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"The history of all hitherto existing society
is the history of class struggles."

Karl Marx & Frederich Engels,
The Communist Manifesto, 1848

Marx the Revolutionary

by Brian Ingham, 1983

inqaba YA BASEBENZI

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"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways. The point, however, is to change it".

These now famous words were written by Marx in 1845. They fully convey the spirit in which he was to live out his life over the next 38 years.

No one has ever understood more clearly than Marx the importance of theory to the working class movement and his contribution in the theoretical field has been acknowledged ever since by all the great teachers of socialism as second to none.

But Marx was not the white-haired academic recluse which, since his death, countless historians have attempted to depict. He was to his core a revolutionary fighter, an organiser, speaker, publicist and pamphleteer, vigorously struggling to free society of class oppression, exploitation, misery and want.

After Marx's death in 1883, Engels, his lifelong friend, co-thinker and intimate political co-worker, paid tribute to the theoretical legacy which Marx, "the greatest living thinker", had left to the workers of the world. "Marx", Engels added, "was above all a revolutionary, and his great aim in life was to co-operate in this or that fashion in the overthrow of capitalist society and the state institutions which it had created, to co-operate in the emancipation of the modern proletariat, to whom he was the first to give a consciousness of its class position and its class needs, a knowledge of the conditions necessary for its emancipation. In this struggle he was in his element, and he fought with a passion and tenacity and with a success granted to few".

When only 24 years old, he had collaborated with sections of the Rhineland liberal capitalist class in establishing the radical *Rheinische Zeitung* ('Rhineland Newspaper'), of which he soon became the editor. Engels later commented that the *Rheinische Zeitung* "wore out one censor after another. Finally it came under double censorship...that also was of no avail. In the beginning of 1843 the government declared that it was impossible to keep this newspaper in check and suppressed it without more ado".

Marx was never intimidated by such acts of oppression. On the contrary, they merely steeled his resolve to continue the struggle in an even more steadfast manner. On this occasion he left for France where he was able to gain more experience of the socialist and communist ideas circulating outside Germany, and where he began his lifelong collaboration with Engels.

Marx and Engels clarified the basic tenets of scientific socialism, and they began to work painstakingly to build the very first foundations of a party based upon these principles.

Various groupings of intellectuals existed in Europe at that time, each peddling some utopian socialist scheme, but each also devoid of any real contact with the working class. Marx and Engels refused to join any of these organisations, most of which still cloaked themselves in masonic-type conspiratorial airs. Instead, they formed their own tiny propaganda group.

Marx later explained that in this period: "We issued a series of pamphlets, some of them printed, other lithographed, mercilessly criticising the mixture of Anglo-French socialism or communism and German philosophy...and putting forward instead a scientific insight into the economic structure of bourgeois society as the only tenable basis, explaining this in a popular form and pointing out that the task was not to work out a utopian system but to participate consciously in the historical process of social transformation taking place before our eyes".

In January 1847 Marx and Engels were persuaded to join the 'League of the Just', an organisation, mainly, though by no means exclusively, made up of expatriate German artisans, which had been formed in a number of European centres. The leaders of the League had been won round to the ideas and organisational methods of Marx and Engels.

Under their influence it changed its name to the 'Communist League' and re-organised itself for active propaganda work among the working class. It also dropped its old slogan: "All men are brothers" in favour of the battle cry: "Workers of the world unite".

It was the Communist League which commissioned Marx and Engels to write the Communist Manifesto. This appeared only a matter of weeks before the February Revolution in Paris began a revolutionary earthquake that reverberated around the whole of Europe.

Marx was to emerge as one of the central and most decisive leaders of the German revolution of 1848-49. He had been prepared for the epic part he was to play, by his political and revolutionary activity over the previous 10 years or so. Now his painstaking propaganda work gave way to energetic activity in the maelstrom of great historical events.

Having been hounded out of France in 1845, after pressure from the Prussian government, Marx now faced arrest and banishment from his new home in Belgium. Momentarily he returned to Paris, where a representative of the Provisional government elected in February was offering him both refuge and citizenship.

Then he moved to the Rhineland as editor of the newly founded *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* ('New Rhineland Newspaper'), a paper established mainly with money from liberal capitalist shareholders.

In both France and England revolutionary conflict unfolded between the working class and the capitalists, as foreshadowed in the Communist Manifesto, but in Italy and Germany it was still necessary for the infant proletariat to ally itself with the emerging liberal industrialists in order to successfully conclude the struggle with feudal despotism.

