

# Manifesto of the Communist International

(Continued from page one)

ent—what for?—for their right to remain slaves of England or France. Never did capitalist rule show itself more shameless, never was the truth of colonial slavery brought into such sharp relief. As a consequence we witnessed a series of open rebellions and revolutionary ferment in all colonies. In Europe itself it was Ireland which reminded us in bloody street battles that it is still an enslaved country and feels itself as such. In Madagascar, in Annam, and in other countries, the troops of the bourgeois Republic have had more than one insurrection of the colonial slaves to suppress during the war. In India the revolutionary movement has not been at a standstill for one day, and lately we have witnessed the greatest labor strike in Asia, to which the government of Great Britain answered with armored cars.

In this manner the colonial question in its entirety became the order of the day not alone on the green table of the diplomatic conferences at Paris but also in the colonies themselves. The Wilson program, at the very best, calls only for a change in the firm-name of colonial enslavement. Liberation of the colonies can come only through liberation of the working class of the oppressing nations. The workers and peasants not only of Annam, Algeria, Bengal, but also of Persia and Armenia, can gain independent existence only after the laborers of England and France have overthrown Lloyd George and Clemenceau and taken the power into their own hands. Even now in the more advanced colonies the battle goes on not only under the flag of national liberation but it assumes also an open and outspoken social character. Capitalistic Europe has drawn the backward countries by force into the capitalistic whirlpool, and Socialistic Europe will come to the aid of the liberated colonies with its technique, its organization, its spiritual influence, in order to facilitate their transition into the orderly system of Socialistic economy.

Colonial slaves of Africa and Asia! The hour of triumph of the Proletarian Dictatorship of Europe will also be the hour of your liberation!

## II

The whole bourgeois world accuses the Communists of destroying liberties and political democracy. That is not true. Having come into power the proletariat only asserts the absolute impossibility of applying the methods of bourgeois democracy and creates the conditions and forms of a higher *working-class democracy*. The whole course of capitalistic development undermined political democracy, not only by dividing the nation into two irreconcilable classes, but also by condemning the numerous petty bourgeois and semi-proletarian elements, as well as the slum proletariat, to permanent economic stagnation and political impotence.

In those countries in which the 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 worker's revolution are not yet ripe, the same process will go on. But the great middle layers on the farms, as well as in the cities, are hindered by Capitalism in their historic development and remain stagnant for whole epochs. The peasant of Bavaria and Baden who does not look beyond his church spire, the small French wine-grower who has been ruined by the adulterations practiced by the big capitalists, the small farmer of America plundered and betrayed by bankers and legislators—all these social ranks which have been shoved aside from the main road of development by Capitalism, are called on paper by the regime of political democracy to the administration of the State. In reality, however, the finance-oligarchy decides all important questions which determine the destinies of nations behind the back of parliamentary democracy. Particularly was this true of the war question. The same applies to the question of peace.

If the finance-oligarchy considers it advantageous to veil its deeds of violence behind parliamentary votes, then the bourgeois State has at its command in order to gain its ends all the traditions and attainments of former centuries of upper-class rule multiplied by the wonders of capitalistic technique: lies, demagogism, persecution, slander, bribery, calumny and terror. To demand of the proletariat in the final life and death struggle with Capitalism that it should follow lamb-like the demands of bourgeois democracy would be the same as to ask a man who is de-

fending his life against robbers to follow the artificial rules of a French duel that have been set by his enemy but not followed by him.

In an empire of destruction, where not only the means of production and transportation, but also the institutions of political democracy represent bloody ruins, the proletariat must create its own forms, to serve above all as a bond of unity for the working class and to enable it to accomplish a revolutionary intervention in the further development of mankind. Such apparatus is represented in the *Workmen's Councils*. The old parties, the old unions, have proved incapable, in person of their leaders, to understand, much less to carry out, the task which the new epoch presents to them. The proletariat created a new institution which embraces the entire working class, without distinction of vocation or political maturity, an elastic form of organization capable of continually renewing itself, expanding, and of drawing into itself ever new elements, ready to open its doors to the working groups of city and village which are near to the proletariat. This indispensable autonomous organization of the working class in the present struggle and in the future conquests of different lands, tests the proletariat and represents the greatest inspiration and the mightiest weapon of the proletariat of our time.

Wherever the masses are awakened to consciousness, Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Councils will be formed. To fortify these Councils, to increase their authority, to oppose them to the State apparatus of the bourgeoisie, is now the chief task of the class-conscious and honest workers of all countries. By means of these Councils the working class can counteract that disorganization which has been brought into it by the infernal anguish of the war, by hunger, by the violent deeds of the possessing classes, and by the betrayal of their former leaders. By means of these Councils the working class will gain power in all countries most readily and most certainly when these Councils gain the support of the majority of the laboring population. By means of these Councils the working class, once attaining power, will control all the field of economic and cultural life, as in Soviet Russia.

