

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Winds of terror were blowing through Europe – the winds of terror of Communism. All the powers of Old Europe joined together in a holy war until the total destruction of these winds of terror. The Pope and the Czar, Metternich and Jesu, the French radicals and the German police, Where is that same opposition party, whereby its opposition with the government did not slander it because it was communist; where are those same opposition parties that did not throw back the communist blame of fearsome infamy, whether as reactionary opponents, whether as more advanced members of the opposition? Two things are evident from this fact. Communism was already known as a power by all the European powers. The time had already come for communists to present their opinions publically by a committee, to state their objectives and place against their activities with the winds of terror of communism a manifesto of the party itself. For the purpose of this objective communists of several nations gathered in London and worded their manifesto, which would be published in English, French, German, Italian, Flemish and Danish.

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1. The Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat

1. Historical analysis – the history of the Bourgeoisie

The history of every society to date is the history of class struggles. Free men and slaves, patricians and plebeians, master and vassal, artist and apprentice, in short – exploiters and exploited who continuously stand against each other, conducting a never-ending struggle, whether hidden or open, a struggle that ended each time with the redesign of the entire society or the joint loss of the struggling classes. During various time periods in history we have witnessed almost everywhere the absolute split of society into various pedigree classes, into a ranking of a variety of social classes. In ancient Rome we find patricians, horsemen, plebeians, slaves; in the middle ages – feudal lords, vassals, artists, apprentices, and apart from them almost in all the aforementioned classes, special secondary ranks. The contemporary bourgeoisie society, which grew from the dying of the feudal society, did not renounce the contradictions of the classes. It also placed new classes, new conditions of oppression and new types of struggles instead of the old ones. It is clear, in our times, that the bourgeoisie period, excels in the fact that it granted the contradicting classes a simpler form. Society is splitting in an increasing fashion into two large hostile camps, which stand directly one against the other – the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. From amongst the vassals of the Middle Ages came the free population of the first cities; from this population the first foundations of the bourgeoisie were developed. The discovery of America, sailing around Africa, created a new area of activity for the up and coming bourgeoisie; the markets of India and China, the settlement of America, the monetary exchange with the colonies, the growth of the monetary exchange methods and merchandise in general awarded

commerce, shipping and industry a momentum the like of which had never been seen before, and by such – rapid development of the revolutionary basis which existed in the crumbling feudal society.

2. The bourgeoisie fulfilled in history an extraordinary revolutionary role. The bourgeoisie destroyed the patriarchal, feudal orders; the ideals in each place in which it took over the government, it severed without pity all the feudal and rich contacts that man had with his supervisor and did not leave any other contact between one man and another apart from the joint interest, apart from “payment in cash” and any other emotions thereby. It drowned in cold water the egotistical calculation of the holy trembling of religious fervour. of the chivalrous excitement and the tiny-bourgeoisie melancholy. It cashed the integrity of man into an exchange rate and converted the signed and sealed freedoms that were acquired lawfully and counted the votes of one election. This was a freedom lacking any conscience of trade. In short it placed, instead of exploitation under the guise of religious illusions and policies, an open exploitation, lacking in shame, direct and dry. The bourgeoisie removed the halo of respect from all the occupations that had achieved to that point by reverence and religious anxiety. It turned the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the scientist into its salaried employees receiving payment...the bourgeoisie were not able to exist without causing continual dramatic changes in the production instruments, thereby, as regards production, and thereby – as regards all the social relationships. And on the other hand, the meticulous guarding of the old production method was the first prerequisite for all the previous industrial classes. The continual change taking place in production, the never-ending undermining of all the social conditions, the uncertainty and the movement of the persistent set aside the bourgeoisie era from all the others.

3. The bourgeoisie annexes the civilisations of all the nations including the wildest of them, and this by the rapid improvement of all the production instruments by communication networks that have become much more convenient. The prices of its goods that are equal for all are comparable to heavy cannons with the help of which it shatters all the walls of China and subdues the most stubborn xenophobia of feral nations. It forces all the nations to adopt the production method of the bourgeoisie, if it does not want to be devastated; it forces them to lead their “civilization”, that is to become bourgeoisie. In short, it creates for itself a world that shall be in its image and in its likeness.

