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Manifesto of the Socialist Party

(Adopted by National Convention, Machinists' Hall, Chicago,
September 4, 1919.)

THE capitalist class is now making its last stand in history. It was intrusted with the government of the world. It is responsible for the prevailing chaos. The events of the recent years have conclusively demonstrated that capitalism is bankrupt. It has become a dangerous impediment to progress and human welfare. The working class alone has the power to redeem and to save the world.

In every modern country, whether monarchial or republican in form, the capitalist class was in control, monopolized the national wealth and directed the industrial processes.

Its rule has been one of oppression, disorder and civil and international strife.

The capitalist interests of every leading nation fully exploited the resources of their countries, and reduced their peoples to wretchedness and then set out to conquer the markets of the world for the sale of their surplus commodities, for the investment of their surplus capital, and for the acquisition of additional sources of raw material and natural wealth.

Imperialism's Mad Era Comes

A new era dawned upon the world, the mad era of capitalist imperialism. The weak peoples of the globe were subjugated by the strong nations. Asia, Africa, and Latin America, with their hundreds of millions of peaceful inhabitants, were forcibly parceled out into colonies, so-called protectorates and spheres of influence for their capitalist conquerors.

The struggle for foreign markets became ever more desperate and acute. A violent clash among the competing imperialistic nations became ever more imminent and threatening.

The great rival powers of the world were uneasily and distrustfully watching each other and arming against each other. Millions of workers were taken from productive labor and trained in the savage art of killing their fellow-men. Civilizing and life-sustaining activities were subordinated to the mad race for military and naval supremacy. The nations of Europe groaned under the oppressive burdens of great armaments and became frantic with fear of mutual attacks. Capitalism in its full development caused human society to revert to the primitive conditions of savage tribal warfare.

Then came the inevitable collapse. The world was precipitated into the most savage and inhuman slaughter in history.

Millions of young men were killed. Millions more were maimed and crippled. Countries were devastated and depopulated. Industries were disorganized. Famine, disease and misery ravaged the people of many lands.

Heed Not War's Terrible Lessons

Finally, the ghastly combat ended. The Central Powers, vanquished and exhausted, laid down their arms. Imperialistic statesmen of the victorious allies dictated a so-called peace. It is a peace of hatred and violence, a peace of venge-

ance and strangulation. The reactionary statesmen at the Versailles peace conference were blinded by greed, passion and fear. They refused to heed the terrible lesson of the great war. They have left open the old international sores and have inflicted innumerable wounds upon a distracted world.

To strengthen their precarious rule of violence and reaction, the triumphant representatives of Allied capitalism have created an Executive Committee of their governments, which they have the insolence to parade under the counterfeit label of a League of Nations.

The true aim of this alliance of capitalistic powers is to safeguard their plunder, to bully and dominate the weak nations, to crush proletarian governments, and to thwart everywhere the movements of the working class.

It was the world-wide struggle between the working class and the capitalist class which dictated the decisions of the Versailles Conference. This is clearly shown on the one hand by the desperate attempts to crush Soviet Russia and by the destruction of Socialist Finland and Soviet Hungary, and on the other hand by its recognition of the un-socialistic coalition government of Germany.

“League” is Capitalism’s Black International

The so-called League of Nations is the Capitalist Black International against the rise of the working class. It is the conscious alliance of the capitalists of all nations against the workers of all nations.

It now becomes more than ever the immediate task of international Socialism to accelerate and organize the inevitable transfer of political and industrial power from the capitalist class to the workers. The workers must reorganize the economic structure of human society by eliminating the institution of the private ownership of natural wealth and of the machinery of industry, the essence of the war-breeding system of international commercial rivalry. The workers of the world must recognize the economic structure of human society by making the natural wealth and the machinery of industry the collective property of all.

The workers of the world are already ushering in the new order of true civilization.

In Germany and Austria the workers are now the dominant political power. While the leaders of the workers of these two countries have as yet proved too timid to use their political power for the abolition of economic exploitation, the masses are showing an ever increasing determination to end the impossible government co-partnership between capital and labor and to establish in its place a genuine Socialist industrial democracy.

The workers of Great Britain, France and Italy, the workers of the newly created nations, and the workers of the countries which remained neutral during the war, are all in a state of unprecedented unrest. In different ways and by different methods, either blindly impelled by the inexorable conditions which confront them, or clearly recognizing their revolutionary aims, they are abandoning their temporizing programs of pre-war labor reform. They are determined to control the industries, which means control of the governments.

Capitalism Insolent and Oppressive

In the United States, capitalism has emerged from the war more reactionary and aggressive, more insolent and oppressive than it has ever been.

Having entered the war “to make the world safe for democracy”, our government had enthusiastically allied itself with the most reactionary imperialism of Europe and Asia. In the preparation of the infamous “peace treaty”, acts of violence and of plunder were sanctioned by our peace delegates. Acts of infamy were masked by our eloquent president in idealistic and sanctimonious phrases.

And while thus serving as an accomplice of black re-

action abroad, our administration and the capitalist interests behind it were busily engaged in the ruthless work of suppressing civil rights and liberties at home.