The collapse of the imperialistic State, czaristic to

most democratic, goes on simultaneously with the collapse of the imperialistic military system. The armies of millions, mobilized by Imperialism, could remain steadfast only so long as the proletariat remained obedient under the yoke of the bourgeoisie. The complete breakdown of national unity signifies also an inevitable disintegration of the army. Thus it happened, first in Russia, then in Austria-Hungary, then in Germany. The same also is to be expected in other imperialistic states. Insurrection of the peasants against the landowner, of laborer against capitalist, of both against the monarchic or "democratic" bureaucracy, must lead inevitably to the insurrection of soldier against commander and, furthermore, to a sharp division between the proletarian and bourgeois elements within the army. The imperialistic war which pitted nation against nation, has passed and is passing into the civil war which lines up class against class.

The outcry of the bourgeois world against the civil war and the red terror is the most colossal hypocrisy of which the history of political struggles can boast. There would be no civil war if the exploiters who have carried mankind to the very brink of ruin had not prevented every forward step of the laboring masses, if they had not instigated plots and murders and called to their aid armed help from outside to maintain or restore their predatory privileges. Civil war is forced upon the laboring classes by their arch-enemies. The working class must answer blow for blow, if it will not renounce its own object and its own future which is at the same time the future of all humanity.

The Communist parties, far from conjuring up civil war artificially, rather strive to shorten its duration—as much as possible—in case it has become an iron necessity—to minimize the number of its victims, and above all to secure victory for the proletariat. This makes necessary the disarming of the bourgeoisie at the proper time, the arming of the laborer, and the formation of a communist army as the protector of the rule of the proletariat and the inviolability of the social structure. Such is the Red Army of Soviet Russia which arose to protect the achievements of the working class against every assault from within or without. The Soviet Army is inseparable from the Soviet State.

Conscious of the world historic character of their mission, the enlightened workers strove from the very beginning of the organized Socialist movement for an international union. The foundation stone of this union was laid in the year 1864 in London, in the first International. The Franco-Prussian War, from which arose the Germany of the Hohenzollerns, undermined the First International, giving rise at the same time to the national labor parties. As early as 1889 these parties united at the Congress of Paris and organized the Second International. But during this period the center of gravity of the labor movement rested entirely on national ground, confining itself within the realm of national parliamentarism, to the narrow compass of national states and national industries. Decades of organizing and labor reformism created a generation of leaders most of whom gave verbal recognition to the program of social revolution but denied it in substance. They were lost in the swamp of reformism and adaptation to the bourgeois state. The opportunistic character of the leading parties of the Second International was finally revealed—and led to the greatest collapse of the movement in all its history—when events required revolutionary methods of warfare from the labor parties. Just as the war of 1870 dealt a deathblow to the First International by revealing that there was not in fact behind the social-revolutionary program any compact power of the masses, so the war of 1914 killed the Second International by showing that above the consolidated labor masses there stood labor parties which converted themselves into servile organs of the bourgeois state.

This includes not only the social patriots who today are openly in the camp of the bourgeoisie as preferred confidential advisers and reliable hangmen of the working class, but also the hazy, fickle and irresolute Socialist Centre which is today trying to revive the Second International, i. e., the narrowness, opportunism and revolutionary impotence of their predecessors. The Independents of Germany, the present Majority of the Socialist Party in France, the Independent Labor Party in England, and similar groups, are actually trying to re-establish themselves in the position which the old official parties

(Continued on page seven)

The Most Important Book of the Year—Just Out!

## The Proletarian Revolution in Russia

By N. Lenin and Leon Trotzky

Edited, with an Introduction, Notes and Supplementary Chapters

By Louis C. Fraina

This unique book traces the course of the great Russian Revolution from March 1917 to October 1918, in the words of the two masters of the Revolution.

It consists of a mass of articles and pamphlets written during the Revolution, covering every important phase of the Revolution, arranged to make a consecutive story.

CONTENTS: Part One—The First Stage of the Revolution, by N. Lenin (March 12 to May 18). Part Two—The General Program of the Bolsheviks, by N. Lenin (tactics, program and general policy). Part Three—The Struggle for State Power, by N. Lenin and Leon Trotzky (May 18 to the "uprising" of July 16-17). Part Four—The Revolution in Crisis, by Leon Trotzky (written at the end of August, analyzing the Bolshevik defeat in July, the Moscow Conference and the problems of the future). Part Five—The Proletarian Revolution Conquers, by Louis C. Fraina (September to January—the coup d'état of November 7, the Constituent Assembly; includes articles of Lenin and Trotzky and documents). Part Six—The Revolutionary Struggle for Peace, by Leon Trotzky and N. Lenin (December to Brest-Litovsk). Part Seven—The Soviet Republic and its Problems, by N. Lenin (May, 1918). Supplementary—Foreign Relations (July to October, 1918; Lenin, Trotzky and Chicherin).

410 Pages—More than 200,000 Words.

Paper Cover, \$1.00; Library Edition, Cloth, \$1.50.

## The Social Revolution in Germany

By Louis C. Fraina

A fundamental study of the great struggle in Germany, which is at the same time a study in revolutionary Socialism. Indispensable to an understanding of the character of the European Revolution. Including two articles by Karl Liebknecht and Franz Mehring. Popular, Comprehensive, Incisive.

112 Pages; 25c a Copy.

Address all orders

THE REVOLUTIONARY AGE

885 Washington St., Boston, Mass.