Communist Party of America is its American section. The Communist International was in fact created when the real proletarian elements of former socialist parties in the different countries formed Communist Parties; and it was formally established in March, 1919, at its first world congress at Moscow. The Communist International, which is more and more gaining the sympathy and support of the proletariat of all countries, not alone in words but in deeds, by its political content and ideology restores Marxism and realizes the revolutionary teachings of Marx, now relieved from all bourgeois and opportunist perversions.

The social revolution, replacing private property by social production and exchange, and introducing the systematic organization of production to secure the welfare of all members of society, will abolish the division into classes and liberate oppressed humanity, and put an end to all exploitation of one part of society by another.

The necessary condition for a social revolution is the dictatorship of the proletariat, which means that the proletariat must seize political power to enable it to crush the resistance of the capitalists. The Communist Party of America aims to make the proletariat capable of fulfilling its great historic mission; it organizes

the proletariat into an independent political party, which opposes all the bourgeois parties, including the opportunist socialist parties; leads the workers in the class struggle; reveals to them the irreconcilable difference of interest between the exploiters and the exploited, and explains the historic significance and the essential conditions of the approaching social revolution. The Communist Party of America, the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat, calls upon the toiling and exploited masses who accept its principles and tactics, to join its ranks.

The Communist Party of America, Section of the Communist International, defines the aims and processes of the proletarian revolution in America, as follows:

## The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Bourgeois Democracy.

"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." (Marx.)

Bourgeois republics, even the most democratic, and sanctioning such watchwords as: "will of the people", "unity of the nation", "public opinion", "no class privilege", "equality before the law", etc., etc., remain in fact, due to the existence of private property in land and the machinery of production, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and an instrument for the exploitation and suppression of the broad masses of the workers by a small group of capitalists. Contrary to this, the proletarian or Soviet state transforms all purely working class organizations, the organizations of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat, comprising the vast majority of the population, into a single and permanent basis of state apparatus, both local and national.

The proletarian revolution comes at the moment of economic or political crisis,—the collapse of the capitalist order. During the revolution and under the impulse of the economic chaos, the proletariat organizes separate organs of working class power, Workers' Soviets (Councils), and by the use of force conquers political power, destroys the machinery of the bourgeois state, and establishes the proletarian dictatorship.

The proletarian state, like every state, is an organ of suppression and coercion, but its machinery is directed against the enemies of the working class. Its aim is to break the desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie and to take 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; the state dies out.

The bourgeois parliamentary state is the organ of the bourgeoisie for the suppression and coercion of the working masses. 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. Bourgeois democracy, with its parliamentary system, defrauds the masses of participation in the administration of the state. The masses, and their organizations are actually deprived of real state administration.

In the Workers' Government—the proletarian dictatorship in the form of Soviet power—the organization of the masses dominate and through them the masses themselves administer. Bourgeois democracy and the parliamentary system separate the masses from the capitalist state by the division of legislative and executive power, and by the toleration of unrecalable mandates. In the Soviet Government, on the contrary, the merging of the legislative and executive functions, the right of recall, the operation of the Soviets as active state apparatus, unite the masses with the administrative organs. This unity is also promoted by the fact that under the Soviet government the elections themselves are conducted, not in conformity with artificial territorial demarcations but in accordance with industrial units. The proletarian dictatorship, in the form of the Soviet Government, thus realizes true proletarian democracy, the democracy for and of the working class and against the bourgeoisie.

The proletarian revolution is a lengthy process which begins with the destruction of the capitalist state and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and ends only with the transformation of the capitalist system into the Communist Society.

## Political Action

Every class struggle is a political struggle. The object of this struggle, which inevitably develops into civil war, is the conquest of political power. However, this power cannot be acquired, organized and directed, otherwise than by means of a political party. Only when the workers have as their leader an organized and experienced political party, with strictly defined objects, and practically drawn up