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# Down Tools On May First!

## Workers Awaken! Workers Unite!

[CLP leaflet, circa April 25, 1920]

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The sun of Communism is rising in the East. From Russia its invigorating rays are awakening the proletariat of the world. The workers everywhere, inspired by the success of their first workers' government, will celebrate May First, their International Labor Day, with a determination only satisfied with a complete victory.

Never in the history of May First, never since the International Congress of Paris in 1889, were the prospects for a final victory of the working class brighter, never the spirit of the workers less breakable than today, on the eve of May First, 1920. Although the capitalist governments of all countries are preparing the hangman's noose for all those that dare to think in terms inimical to the interests and principles of man-devouring imperialistic capitalism, the working class sees in these persecutions only the last efforts of the dying beast to escape its destiny.

### **May First is the Workers' Day.**

**The revolutionary advance guard of the Proletariat calls upon the workers everywhere to break the bondage of economic and political slavery and demonstrate on that day for the cause of real freedom.**

May First is not a Labor Day decreed to you by the powers that be to dope the workers into the belief that the government stands above the classes. No! May First is the workers' own day, on which, by their own determination they down tools and test their strength.

The power that decrees a holiday to you today tells you tomorrow: Thou shalt not strike!

**But your power can take a holiday today, can strike tomorrow, in spite of everything.**

May First, as International Labor Day, is the day on which the workers by their own action demonstrate that they must fight for what they want, and for what they are entitled to, and that they have the power to win.

May First gives the answer of the revolutionary proletariat of all countries to the manifestations of solidarity of international capitalism.

And that answer is: **SOLIDARITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT.**

Workers of America: You have fought for higher wages for years. By hard struggle you succeeded here and there. And yet, you find yourself today so much the slave of profit-making capital as ever.

You have fought for shorter hours. You have succeeded. And yet, today you must work more of your own life into the product of your toil on one day than when you worked 12 hours.

In years past we demonstrated for the 8-hour day on May First.

Today we demonstrate for: **ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS.**

Capitalist Society is built upon our sweat and blood, our misery and want. All our "victories" on the economic field are turned against us, and our economic slavery is reinforced by an absolute political dictatorship of capitalism. *Thus our economic struggle must of necessity become a political one. The proletarian struggle ceases to be a struggle for higher wages and shorter hours, and becomes a struggle for the supremacy of the working class.*

This struggle can only be fought to victory by the masses of the workers. On May First the workers exercise this mass-action, demonstrating no more for

the 8-hour day, but for the dictatorship of the proletariat. ON THAT DAY WE DOWN TOOLS TO SHOW OUR DETERMINATION TO FIGHT AND OUR POWER TO WIN.

Comrades and Fellow Workers:— In demonstrating our determination to fight and win we must join hands with the workers of the world. They have fought our battles which they knew were theirs. We must fight their battles which we know to be ours.

Finding the capitalist governments in a conspiracy to crush the Workers' Republic of Russia, it becomes our task and duty to direct our demonstration, on May First, against this murderous conspiracy.

In their actions against Russia the capitalist governments of all countries belie their phrases of "freedom" and "democracy" and demonstrate that their highest science of statesmanship is the piratical principle: Sacrifice everything (in the name of the people, if you find fools enough to believe you) sacrifice even the people themselves for the right and the chance to make profit. Carrying out this principle with merciless rigidity, they murder freedom in the name of their capitalist freedom, they suppress the people in the name of the people, their victims.

Enslaving the people economically under the disguise of a nominal political democracy, the capitalists hypocritically shed tears because the workers of Russia free the people of that country economically with the power of a dictatorship. And the answer of the capitalist dictators to the Russian people are murderous expeditions against the Soviet Republic.

Workers! To get free you must answer the war cry of united capitalism against the workers of Russia as well as the workers in other countries with the war cry of united labor against capitalism. *The answer to the capitalists of the world in their war against the social revolution in Russia and elsewhere must be the social revolution against capitalism everywhere.*

But, workers: TO BE FREE, YOU MUST DARE TO BE FREE. The chain holding us down in wage slavery is our submissiveness, our lack of revolutionary spirit. The determination of the workers to exert their power in united mass action aiming at the

complete destruction of the capitalist dictatorship is the long range gun that will shatter the power of the exploiters.

Let the First of May 1920 kindle that spirit.

Comrades and Fellow Workers: Let us be free!

LET US DOWN TOOLS in answer to the capitalists' war on the revolutionary proletariat everywhere.

LET US DOWN TOOLS ON THAT DAY in honor of the victims, the countless soldiers of the revolution that were murdered by international capitalism in its effort to save the right to make a profit.

LET US DOWN TOOLS ON THAT DAY so that we may have a test of strength of the revolutionary army of the proletariat in united action the world over.

LET US DOWN TOOLS ON THAT DAY so that the workers may be inspired with confidence in their own power; so that May First, 1920, may awaken the spirit of revolutionary class solidarity. This spirit will unite the proletariat the world over in its fight for real freedom. It will bring peace to the people everywhere: not the peace of the graveyard, dictated by voracious imperialistic capitalism, but joyous peace known only to free people from among whom greed and profit has been removed as cause for human slaughter.

LET US DOWN TOOLS ON THAT DAY as a sign of our allegiance to the principles our comrades in Russia are fighting for, to help them win their battle.

### **Down tools on May First, 1920.**

Let the battalions of labor demonstrate their power on that day.

**All Power to the Workers!**

**All Industries to the Workers!**

**Long Live the Social Revolution!**

**COMMUNIST LABOR PARTY**

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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