The bourgeoisie enslaved the village to govern the city. It built huge cities, significantly increased the number of populations in the city as compared to the rural populations extricated in this way a significant part of the population from a life of rural ignorance. It created dependency of the village on the city, the dependency of the feral countries and the semi-feral countries on cultural countries, the dependency of the farming people on the bourgeoisie people, the dependency of the east on the west. The bourgeoisie gradually destroyed the split in the means of production, of property and of the population; it distorted the population, concentrated the production methods and concentrated the property in the hands of the few. The political concentration came as an inevitable result of the aforementioned process. The independent regions, with almost exclusive alliances, and which have various interests, laws, governments and customs duties that were compressed into one nation, and it had one government, one law, one interest, one national class, one customs arena. The bourgeoisie developed mass production forces that were greater than anything developed in all the previous generations together, and this during its class rule which was still not 100 years old. The control over the forces of nature, mechanization, application of chemistry in industry

and agriculture, steam ships, railways, telegram system, preparation of land in entire areas of the world, preparation of rivers for sailing vessels, populations as if they had sprung out of the ground – and that there was a generation from the previous generations that imagined that these powers of production were hidden in a coma in the bosom of social labour.

4. Class war

A. The history of industry and trade has been for several decades no more than a history of an uprising of the production forces in our times against property relations which constitute a condition for the establishment of the bourgeoisie and its rule. It is sufficient that we recall the trade crises, which are frequently repeated and increasingly endanger the existence of the entire bourgeoisie society and place it in question. In these trade crises not only were a large part of the products produced regularly destroyed but rather also the production forces that had already been created. A social epidemic breaks out during crises, an epidemic which during all the previous eras would be seen as absurd: the epidemic of surplus production. Suddenly society finds itself withdrawing to a situation of ephemeral recklessness; it seems to it that the hunger, whereby a general war of destruction had disconnected it from all the sources of sustenance; it seemed that industry and trade had been destroyed and why? Because it had a surplus of civilization, a surplus of food, a surplus of industry and a surplus of trade. The production forces available to it no longer serve the promotion of the bourgeoisie property relations; the opposite is true, they have become too huge in comparison with these relations and are halted by them; and when they overcome this obstacle, the entire bourgeoisie society enters a situation of disorder, and the existence of the bourgeoisie property is in danger. The bourgeoisie relations became too narrow to encircle the wealth that they created. How does the bourgeoisie overcome crises? On the one hand by forced destruction of numerous production forces; and on the other hand by capturing new markets and more through utilization of the various markets. How therefore? By preparing more and greater multiparty crises and by reducing the means for preventing the crises. That same weaponry, with the help of which the bourgeoisie subdued the feudal system, is used at present against the bourgeoisie itself. **Zero, the bourgeoisie has not only weakened the arms that brought it to extinction; it also placed men to hold these arms – the workers of our times, the proletariat.**

B. As the measure of the development of the bourgeoisie – that is capital – so too the measure of the development of the proletariat, the contemporary workers class, which is established only for as long as they find work, and they find work only for as long as their work increases the capital. The workers, who are forced to sell themselves one by one, constitute comparable merchandise for each of the items of other commerce and they are subordinate equally to all the fluctuations of competition, to all the changes taking place in the market. The work of the proletarians has lost any independence and therefore also any reason in the eyes of the workers, and this due to the expansion of mechanization and due to the distribution of the work. The worker became one of the accessories of a machine and no more, and he was required to carry out only the simplest and the most monotonous of hand movements, which is the easiest thing to learn. The costs, that are caused by the worker, are therefore almost only for means of sustenance that he requires for his existence and the continuation of his species. On the other hand, the price of the merchandise, that is to say also of the labour, is weighted against the cost of its production. Therefore, the more loathsome the labour, the lower the wage. Moreover, the more mechanization and distribution of work increase, the more

the labour mass increases, whether by way of multiplicity of work hours or by way of multiplicity of the work required during a certain time period or acceleration of the course of mechanization. Contemporary industry changed from a small workshop of a patriarchal artist to a large factory of industrial capitalists. Masses of workers compacted into the factory, organized in a military fashion. They are placed as if they were privates of industry, under the supervision of a system of junior commanders and officers. They are not only the servants of the bourgeoisie class, of the bourgeoisie state, but rather they are enslaved every day, every hour, by the machine, by the supervisor and by the bourgeoisie – the solitary industrialist himself, first of all. This tyranny is pettier, more evil, more annoying, inasmuch as it is more openly declared that profit is its very purpose.