The capitalist class, however, proved to be contemptible allies, even in their own revolution! At every serious test they gave way to reaction.

Marx fought through the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and through tireless personal activity to stiffen these temporary allies, but in

vain. The liberal bourgeoisie in general retreated under pressure from the reaction, and as they did, those connected with the paper withdrew their financial support so that Marx was compelled to plough his own meagre savings into the paper as the only means of keeping it alive.

Marx attempted to lead the movement in the Rhineland back onto the offensive. Special editions of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* called for: a boycott of taxes to the victorious counter-revolutionary government; for the arming of the people; and for armed resistance against "the enemy".

For this stand he faced arrest and trial. But neither Marx nor the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* were that easily silenced. At his trial he stood firm, defended the revolutionary movement and mercilessly attacked the forces of reaction. As a result the jury acquitted him and the foreman even thanked him for his instructive remarks!

The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* continued for a short time after this until the reaction had gathered enough strength to close it down altogether and expel Marx from Prussian territory. The last defiant issue, after 301 issues in all (sometimes appearing 7 days a week), appeared in red ink on May 19th 1849, warning the people against any attempt to seize power while the military situation was unfavourable, thanking its readers for their sympathy and support, and declaring that their final word always and everywhere would be: "The emancipation of the working class".

Marx was again forced into exile, first in France, and then, compelled to move once more, he settled in London where he lived for the rest of his life.

Initially he worked to help re-assemble the Communist League, in the preparation for the expected renewed revolutionary upsurge. This upsurge, however, did not materialise. By 1852 it was clear that the tide of European revolt had temporarily ebbed.

The Communist League began to break up into different squabbling sects. Marx and Engels stepped to one side, finding the atmosphere of these groups increasingly sterile. Marx began to devote his energies primarily to his important theoretical work on economics and to earning a precarious living as a correspondent of the *New York Tribune*.

Nevertheless, he still kept in regular active contact with the emerging working class movements, especially in Germany and Britain. He was, for instance, a frequent contributor to *The People's Paper*, the paper founded in 1852 by the revolutionary wing of the Chartists.

It was not until 1864, however, that Marx was able fully once again to pick up the threads of his practical revolutionary activity. By then, Engels wrote:

> "The Labour Movement in the various countries of Europe had so far regained strength that Marx could entertain the idea of realising a long-cherished wish: the foundation of a Workers' Association embracing the most advanced countries of Europe and America, which would demonstrate bodily, so to speak, the international character of the socialist movement both to the workers themselves and to the bourgeois and the governments...A mass meeting in favour of Poland...on September 28, 1864 provided the occasion...
>
> "The International Working Men's Association was founded; a provisional General Council with its seat in London, was elected at the meeting, and Marx was the soul of this as of all subsequent General Councils up to the Hague Congress. He drafted almost every one of the documents issued by the General Council of the International, from the *Inaugural Address* of 1864, to the *Address on the Civil War in France*".

"For 10 years", wrote Engels, "the International dominated one side of European history—the side on which the future lies". The International gathered under its banner all the various conflicting tendencies within the Labour Movement of Europe and America, including French, Swiss and Belgian followers of the anarchist Bakunin, the utopian Proudhon, German followers of Lassalle and British trade unionists.

London was the home of the General Council. Marx considered Britain to be the key country in the struggle for socialism, given the more advanced stage that both capitalism and the organisations of the working class had achieved.

Marx therefore insisted upon direct representation on the General Council for all trade unions and other working class organisations affiliated from Britain, and it was only towards the end of the life of the International that there was a separate British Federation.

Marx strove to develop the International as a truly mass movement. Affiliation was open to all individuals and organisations which accepted the need to struggle for an end to the yoke of capitalist exploitation. But Marx never attempted to bureaucratically force his own theoretical views or tactics on any section; he believed that it was only through joint action and discussion that genuine agreement and genuine unity emerge.

In drawing up the *Inaugural Address*, Marx was conscious of the different stages of theoretical development reached by the labour movement in each country. Therefore, while repeating the fundamental ideas expressed in the *Communist Manifesto*, the tone was different. "Time is necessary", he wrote to Engels; "before the movement can allow the old boldness of speech. The need of the moment is bold in matter, but mild in manner".

