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Manifesto of the Communist International

To the proletariat of all countries!

SEVENTY-TWO years have gone by since the Communist Party of the World proclaimed its program in the form of the Manifesto written by the greatest teachers of the proletarian revolution, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Even at that early time, when Communism had scarcely come into the arena of conflict, it was hounded by the lies, hatred and calumny of the possessing classes, who rightly suspected in it their mortal enemy. During these seven decades Communism has travelled a hard road: of ascent followed by periods of sharp decline; successes, but also severe defeats. In spite of all, the development at bottom went the way forecast by the Manifesto of the Communist Party. The epoch of the last decisive battle came later than the apostles of the social revolution expected and wished. But it has come.

We Communists, representatives of the revolutionary proletariat of the different countries of Europe, America and Asia, assembled in Soviet Moscow, feel and consider ourselves followers and fulfillers of the program proclaimed seventy-two years ago. It is our task now to sum up the practical revolutionary experience of the working class, to cleanse the movement of its admixtures of opportunism and social patriotism, and to gather together the forces of all the true revolutionary proletarian parties in order to further and hasten the complete victory of the communist revolution.

I

For a long span of years Socialism predicted the inevitableness of the imperialistic war; it perceived the essential cause of this war in the insatiable greed of the possessing classes in both camps of capitalist nations. Two years before the outbreak of the war, at the Congress of Basle, the responsible Socialist leaders of all countries branded Imperialism as the instigator of the coming war, and menaced the bourgeoisie with the threat of the Socialist revolution—the retaliation of the proletariat for the crimes of militarism. Now, after the experience of five years, after history has disclosed the predatory lust of Germany, and has unmasked the no less criminal deeds on the part of the Allies, the State Socialists of the Entente nations, together with their governments, again unmask the deposed German Kaiser. And the German social patriots, who in August 1914 proclaimed the diplomatic White Book of the Hohenzollern as the holiest gospel of the people, today, in vulgar sycophancy, join with the Socialists of the Entente countries in accusing as arch-criminals the deposed German monarchy which they formerly served as slaves. In this way they hope to erase the memory of their own guilt and to gain the good will of the victors. But alongside the dethroned dynasties of the Romanoffs, Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs, and the capitalist cliques of these lands, the rulers of France, England, Italy and the United States stand revealed in the light of unfolding events and diplomatic disclosures in their immeasurable vileness.

The contradictions of the capitalist system were converted by the war into heastly torments of hunger and cold, epidemics and moral savagery, for all mankind. In this the academic quarrel in Socialism over the theory of *increasing misery*, and also of the undermining of Capitalism through Socialism, is now finally determined. Statisticians and teachers of the theory of reconciliation of these contradictions have endeavored for decades to gather together from all countries of the earth real and apparent facts which evidence the increasing well-being of the working class. Today abysmal misery is before our eyes, social as well as physiological, in all its shocking reality.

Finance-capital, which threw mankind into the abyss of war, has itself suffered catastrophic changes during the course of the war. The dependence of paper money upon the material basis of production was completely destroyed. More and more losing its significance as medium and regulator of capitalistic commodity circulation, paper money becomes merely a means of exploitation, robbery, of military-economic oppression. The complete deterioration of paper money now

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Translated by IDA FERGUSON

reflects the general deadly crisis of capitalist commodity exchange.

As free competition was replaced as regulator of production and distribution in the chief domains of economy, during the decades which preceded the war, by the system of trusts and monopolies, so the exigencies of the war took the regulating role out of the hands of the monopolies and gave it directly to the military power. Distribution of raw materials, util-

The White Terror

Consciously and systematically, under the direction of agents of Capitalism, police and rowdy mobs, including soldiers and sailors, are being mobilized against Socialism.

The May Day murderous assaults upon Socialist meetings are a revelation of capitalist brutality and a challenge to Socialism. It is equally a revelation of the fear of Capitalism at the oncoming proletarian revolution. Capitalism is shaking, and it resorts to terrorism to preserve its plundering power.

In Boston, riots were provoked against Socialist Party meetings. About 1000 men, women and children marching from the Dudley Street Opera House to a new meeting at New International Hall, Roxbury, were assaulted by a rowdy mob acting in co-operation with the police. There was no disturbance until the police assaulted our comrades. The peaceful character of this parade is proven by the fact that at least one-third consisted of women and children.

The police were not satisfied with using clubs, they deliberately shot at the men and women. It was unprovoked shooting, with intent to kill.

Then the police and rowdy mobs hunted down our comrades until late at night, assaulting even women, making indiscriminate arrests and smashing Socialist halls.