The more that manual labour requires less skill and less strength, that is to say the more that contemporary industry develops, the more work for women displaces work for men. The gender differences have no social significance as regards the working class. There are other labour instruments which cause various costs pursuant to age and gender.

C. When the exploitation of the worker is completed by industry, and he receives his wage in cash, other parts of the bourgeoisie attack him: the landlords, the shop owners, the pawnshops etc. The people who until now have been placed at the bottom of the middle classes: the industrialists and the minor traders, the low rent owners, the tradesmen and the farmers – all these classes descend to the proletariat. And this, whether because their meagre capital is insufficient to operate the greater industry and their hands are lower in the competition with the larger capitalists, or whether their expertise loses its value due to new production methods. The proletariat therefore gains reinforcement that comes from amongst all the classes in society. The proletariat undergoes various stages of development. Its struggle with the bourgeoisie starts with its existence. From the outset a few workers struggle, thereafter the workers from one factory, followed by workers in one field of work, the solitary bourgeoisie exploiting them directly. The workers direct their attacks not only against the bourgeoisie production relations, but rather the production instruments themselves; they destroy the foreign competitive goods, beat the machines, burn the factories, attempt to recapture the status that the worker lost in the middle ages. At this stage the workers constitute a mass dispersed over the entire earth and split due to the competition. The standing together of the masses of workers is still not a result of their unification, but rather a result of the unification of the bourgeoisie that must – and still can – motivate the proletariat in entirety in order to achieve its political objectives. At this stage the proletariat are not fighting therefore their enemies, but rather the enemies of their enemies, against the remains of an absolute kingdom, against the landowners, bourgeoisie who are not industrialists, minor bourgeoisie. Every historical movement is concentrated in this way by the bourgeoisie;

D. Every victory achieved in this fashion is a victory for the bourgeoisie. However, the more that industry develops, not only do the proletariat multiply; it is compressed into larger masses, its strength increases, and it feels it more. The interests of the proletariat and its life conditions change, as the system of machines increasingly blurs the work differences and decreases the way everywhere to almost the same low level. The increase of competition between the bourgeoisie and themselves and the trade crises and the growing competition take away the stability from the workers' wage; never-ending sophistication, with rapidly increasing development of machines takes away the security of every social class; the confrontations

between a solitary worker and the solitary bourgeoisie often take on a more frequent character of a confrontation between two classes.

The workers start to establish unions directed against the bourgeoisie; they assemble in favour of protecting their salaries, they even found permanent associations, in order to equip themselves with food in preparation for possible uprisings. For some the struggle turns into a rebellion. The workers are frequently victorious; however, their victory is solely ephemeral. Not direct success, but rather the comprehensive unification of an increasing number of workers, is the real result of their struggle. This unification is helped by the developing media, created by the large industry and which produce contacts between workers in various places. And there is no need only for the media in order that the many local struggles have the same character in each and every site, to become a national struggle, a concentrated class struggle. However, every struggle is a political struggle. And to differentiate from the bourgeoisie in the Middle Ages who had only rural pathways and they required hundreds of years in order to unify, the contemporary proletariat established their unification with the help of the railways, within several years.

5. The proletariat

The proletariat, the lowest level of the current society, cannot stand tall without blowing up all the super structures of the classes which constitute the official society. The struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie is from the outset a national struggle, if not pursuant to its content then at least pursuant to its form. It is natural that the proletariat in each and every country is commanded to overcome first of all its bourgeoisie. By our description of the general stages of the development of the proletariat, we have followed the hidden civil war more or less, which was taking place in society until that point, which it becomes an open revolution, and the proletariat establishes its rule by overthrowing the bourgeoisie with violence.

