

Appendix 2

Manifesto of the Communist Left to the proletarians of Europe (June 1944)

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It will soon be five years that imperialist war has raged in Europe, with all its misery, massacres and devastation.

On the Russian, French and Italian fronts tens of millions of workers and peasants are slaughtering each other for the exclusive interests of a sordid and bloody capitalism, which obeys only these laws: profit, accumulation.

In the course of five years of war, especially the last year - that of the liberation of all peoples, you have been told - many false programmes, many illusions have disappeared, making the mask, behind which the odious face of capitalism has been hidden, fall.

In each country you have been mobilised behind different ideologies, each having the same goal, the same result: to hurl you into the carnage, one against the other, brothers against brothers in misery, workers against workers.

Fascism, National-Socialism, demand “living space” for their exploited masses, but only do so to bide their fierce will to extricate themselves from the profound crisis which undermines their very basis.

The Anglo-American-Russian bloc wanted - so it appeared - to deliver you from fascism in order to give back to you your freedoms, your rights. But these promises were only the bait to make you participate in the war to eliminate - after having first begotten it - fascism, the great imperialist competitor, outdated as a mode of life and domination for capitalism.

The Atlantic Charter, the plan for the New Europe, was only the smokescreen behind which was hidden the conflicts real meaning; a war of bandits with its mournful trail of destruction and massacres, all of whose terrible consequences the working class must bear.

Workers!

You are told, they would like to make you believe, that this war is not like all the others. You are being lied to. As long as there are exploiters and exploited, capitalism is war, war is capitalism.

The revolution of 1917 was a proletarian revolution. It was the shining proof of the proletariat's political capacity to constitute itself as a ruling class and to move towards the organisation of a communist society. It was the response of the labouring masses to the imperialist war of 1914-1918.

But the leaders of the Russian state have since then abandoned the principles of that revolution, have transformed your communist parties into nationalist parties, have dissolved the Communist International and have helped international capitalism to hurl you into the carnage.

If in Russia, they had remained loyal to the programme of the revolution and of internationalism, if they had constantly called on the proletarian masses to unify its struggles against capitalism, if they had not adhered to that masquerade, the League of Nations, it would have been impossible for imperialism to have unleashed the war.

In participating in the imperialist war together with a group of capitalist powers, the Russian state has betrayed the Russian workers and the international proletariat.

Workers of Germany!

Your bourgeoisie counted on you, on your endurance and your productive power, to win a place for imperialism, to dominate the industrial and agricultural basis of Europe. After turning Germany into a

barracks, after making you work for four years at breakneck speed to prepare the engines of war, they have thrown you into all the countries of Europe to everywhere bring — as in each imperialist conflict — ruin and dislocation.

The plan of your imperialism has been foiled by the laws of development of international capitalism which has since 1900 exhausted any possibility of a blooming of the imperialist form of domination, and still more so, of every nationalist expression.

The profound crisis which wastes the world, and particularly Europe, is the insoluble crisis, the death crisis, of capitalist society.

Only the proletariat, through its communist revolution, can eliminate the causes of the distress and the misery of the labouring masses and the workers.

Workers and soldiers!

The fate of your bourgeoisie will now be determined on the terrain of imperialist competition. But international capitalism cannot end the war, because war is its last, its only possibility of survival.

Your revolutionary traditions are profoundly rooted in the class struggle of the past. In 1918, with your proletarian leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, in 1923 (despite the opportunism already

arising in the Communist International) you engraved on history your revolutionary will and power.

The National-Socialism of Hitler and the opportunism of the 3rd International made you believe that your fate was linked to the struggle against the Treaty of Versailles. This false struggle could only tie you to the programme of your capitalism, which was characterised by a spirit of revenge and the preparation for the present war.

Your interests as workers are only linked to the interests of all the exploited of Europe and of the whole world.

You occupy a critical place to force an end to the monstrous carnage. Following the example of the Italian proletariat, you must undertake the struggle against war production, you must refuse to fight against your brother workers (1). Your revolt must be a manifestation of the class struggle. It must be translated into strikes and upheavals. As in 1918, the fate of the proletarian revolution is dependent on your capacity to break the chains that bind you to the monstrous machine of German imperialism.

Workers, Labourers in Germany!

They have deported you to build engines of destruction. For each worker who arrives, a German worker can be sent to the front.

Whatever your nationality, you are one of the exploited.

