

# THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO OF 1848

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(Cont. from last issue.)

At this stage, therefore, the proletarians, do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeoisie. Thus the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie, every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labor, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crisis, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon the workers begin to form combinations (Trades Unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision before hand for these occasional revolts. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battle lies not in the immediate result but in the ever-expanding union of workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by Modern Industry, and that places the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages with their miserable highways required centuries, the modern proletarians, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

This organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset

again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus the ten hours' bill in England was carried.

Altogether collisions between the classes of the old society further, in many ways, the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all times, with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education; in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the ruling classes are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

Finally, in times when the class-struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class—in fact, within the whole range of an old society—assumes such a violent, glaring character that a small section of the ruling class cut itself adrift and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movements as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie to-day the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction

their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more; they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests; they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat.

The "dangerous class," the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.

In the conditions of the proletariat, those of the old society at large are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeois family relations; modern industrial labor, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for and insurances of individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.

In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where the war breaks out

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into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie, lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.

Hitherto every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern laborer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule, because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie; in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage labor. Wage labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their involuntary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

### II. Proletarians and Communists

In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole?

The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties.

They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement.

The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by

## The Soviet Style ..

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has been done and on the length of time the person has worked. Preference is given to those who have been incapacitated as a result of occupational accident or disease. Such persons if they are completely incapacitated receive 100 per cent of their former wage, no matter how short or how long a time they have been working. Should the degree of a person's disability change, he is transferred to a different invalid group and the pension is adjusted accordingly.

Old age pensions as such only began to be paid in 1928. Before that time, people who were incapacitated by old age were taken care of under the laws for general invalidism. In 1928, however, the payment of pension upon reaching a definite age was established for certain groups of wage-earners, and since then it has been extended until it covers all the main groups of workers. Those who work underground or in other hazardous kinds of work are eligible for pension at the age of fifty if they have worked for a period of twenty years. In other branches of labor, men are eligible at sixty after having worked twenty-five years, and women at fifty-five after twenty years of work. The size of pension varies from 50 to 65 per cent of the average wage for the last twelve months of employment, depending on the type of work that has been performed.

Dependents of insured persons who have died or whose whereabouts is unknown also receive a pension.

It must be noted that in the Soviet Union rent varies with the wages received, so that a person receiving a pension smaller than his previous wage would pay less rent. Also when the cost of bread went up in 1935 at the time of discarding ration cards, pensions were likewise raised. Moreover persons receiving pensions are encouraged to work in addition to their pension, unless the sum of the two exceed the former wage. In that case the pension is decreased.

All these pensions and aids are vitally important, for it is by them that Soviet social insurance protects the worker. Nagging fear of the future is removed.

this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

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## The New Giants . . .

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very efficiently, according to Raizer, who explained that while the largest furnaces of the Makeyevka Plant, each with a volume of 930 cu. m., are smelting one ton of pig iron per 0.80 cu. m. of useful volume of furnace (on the best days achieving a coefficient of 0.77), the new blast furnaces should produce a ton of metal per 0.75 and even 0.70 cu. m.

Though the best technical achievements of other Soviet and foreign blast furnaces will be employed in the new ones, and though their control will be entirely automatic, nevertheless, they will not cost more to build than the Magnitogorsk furnaces.

According to plan, each of the new blast furnaces should produce 1,300 tons of pig iron a day. With the application of Stakhanov methods, however, production from 20 to 30 per cent above plan is anticipated.

The workers are able to face life without dread as to what will happen to themselves or to their family if they fall ill or are injured. They do not have the constant spectre of doctor's bills nor of funeral costs. A woman does not need to be anxious, lest having a baby will cause her to lose her job. A man can work without constant worry as to what will happen to his family if he dies. All this means security. It is an essential part of human happiness, of that joy in life which is becoming so evident in the Soviet Union.

Soviet social insurance does not confine itself, however, merely to taking care of eventualities. It tries to prevent them. It contributes large sums to promoting good health among the workers. Money is set aside for the building and support of rest homes and sanitariums. Large sums are spent on children's camps, nurseries and kindergartens, on providing extra food for school children or milk for babies. There is a special fund for improving housing conditions. All these contributions, as is the money spent by social insurance on medical care, are of course additional to what comes from the government budget for such purposes. It is most noteworthy that the proportion of the social insurance budget that goes to this indirect aid is increasing.

The object of the Soviet State is that the workers therein should be healthy and happy, free of anxiety about the future and so free to develop their manifold creative abilities both in their work and in outside cultural and social activities. Soviet social insurance is one of the paths toward this goal.