6. The Communists

The communists are therefore in fact the most decisive part, which is always pushing forward, of the workers parties in all countries; they surpass theoretically the rest of the proletariat masses due to understanding the conditions of the proletariat movement, its process and its general results. The immediate objective of the communists is like the objective of the rest of the proletariat parties; forming the proletariat into a class, eradication of the bourgeoisie rule, capturing the political rule from the proletariat. The theoretical assumptions of the communists are not built in any shape or form on ideas, on principles that have been invented or discovered by anyone who is engaged in repairing the world order. These theoretical assumptions serve only as general expressions of the relationships in the existing class struggles, of the historical movement taking place before our eyes. The cancellation of the property relations that existed to date is not something specifically attributed to communism. All the property relations were subordinate to continual historical consideration, to continual historical change. For example, the French revolution voided the feudal property in favour of the bourgeoisie. They did not void property in general but rather cancellation of the bourgeoisie property was specifically by communism. If therefore capital is changed into joint property, belonging to all members of society, this shall not change private property to social. Only the socialist nature of property changes. It loses its class characteristic. Let's now turn to paid

labour: the average price of paid labour is the minimum working wage, that is to say the sum for sustenance, required in order that the worker can live as such. The more that the paid worker makes income for himself as a result of his activity, the more it is sufficient solely and only to reproduce his life. We do not mean in any way whatsoever to void personal appropriation of work products for reproduction of life directly. This is appropriation which has no net profit which could award full control of the work of others. We want to void only the depressing nature of this appropriation, with which the worker lives only in order to increase the capital; one who lives only as required by the interest of the ruling class. In bourgeoisie society there is no living work but rather a means to increase the accrued work. Whereas in the communist society there is no accrued work but rather means to expand the life process of the worker, to enrich them, and advance them.

7. The communist work plan

In the more developed countries it is possible to implement in general the following measures: 1. Expropriation of land property and use of land rent for the purposes of the state's expenses. 2. High progressive taxes. 3. Cancellation of the right of inheritance. 4. Confiscation of the property of all the exiles and the rebels. 5. Centralization of credit by the state by means of a national bank the capital of which belongs to the state and it has an exclusive monopoly. 6. Centralizations of transportation by the state. 7. Increase of the number of national factories and the number of production instruments; preparation of lands and their improvement pursuant to a general program. 8. The duty of work imposed on everyone in the same measure; establishment of industrial armies in particular for purposes of agriculture. 9. Integration of agriculture and industry and action in favour of gradual cancellation of the disparity between the city and country. 10. Free public education for all children; cancellation of child labour in industry in its current form; integration of education in material production etc. When the differences in the classes will be cancelled during development and all the products will be centralized by the unionized workers, the public government will lose its political character. The political government is, in actuality, the organized government of a certain class to oppress another class. When the proletariat unifies into a class during its struggle against the bourgeoisie, when it acquires for itself a status of a ruling class by a revolution and cancels by force it being a ruling class of the old production relations – in this way it cancels the existential conditions of opposing classes, cancels the classes in general, and thereby its government – as a class.

8. The conclusion of the manifesto

Communists do not customarily hide their opinions and their intentions. They declare them openly, that they can only achieve their objectives by way of the destruction by force of all the existing orders of society to this point. Arouse yourselves, the ruling classes, from the communist revolution. The proletariat has nothing to lose apart from their fetters, however will gain a world that is **ALL THE PROLETARIANS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!**

Questions:

- Pursuant to historical communism it was always conducted in the shadow of the class struggle. State which classes clashed during each era.
- Why was the bourgeoisie a revolutionary force pursuant to the manifesto?
- Why did the bourgeoisie create globalization? What is new in the communist argument?
- Why did a war break out and who is paying the price? And how is the proletariat dependent on the bourgeoisie?
- Why does Marx compare the workers to goods? And in which ways does the bourgeoisie exploit the worker?
- Who is the proletariat and how does it contend with the bourgeoisie?
- What is the innovation of the communist party? And what is its plan of action?