The practical achievements of the International included mobilising solidarity during numerous industrial struggles, among them the 1871 Tyneside Engineers' strike and the London basket makers dispute of 1867. Such was the authority of the International among British trade unionists that at one point the Annual Congress of Trades Unions in 1869 urgently called all working class organisations in the United Kingdom to affiliate to the International.

The authority of the International in Britain was also built up by its work in the Reform League, the body created to fight for the old Chartist demand: "Universal Manhood Suffrage". Half the executive of the Reform League were members of the General Council.

Marx personally worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help establish the Reform League, which then rapidly developed as a mass campaigning force, dreaded by the capitalist class which saw within it the spectre of revolution. Continual mass pressure from the League bore down upon the ruling class until the government brought in new electoral reform legislation.

It was a limited reform, extending the vote only to the middle class and to skilled workers, but it was sufficient to mollify the main trade union leaders and split the movement. After this, most of the union leaders who had been active in the International began more and more to accommodate themselves to the Liberals, some hoping in this way to find their own personal passage into Parliament.

The final cleavage with these opportunist leaders came after the Paris Commune, the finest hour for the working class during the lifetime of the International.

In 1871, after the fall of France in the war with Prussia, Parisian workers seized control of Paris, forming the first ever workers' state in history. From afar—and through intermediaries—Marx made every effort steer the Commune along the path to victory.

The Commune was to prove, however, to be only a brief if glorious episode. Tragically, the Commune was drowned in blood.

"The Commune gave the mischievous abortion Thiers (the leader of the French government—*Editor*) time to centralise hostile forces", wrote Marx... "They should immediately have advanced on Versailles", in other words spread the revolution by taking over the Bank of France, the government buildings and advancing to the other cities.

After the crushing of the Commune, the International came under a savage assault from all the European governments who saw the International's, and Marx's, guiding hand in the Commune.

The response of many fainthearts in the International—including some of those trade union leaders associated with the International—was to denounce the Commune and distance themselves from the heroic French workers.

Even though he had not advocated the formation of the Commune, such a stand would never have entered Marx's head. Within days of the fall of the Commune he issued his defiant defence of the Commune, *The Civil War in France*, which to this day remains an inspiration and as an invaluable source of guidance for the labour movement.

Marx and Engels immediately understood the tremendous historic significance of the Commune. They studied it carefully to see how the experience of the Commune could enrich further the working class movement and help it to be better prepared for the future.

With this in mind they wrote into the Preface of the 1872 German edition of the Communist Manifesto, the following central lesson: "One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz, that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes"'.

Throughout the life of the International Marx and Engels had to contend with political opponents who fought political battles not with ideas but with manoeuvre and intrigue. After the defeat of the Commune these intrigues intensified, especially on the part of the followers of the anarchist, Bakunin.

With the International facing crippling blows from state authorities throughout Europe, the danger existed that Bakunin's followers might wrest control. Marx and Engels acted decisively to prevent this and to preserve intact the historical prestige of the International in the eyes of the world working class.

At the 1872 Hague Congress they secured the transfer of the General Council to New York, thus effectively bringing to an end this momentous chapter of working class history.

Engels, later explaining the action of himself and Marx at this time, wrote:

> "There are circumstances in which one must have the courage to sacrifice momentary success for more important things. Especially for a party like ours, whose ultimate success is so absolutely certain...
>
> "...We knew very well that the bubble (of the International) must burst. All the riff-raff attached themselves to it. The sectarians within it became arrogant and misused the International in the hope that the meanest and most stupid actions would be permitted them. We did not allow that. Knowing well that the bubble must burst at some time our concern was not to delay the catastrophe but to take care that the International emerged from it pure and unadulterated".

With the end of the International Marx once again began to give priority to his theoretical work. Though always as long as he lived he remained actively involved in the life of the labour movement, attempting to steer it forward along the most constructive path.

In 1881 Engels commented:

> "By his theoretical and practical achievements Marx has gained for himself such a position that the best people in all the working class movements throughout the world have full confidence in him. At critical junctures they turn to him for advice and then usually find that his counsel is the best."
>
> "This position he holds in Germany, in France, in Russia, not to mention in the smaller countries. It is therefore not a case of Marx forcing his opinion, and still less his will, on people but of the people coming to him of themselves. And it is upon this that Marx's peculiar influence, so extremely important for the movement, reposes".