Your only enemy is German and international capitalism; your comrades are the German workers, and the workers of the whole world.

You carry with you the traditions and experiences of the class struggles of your countries and the entire world. You are not “foreigners”.

Your demands, your interests, are identical to those of your German comrades. In participating in the class struggle in the factory, at the point of production, you will effectively contribute to breaking the course of the imperialist war.

French workers!

At the time of the strikes in 1936, all the parties manoeuvred to transform your just and legitimate class demands into a demonstration of support for the war which was then being prepared. “The era of prosperity” which the demagogues of the Popular Front presented to you as a full flowering was, in fact, only the profound crisis of French capitalism.

Your ephemeral improvements in living standards and work were not the result of an economic recovery, but were bought about by the need to set the war industry in motion.

The invasion of France has been exploited by all those responsible for the conflict - from the left to the right - to instil in your minds a desire for revenge and hatred against the German and Italian workers, who no more than you bear any responsibility for starting the war, and who, like you bear the terrible consequences of a butchery willed and prepared by all the capitalist states.

The Pétain-Laval government speaks to you of a National Revolution. It is the most vulgar lie; the most reactionary method to make you accept without flinching the weight of military defeat for the exclusive benefit of capitalism.

The Algiers Committee² holds out before you the return to pre-war abundance and prosperity. Whatever the colour or form of tomorrow's government, the labouring masses of France and the other countries of Europe will pay a heavy war tribute to the Anglo-American-Russian imperialists in the ruins and destruction caused by the two armies in struggle.

French workers!

Too many among you have been led to believe in, to hope for, the well-being bought by the armies, be they English, American or Russian.

The intrigues and contrasts which already manifest themselves within this "trinity" of thieves on the

subject of the division of the spoils foreshadows the fact that the conditions imposed on the proletariat will be hard if you do not take the path of class struggle.

Too many among you have made yourselves the auxiliaries of capitalism by participating in the partisans' war, the most extreme expression of nationalism.

Your enemies are neither the German soldier, nor the English or American soldier, but their capitalism which has led them to war, to killing, to death. Your enemy is your own capitalism, whether it is represented by Laval or De Gaulle. Your freedom is linked neither to the fate nor to the traditions of your ruling class, but to your independence as a proletarian class.

You are the children of the Paris Commune, and it is only by inspiring yourselves by it and by its principles that you will succeed in breaking the chains of slavery that link you to the outdated apparatus of capitalist domination: the traditions of 1789 and the laws of the bourgeois revolution.

Workers of Russia!

In 1917, with your Bolshevik Party and Lenin, you overthrew the capitalist regime and established the first Republic of Soviets. Your magnificent class action opened the historic period of the decisive struggle between two opposed societies: the old, the bourgeoisie, destined to disappear under the weight of its contradictions; the new, the proletariat, constituting itself as a ruling class so as to move towards a

classless society, communism.

In that period too, imperialist war raged. Millions of workers fell on the battlefields of capitalism. The example of your decisive struggle filled the working masses with the will to put an end to the useless massacre. In breaking the course of the war, your revolution became the programme, the battle flag, for the struggle of the exploited of the world. Capitalism consumed by the economic crisis - aggravated by the war - trembled in the face of the proletarian movement which burst over all of Europe.

Surrounded by the White armies and those of international capitalism which sought to eliminate you by famine, you succeeded in extricating yourselves from the counter-revolutionary embrace; thanks to the heroic support of the European and international proletariat, which took the road of class struggle, the bourgeois coalition was prevented from intervening against the proletarian revolution.

The lesson was decisive: henceforth, the class struggle will develop on the international terrain, the proletariat will form its communist party and its International on the programme confirmed by your communist revolution. The bourgeoisie will direct itself towards the repression of the workers movement and towards the corruption of your revolution and your power.

The present imperialist war finds you not with the proletariat, but against it. Your allies are no longer the workers, but the bourgeoisie. You no longer defend the Soviet constitution of 1917, but the “socialist” fatherland. You no longer have comrades like Lenin and his co-workers, but jackbooted,

bemedalled generals, just as in all the capitalist countries - the symbol of bloody militarism, the slayers of the proletariat.

You are told that there is no capitalism in Russia, but your exploitation is the same as the rest of the proletariat, and your labour power disappears into the abyss of the war and into the treasuries of international capitalism. Your freedom is the freedom to be made to kill to help imperialism to survive. Your class party has disappeared, your soviets are eliminated, your unions are barracks, your links with the international proletariat are broken.