Upon the pretext of war-time necessity, Congress and state legislatures enacted drastic laws which effectively nullified the right of political criticism and opposition, freedom of speech, of the press and assemblage. Although the laws were clearly unconstitutional, the courts skillfully avoided declaring them invalid. The Socialist Party, which during the war was the only party of peace and progress and the sole defender of civil rights and labor's interests in the United States, was brutally outlawed. Its press was crippled, many of its meetings were dispersed, a great number of its defenders were persecuted and jailed.

Under the cloak of false patriotism and behind a barrage of terroristic jingo sentiment, deliberately incited by them, the capitalists of America launched an orgy of profiteering which all but ruined the nation. The administration permitted a relatively small number of men to make profits amounting to billions of dollars while the prices of the necessities of life rose to overwhelming heights. While the war created thousands of new millionaires the short-sighted workers of the United States were appeased by increases of their nominal wages, which left them behind their pre-war standards of life. While the vain, conservative labor leaders were bribed by meaningless posts of honor, the courageous spokesmen for the more radical labor groups were put behind prison bars.

See Awakening Among Workers Even Here

It is not surprising, therefore, that the end of the war has found the organized workers of America far behind their brothers in Europe who are everywhere strengthening their forces to throw off the chains of industrial and political subjugation.

But even in the United States the symptoms of a rebellious spirit in the ranks of the working masses are rapidly multiplying. The widespread and extensive strikes for better labor conditions, the demand of the two million railway workers to control their industry, the sporadic formation of labor parties apparently though not fundamentally in opposition to the political parties of the possessing class, are promising indications of a definite tendency on the part of American labor to break away from its reactionary and futile leadership and to join in the great emancipating movement of the more advanced revolutionary leaders of the world.

Recognizing this crucial situation at home and abroad, the Socialist Party of the United States at its first national convention after the war, squarely takes its position with the uncompromising section of the international Socialist movement. We unreservedly reject the policy of those Socialists who supported their belligerent capitalist governments on the plea of "national defense" and who entered into demoralizing compacts for so-called civil peace with the exploiters of labor during the war and continued a political alliance with them after the war. We, the organized Socialists of America, pledge our support to the revolutionary workers of Russia in the support of their Soviet government; to the radical Socialists of Germany, Austria and Hungary in their efforts to establish working-class rule in their countries, and to those Socialist organizations in England, France and Italy and other countries who during the war, as after the war, have remained true to the principles of uncompromising international Socialism.

Hope in Free and Equal Socialist Nations

We are utterly opposed to the so-called League of Nations. Against this international alliance of capitalist governments, we hold out to the world the ideal of a federation of free and equal Socialist nations.

A genuine and lasting peace can be built only upon the basis of reconciliation among the peoples of the warring na-

tions and their mutual co-operation in the task of reconstructing the shattered world.

We emphatically protest against all military, material or moral support which our government is extending to czarist counter-revolutionists in Russia and the reactionary forces in Hungary and we demand the immediate lifting of the indefensible and inhuman blockade of Soviet Russia.

We demand the unconditional and immediate liberation of all political and industrial class war prisoners convicted under the infamous Espionage Law and other repressive legislation. We demand the immediate and unconditional release of all conscientious objectors. We demand the full restoration to the American people of their constitutional rights and liberties.

The people of Russia, like the American colonists of 1776, were driven by their rulers to the use of violent methods to secure and maintain their freedom. The Socialist Party calls upon the workers of the United States to do all in their power to restore and maintain our civil rights to the end that the transition from capitalism to Socialism may be effected without resort to the drastic measures made necessary by autocratic despotism.

The great purpose of the Socialist Party is to wrest the industries and the control of the government of the United States from the capitalists and their retainers. It is our purpose to place industry and government in the control of the workers with hand or brain, to be administered for the benefit of the whole community.

Workers Must Be Strongly Organized

To ensure the triumph of Socialism in the United States the bulk of the American workers must be strongly organized politically as Socialists in constant, clear-cut and aggressive opposition to all parties of the possessing class. They must be organized on the economic field on broad industrial lines, as one powerful and harmonious class organization, co-operating with the Socialist Party, and ready in cases of emergency to reinforce the political demands of the working class by industrial action.

To win the American workers from their ineffective and demoralizing leadership, to educate them to an enlightened understanding of their own class interest, and to train and assist them to organize politically and industrially on class lines in order to effect their emancipation,—that is the supreme task confronting the Socialist Party of America.

To this great task, without deviation or compromise, we pledge all our energies and resources. For its accomplishment we call for the support and co-operation of the workers of America and of all other persons desirous of ending the insane rule of capitalism before it has had the opportunity to precipitate humanity into another cataclysm of blood and ruin.

**LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST
REVOLUTION, THE ONLY HOPE OF THE SUFFER-
ING WORLD!**

Additional copies of this leaflet and other literature on the actions of the National Emergency Convention of the Socialist Party may be secured by writing the National Office, Socialist Party, 220 So. Ashland Blvd., Chicago, Ill.

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