In 1883 he finally fell victim to his chronic ill health. Throughout his adult life he had been plagued by recurring illness. He also had to endure desperate poverty and terrible personal tragedies. But because of his unshakeable confidence in the socialist future of mankind he always was able to summon the will for the struggle against capitalism.

Marx's ideas and the example of his personal revolutionary activity live on.

At Marx's graveside in 1883, Engels finished his address with these words:

> "Marx was the best-hated and most slandered man of his age. Governments, both absolutist and republican, expelled him from their territories, whilst the bourgeois, both conservative and extreme democratic, vied with each other in a campaign of vilification against him.
>
> "He brushed it all to one side like cobwebs, ignored them and answered them only when compelled to do so. And he died honoured, loved and mourned by "millions of revolutionary workers from the Siberian mines over Europe and America to. the coast of California, and I make bold to say that though he had many opponents he had hardly a personal enemy.
>
> "His name will live on through the centuries and so also will his work."

The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism



by V. I. Lenin, March 1913

The teaching of Marx evokes throughout the civilized world the greatest hostility and hatred on the part of all bourgeois science (both official and liberal), which regards Marxism as something in the nature of a "pernicious sect." No other attitude is to he expected, since there can he no "impartial" social science in a society which is built up on the class struggle.

All official and liberal science defends wage-slavery in one way or another, whereas Marxism has declared relentless war on that slavery. To expect science to be impartial in a society of wage-slavery is as silly and naive as to expect impartiality from employers on the question as to whether the workers' wages should be increased by decreasing the profits of capital.

However this is not all. The history of philosophy and that of social science shows with perfect clearness that there is nothing in Marxism resembling "sectarianism" in the sense of a secluded fossilized doctrine originating somewhere away from the high road of development of world civilization. On the contrary, the genius of Marx manifested itself in that he provided the answers to questions which had already been put by the advanced brains of humanity.

His teaching came as a direct and immediate continuation of the teaching of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy, and socialism.

The teaching of Marx is all-powerful because it is true. It is complete and harmonious, providing men with a consistent view of the universe, which cannot be reconciled with any superstition, any reaction, any defence of bourgeois oppression. It is the lawful successor of the best that has been created by humanity in the nineteenth century -- German philosophy, English political economy, and French socialism.

It is these three sources, which are also the three component parts of Marxism, that we will briefly dwell upon.

One

The philosophy of Marxism is materialism. Throughout the recent history of Europe, and particularly at the end of the eighteenth century in France, which was the scene of the decisive battle against every kind of medieval rubbish, against serfdom in institutions and ideas, materialism proved to be the only consistent philosophy, true to all the teachings of natural science, hostile to superstitions, cant, etc. The enemies of democracy tried, therefore, with all their energy, to "overthrow," undermine and defame materialism, and defended various forms of philosophic idealism, which always leads, in one way or another, to the defence and support of religion.

Marx and Engels always defended philosophic materialism in the most determined manner, and repeatedly explained the profound error of every deviation from this basis. Their views are more clearly and fully expounded in the works of Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach* and *Anti-Duhring*, which, like the *Communist Manifesto*, are household books for every conscious worker.

However, Marx did not stop at the materialism of the eighteenth century but moved philosophy forward. He enriched it by the achievements of German classical philosophy especially by Hegel's system, which in its turn had led to the materialism of Feuerbach. Of these the main achievement is dialectics, i.e., the doctrine of development in its fuller, deeper form, free from one-sidedness the doctrine, also, of the relativity of human knowledge that provides us with a reflection of eternally developing matter. The latest discoveries of natural science – radium, electrons, the transmutation of elements – are a remarkable confirmation of the dialectical materialism of Marx, despite the doctrines of bourgeois philosophers with their "new" returns to old and rotten idealism.

While deepening and developing philosophic materialism, Marx carried it to its conclusion; he extended its perception of nature to the perception of human society. The historical materialism of Marx represented the greatest conquest of scientific thought.

Chaos and arbitariness, which reigned until then in the views on history and politics, were replaced by a strikingly consistent and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how out of one order of social life another and higher order develops, in consequence of the growth of the productive forces – how capitalism, for instance, grows out of serfdom.

Just as the cognition of man reflects nature (i.e., developing matter) which exists independently of him, so also the social cognition of man (i.e., the various views and doctrines-philosophic, religious, political, etc.) reflects the economic order of society. Political institutions are a superstructure on the economic foundation. We see, for example, that the various political forms of modern European states serve the purpose of strengthening the domination of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

The philosophy of Marx completes in itself philosophic materialism which has provided humanity, and especially the working class, with a powerful instrument of knowledge.