The actions of the police on May Day in Cleveland, Boston and other cities, constitute an unparalleled outrage. It was a deliberate, provocative, murderous assault. Will the authorities investigate the police outrages and punish the guilty? No!

We do not protest against these outrages: Capitalism thrives on outrage. Capitalism provokes terrorism and profits from terrorism. But we declare that we shall proceed with our campaign to emancipate the working class. We shall not allow terrorism to frighten us. We shall answer this terrorism with the force of our ideas, with the might of the conscious, Socialist proletariat.

ization of petroleum from Baku or Roumania, of coal from Donetz, of cereals from the Ukraine: the fate of German locomotives, railroad cars and automobiles, the provisioning of famine-stricken Europe with bread and meat,—all these basic questions of the economic life of the world are no longer regulated by free competition, nor yet by combinations of national and international trusts, but through direct application of military force.

Just as complete subordination of the power of the State to the purposes of finance-capital led mankind to the imperialistic shambles, so finance-capital has, through this mass slaughter, completely militarized not alone the State but also itself. It is no longer able to fulfill its essential economic functions otherwise than by means of blood and iron.

The opportunists who before the war exhorted the workers, in the name of the gradual transition into Socialism, to be temperate; who, during the war, asked for submission in the name of "civil peace" and defense of the Fatherland, now again demand of the workers self-abnegation to overcome the terrible consequences of the war. If this preaching were listened to by the workers Capitalism would build out of the bones of several generations a new and still more formidable structure, leading to a new and inevitable world war. Fortunately for humanity, this is no longer possible. The absorption by the State of the economic life,

so vigorously opposed by capitalist Liberalism, has now become a fact. There can be no return either to free competition nor to the rule of the trusts, syndicates and other economic monsters. The only question is what shall be the future mainstay of state production, the Imperialistic State or the State of the victorious proletariat? In other words, shall the whole of working humanity become the feudal bond-servants of the victorious Entente bourgeoisie, which under the name of a League of Nations aided by an "international" army and an "international" navy, here plunders and murders, there throws a crumb, but everywhere enchains the proletariat, with the single aim of maintaining its own rule? Or will the working class take into its own hands the disorganized and shattered economic life and make certain its reconstruction on a Socialist basis?

Only the Proletarian Dictatorship, which recognizes neither inherited privileges nor rights of property but which arises from the needs of the hungering masses, can shorten the period of the present crisis; and for this purpose it mobilizes all materials and forces, introduces the universal duty to labor, establishes the regime of industrial discipline, this way to heal in the course of a few years the open wounds caused by the war and also to raise humanity to new undreamt-of heights.

The national State which was given a tremendous impulse by capitalistic evolution has become too narrow for the development of the productive forces. And even more untenable has become the position of the small States, distributed among the great powers of Europe and in other parts of the world. These small States came into existence at different times as fragments split off the bigger States, as petty currency in payment for services rendered, to serve as strategic buffer States. They, too, have their dynasties, their ruling gangs, their imperialistic pretensions, their diplomatic machinations. Their illusory independence had until the war precisely the same support as the European balance of power: namely, the continuous opposition between the two imperialistic camps. The war has destroyed this balance. The tremendous preponderance of power which the war gave to Germany in the beginning compelled these smaller nations to seek their welfare and safety under the wings of German militarism. After Germany was beaten the bourgeoisie of the small nations, together with their patriotic "Socialists," turned to the victorious Imperialism of the Allies and began to seek assurance for their further independent existence in the hypocritical "points" of the Wilson program. At the same time the number of little States has increased; out of the unity of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, out of the different parts of the Czarist Empire, new sovereignties have formed themselves. And these, as soon as born, jump at each other's throats on account of their frontier disputes. Meanwhile the Allied imperialists brought about certain combinations of new and old small States through the cement of mutual hatreds and general weakness. Even while violating the small and weak peoples and delivering them to famine and degradation, the Entente imperialists, exactly as the imperialists of the Central powers before them, did not cease to talk of the right of self-determination of all peoples, a right which is now entirely destroyed in Europe and in the rest of the world.

Only the proletarian revolution can secure the existence of the small nations, a revolution which frees the productive forces of all countries from the restrictions of the national States, which unites all peoples in the closest economic co-operation on the basis of a universal economic plan, and gives even to the smallest and weakest peoples the possibility freely and independently to carry on their national culture without detriment to the united and centralized economy of Europe and of the whole world.

The last war, after all a war against the colonies, was at the same time a war with the aid of the colonies. To an unprecedented extent the population of the colonies was drawn into the European war. Indians, Arabs, Madagascans battled on the European continent.

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