
Hail to the Soviets!

May Day Proclamation by the Central Executive Committee Communist Party of America.

Full text of a leaflet published by the CPA, late April 1920. Copy in Tim Davenport collection.

Workers of America:

Eighteen months have passed since the imperialist nations of the world signed the armistice agreement which was to bring to an end the slaughter of millions of workingmen upon the battlefields of Europe.

You were told that this war was a war of democracy against autocracy. You were urged to give your labor without stint and to sacrifice your lives without question, so that the cause of “right” and “justice” might triumph.

For a year and a half the representatives of Allied imperialists have been in control of the affairs of the world. Wielding power such as few men have possessed in history of mankind, Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and their lesser satellites, have reshaped the world in harmony with their ideas of “democracy” and “justice.”

What has been the result of their labor, workers of America? What have the imperialist masters of the world achieved for you and for the workers of the world?

Have the glowing promises through which they tricked you into supporting their imperialist war been kept? Have they rebuilt the world upon the new foundation through which, they told you, the useless slaughter of the flower of the youth of the nations would be ended? Have they changed the conditions under which you gain your livelihood, broken the strangling grip of the exploiters upon your throat and made your lot more bearable?

MAY DAY — Labor’s International Holi-

day — is approaching. On May Day the revolutionary workers of the world will count their gains and losses, they will renew their courage and determination by recounting their victories, and pay tribute to those that have fallen as martyrs to their cause.

Dare you, workers of America, face the facts of the promises and performances of your masters, the exploiters, to whom you have in the past given your support?

Eighteen months have gone since your masters won their victory for “democracy” and “justice.” Look abroad in the world and witness their achievement!

The war is at an end, but war still goes on. On two continents, on many battlefields, men are fighting. The threat of war and yet more wars hangs over the people of almost every country of Europe and America. Imperialistic ambition and greed — the desire to secure new economic resources for exploitation, which is the characteristic of every capitalist nation — are creating new jealousies and conflicts and continually threaten to again participate the people of these countries into the abyss of universal slaughter.

The economic system of Europe is in a state of collapse. The strivings of the “statesmen” at Paris have failed to put this machinery in order. The efforts of the “statesmen” have proven fruitless in the face of the contradictions of capitalist production which are destroying the system. All over Europe the workers are starving because the machinery of capitalist production cannot be set in

motion again.

Financially the entire structure of the capitalist system faces collapse. Money is becoming valueless in many countries of Europe, because of the inflation during the war, and in the United States prices mount ever higher. The government has issued paper money and other forms of obligation, and destroyed the wealth these represent, and consequently the value of money has depreciated. The financiers of the world see their danger, but yet they can find no remedy. Capitalism destroys itself.

Workers of America, you have not thus far felt hunger, misery and suffering to the extent of your brothers in Europe. But already your masters are warning you. The black clouds are on the horizon and the men who know the financial and industrial conditions are forecasting that by fall the United States will be in the grip of a panic which will bring industrial depression, unemployment for millions, with the consequent suffering and misery.

This is the reality of the “better world” with which the capitalists and their tools deluded you into fighting their battles. In place of a “better world” — economic breakdown and widespread misery and suffering. In place of “democracy” and “justice” the brutal oppression of the workers as in the steel strike and the miners strike.

There is only one way in which the workers can save themselves from the consequences of the breakdown of the present economic system. Capitalism has played its part in the history of mankind. It is no longer workable. It must be uprooted and destroyed, and a new system of industry built in its place. This is the historic task of the working class.

The work of destroying international capitalism has already begun through the splendid achievements of the workers of Russia. Consider Russia and the Communists who control the Soviet Government, and contrast it to the capitalist nations and their statesmen!

The Soviet Government was established in Russia after the old regime had brought about the complete collapse of the economic system in that country. In Russia the chaos existed toward which the capitalist system is tending everywhere. While in the capitalist nations things are going from bad to worse, the Communists of Russia are reconstructing the social and industrial system of that country. Attacked by the capitalist imperialists of the world they organized the Red Army, which has been victorious on every front. While fighting the battle against counterrevolution, and hemmed in on all sides by the blockade of the Allies, they have still been able to achieve wonders in the work of rebuilding and reconstructing the economic life of the nation so as to end exploitation and secure the necessities of life, education and recreation to those who work.

The means through which the workers have ousted their exploiters and carried on the work of reconstruction is the Soviet Government, through which is expressed the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The workers found that they could not exercise their power through the governmental machinery of their exploiters. They found that the state machinery of their exploiters, whether it appears in the shape of autocracy of the Tsar, or in the shape of a so-called democratic parliamentary government, such as we have in the United States was an instrument for their oppression which they must replace by their own institution of government before they could use their power and destroy capitalism.

The Soviets — Workers Councils — are the natural expression of the power of the workers. When the workers of Hungary wrested power from their exploiters they did so through the Soviets. When the workers of Bavaria achieved their victory it was through the Soviets. In Germany the workers have found that Moderate Socialism of the Ebert-Scheidemann type and the militarist autocrats are equally their enemy, and they are fighting against both

for the establishment of a Soviet Government.

WORKERS OF AMERICA, YOU MUST JOIN IN THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD IF YOU WOULD EMANCIPATE YOURSELVES FROM CAPITALISM. The parties of your enemies, the capitalists the Republican and Democratic Party — have proven to you that they stand for your oppression and exploitation. Labor parties Moderate Socialism, such as that of the Socialist Party, and reactionary Trade Unions are merely the new tools through which the capitalists maintain their power when they can no longer dupe you by the old methods. YOU MUST BREAK THE POWER OF THE CAPITALISTS. You cannot compromise with them as do the Labor parties, the Moderate Socialists and the reactionary Trade Unionists.

You must develop your power through engaging in the present struggles against the capitalists. The general political strike is the means of expressing your power and the beginning of the revolutionary struggle which will finally establish the Soviet Government and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

While in this country we are not ready for the final struggle, the Communist Party of America calls you to show your power on May Day.

There are in the prisons of the United States

hundreds of political and industrial prisoners whose only offense is that they fought the battles of the workers. Shall they rot behind steel bars forever? Other thousands are to be imprisoned and deported as the result of the capitalist government to destroy the revolutionary movement in this country. Are these workers to be removed from the class struggle while you remain silent ?

STRIKE FOR THE RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL PRISONERS ON MAY DAY. CLOSE THE SHOPS AND FACTORIES DEMONSTRATE YOUR POWER.

DEMAND THE FREEDOM OF THOSE WHO ARE IMPRISONED FOR FIGHTING THE BATTLES OF THE WORKING CLASS.

Make the slogan of the day ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS.

Hail to freedom for all political and industrial prisoners.

HAIL TO THE POLITICAL STRIKE.

Hail to the Soviets and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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