Two

Having recognized that the economic order is the foundation upon which the political superstructure is erected, Marx devoted all the greater attention to the study of that economic order. The principal work of Marx, *Capital*, is devoted to a study of the economic order of modern, i.e., capitalist society.

Classical political economy, before Marx, was built up in England, the most developed capitalist country. Adam Smith and David Ricardo, in their investigations of the economic order, laid the foundations of the labour theory of value. Marx continued their work. He strictly proved and consistently developed this theory. He showed that the value of every commodity is determined by the quantity of socially necessary labour time spent in its production.

Where the bourgeois economists saw a relation of things (the exchange of one commodity for another) Marx revealed a relation between men. The exchange of commodities expresses the connection between individual producers by means of the

market. Money signifies that this connection is becoming closer and closer, inseparably combining the entire economic life of the individual producers into one whole. Capital signifies a further development of this connection: the labour power of man becomes a commodity. The wage labourer sells his labour power to the owner of land, of factories and instruments of labour. The worker uses one part of the labour day to cover the expenditure for the maintenance of himself and his family (wages), and the other part of the day he toils without remuneration and creates surplus value for the capitalist, which is the source of profit, the source of wealth of the capitalist class.

The doctrine of surplus value is the cornerstone of the economic theory of Marx.

Capital, created by the labour of the worker, presses upon the workers, ruins the petty owners and creates an army of unemployed. In industry the victory of large-scale production may be seen at once, but we also see the same phenomenon in agriculture: the superiority of big capitalist agriculture becomes greater, the application of machinery grows, peasant economy is caught in the noose of money-capital, it declines and becomes ruined under the burden of a backward technique. In agriculture, the forms of decline of petty production are different, but the decline itself is an indisputable fact.

By beating petty production, capital leads to the increase of the productivity of labour and to the establishment of a monopoly position for associations of the biggest capitalists. Production itself becomes more and more social; hundreds of thousands and millions of workers are linked up in a systematic economic organism, but the product of the collective labour is appropriated by a handful of capitalists. Anarchy of production, crises, a furious hunt after markets, and the insecurity of existence for the masses of population are on the increase.

While increasing the dependence of the workers upon capital, the capitalist system creates the great power of combined labour.

Marx traced the development of capitalism from the first germs of commodity economy and simple exchange, to its highest forms, to large-scale production.

And the experience of all countries, whether old or new, dearly shows year after year, to an ever greater number of workers, the truth of Marx's teaching.

Capitalism has been victorious all over the world, but this victory is only the eve of the victory of labour over capital.

Three

After the overthrow of serfdom, when a "free" capitalist society appeared, it was at once discovered that this freedom signified a new system of oppression and exploitation of the toilers. Various socialist doctrines immediately began to arise as a reflection of this oppression and protest against it. But socialism in its first origin was utopian. It criticized the capitalist society, it condemned it and damned it, it dreamed of its destruction, it drew fantastic pictures of a better order and endeavoured to convince the rich of the wickedness of exploitation.

But utopian socialism was unable to show a real way out. It could not explain either the essence of wage-slavery under capitalism, or discover the laws of its development, or find the social force which was capable of becoming the creator of a new society.

In the meantime, the stormy revolution which accompanied the fall of feudalism and serfdom everywhere in Europe, and especially in France, revealed ever more clearly the struggle of classes as the basis of the whole development and its motive force.

Not a single victory of political freedom over the class of feudal lords was won without desperate resistance. Not a single capitalist country was established on a more or less free and democratic basis without a life and death struggle between the different classes of capitalist society.

Marx was a genius because he was able before anyone else to draw from these facts and consistently elaborate the conclusion which world history teaches. This conclusion is the doctrine of the class struggle.

People always were and always will be the stupid victims of deceit and self-deceit in politics as long as they have not learned to discover the interests of one or another of the classes behind any moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises. The supporters of reforms and improvements will always he fooled by the defenders of the old, as long as they will not realize that every old institution, however absurd and rotten it may appear, is kept in being by the forces of one or the other of the ruling classes. And there is only one way of breaking the resistance of these classes, and that is to find, in the very society which surrounds us, and to enlighten and organize for the struggle, the forces which can and, by their social position, must form the power capable of sweeping away the old and of establishing the new.