Comrades, workers of Russia!

Among you, as everywhere else, capitalism sows ruin and misery. The proletarian masses of Europe, like you in 1917, await the favourable moment to rise up against the frightful conditions of existence imposed by the war. Like you, they direct themselves against all those responsible for this terrible insanity, whether they be fascists, democrats or Russian. Like you, they try to overthrow the bloody regime of oppression which is capitalism.

Their flag will be your flag of 1917.

Their programme will be your programme, the one your present rulers have taken from you: the communist revolution.

Your state is allied with the forces of capitalist counter-revolution. You must be in solidarity with, you must fraternise with, your comrades in struggle, your brothers; you must struggle at their side to re-establish in Russia and in other countries, the conditions for the victory of the world communist revolution.

English and American soldiers!

Your imperialism is developing its plans for the colonisation and enslavement of all peoples, in order to try and save itself from the grave crisis which envelops all of society.

Already before the war, despite colonial domination and the enrichment of your bourgeoisie you were subjected to unemployment and poverty, those without work numbering in the millions.

Against your strikes for legitimate demands your bourgeoisie did not hesitate to employ the most barbarous means of repression: gas.

The workers of Germany, France, Italy, Spain have accounts to settle with their own bourgeoisie, which like yours is responsible for the filthy massacre.

You are wanted to play the role of cop; you will be sent against the proletarian masses in revolt.

You must refuse to fire, you must fraternise with the soldiers and workers of Europe.

These struggles are your class struggles.

Workers of Europe!

You are surrounded by a world of enemies. All parties, all programmes, have failed the rest posed by the war; All play on your suffering, all unite to save capitalist society from collapse.

The whole band of riffraff in the service of high finance, from Hitler to Churchill, from Laval to Pétain, from Stalin to Roosevelt, from Mussolini to Bonomi, is in collaboration with the bourgeois state to preach order, work, discipline, fatherland - in the perpetuation of your enslavement.

Despite the betrayal of the leaders of the Russian state, the formulas, the theses, the predictions of Marx and of Lenin find, in the very perfidy of the present situation, their striking confirmation.

Never has the class division between exploited and exploiters been so clear, so profound.

Never has the necessity to put an end to a regime of misery and blood been so compelling.

With the killing at the front, with the massacres from the air, with five years of restrictions, famine makes its appearance

The war spreads over the whole continent; capitalism does not know how to, cannot, end this war.

It is not by helping one or the other group of the two forms of capitalist domination that you will shorten the fight.

This time it is the Italian proletariat which has blazed the trail of struggle, of revolt against the war.

As with Lenin in 1917, there is no alternative, no other path to follow outside of the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war.

As long as capitalist rule survives, there will be neither bread, nor peace, nor freedom for the proletariat.

Communist workers!

There are many parties, too many parties. But all of them, even the Trotskyist groups, have fallen into the counter-revolution.

One single party is missing: the proletarian class political party.

The Communist Left alone has stayed with the proletariat, loyal to the programme of Marxism, loyal to the communist revolution. It is only with this programme that it will be possible to give back to the proletariat its organisations, the weapons necessary to its struggle, to victory. These weapons are the new communist party, the new international.

Against all opportunism, against all compromise on the terrain of class struggle, the Fraction³ calls on you to aid the proletariat in extricating itself from the vice of capitalism. Against the united forces of capitalism, the invincible force of the proletarian class must be built.

Workers and soldiers of all countries!

You alone can stop this terrible massacre unprecedented in history.

Workers! In all countries stop the production destined to kill your brothers, your wives, your children.

Soldiers! Cease fire, throw down your weapons! Fraternise beyond the artificial frontiers of capitalism. Unite on the international class front.

- LONG LIVE THE FRATERNISATION OF ALL THE EXPLOITED!
- DOWN WITH THE IMPERIALIST WAR!
- LONG LIVE THE WORLD COMMUNIST REVOLUTION!

June 1944.

NOTES

(1) In March 1943, the strikes of the proletariat in Northern Italy led to the fall of Mussolini and Italy's call for an armistice. This was the first the only serious breach that the European working class made in the second inter-imperialist world massacre.

(2) The coalition put together by Anglo-American imperialism, in Algiers, with the participation of Général De Gaulle, to rule France after its "Liberation".

(3) The organisation of the Italian and French communist Left ("Bordigist"): fraction de la Gauche communiste internationale (GCI).