Only the philosophic materialism of Marx showed the proletariat the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have languished up to the present. Only the economic theory of Marx explained the real position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism.

The independent organizations of the proletariat are multiplying throughout the world from America to Japan and from Sweden to South Africa. The proletariat is being enlightened and educated in waging the class struggle, it is ridding itself of the prejudices of bourgeois society, consolidating itself ever more closely and learning to take the measure of its successes; it is hardening its forces and growing irresistibly.

Ninety Years of the Communist Manifesto



by Leon Trotsky, October 1937

This article was first published in South Africa as an introduction to the first Afrikaans language edition of the The Communist Manifesto.

It is hard to believe that the centennial of the *Manifesto* of the Communist Party is only ten years away! This pamphlet, displaying greater genius than any other in world literature, astounds us even today by its freshness. Its most important sections appear to have been written yesterday. Assuredly, the young authors (Marx was twenty-nine, Engels twenty-seven) were able to look further into the future than anyone before them, and perhaps than anyone since them.

As early as their joint preface to the edition of 1872, Marx and Engels declared that despite the fact that certain secondary passages in the *Manifesto* were antiquated, they felt that they no longer had any right to alter the original text inasmuch as the *Manifesto* had already become a historical document, during the intervening period of twenty-five years. Sixty-five additional years have elapsed since that time. Isolated passages in the *Manifesto* have receded still further into the past. We shall try to establish succinctly in this preface both those ideas in the *Manifesto* which retain their full force today and those which require important alteration or amplification.

1. The materialist conception of history, discovered by Marx only a short while before and applied with consummate skill in the *Manifesto*, has completely withstood the test of events and the blows of hostile criticism. It constitutes today one of the most precious instruments of human thought. All other interpretations of the historical process have lost all scientific meaning. We can state with certainty that it is impossible in our time to be not only a revolutionary militant but even a literate observer in politics without assimilating the materialist interpretation of history.

2. The first chapter of the *Manifesto* opens with the following words: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." This postulate, the most important conclusion drawn from the materialist interpretation of history, immediately became an issue in the class struggle. Especially venomous attacks were directed by reactionary hypocrites, liberal doctrinaires, and idealistic democrats against the theory which substituted the struggle of material interests for "common welfare," "national unity," and "eternal moral truths" as the driving force of history. They were later joined by recruits from the ranks of the labour movement itself, by the so-called revisionists, i.e., the proponents of reviewing ("revising") Marxism in the spirit of class collaboration and class conciliation. Finally, in our own time, the same path has been followed in practice by the contemptible epigones of the Communist International (the "Stalinists"): the policy of the so-called People's Front flows wholly from the denial of the laws of the class struggle. Meanwhile, it is precisely the epoch of imperialism, bringing all social contradictions to the point of highest tension, which gives to the *Communist Manifesto* its supreme theoretical triumph.

3. The anatomy of capitalism, as a specific stage in the economic development of society, was given by Marx in its finished form in *Capital* (1867). But even in the *Communist Manifesto* the main lines of the future analysis are firmly sketched: the payment for labour power as equivalent to the cost of its reproduction; the appropriation of surplus value by the capitalists; competition as the basic law of social relations; the ruination of intermediate classes, i.e., the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry; the concentration of wealth in the hands of an ever-diminishing number of property owners, at the one pole, and the numerical growth of the proletariat, at the other; the preparation of the material and political preconditions for the socialist regime.

4. The proposition in the *Manifesto* concerning the tendency of capitalism to lower the living standards of the workers, and even to transform them into paupers, had been subjected to a heavy barrage. Parsons, professors, ministers, journalists, Social Democratic theoreticians, and trade union leaders came to the front against the so-called "theory of impoverishment." They invariably discovered signs of growing prosperity among the toilers, palming off the labour aristocracy as the proletariat, or taking a fleeting tendency as permanent. Meanwhile, even the development of the mightiest capitalism in the world, namely, US capitalism, has transformed millions of workers into paupers who are maintained at the expense of federal, municipal, or private charity.

5. As against the Manifesto, which depicted commercial and industrial crises as a series of ever more extensive catastrophes, the revisionists vowed that the national and international development of trusts would assure control over the market, and lead gradually to the abolition of crises. The close of the last century and the beginning of the present one were in reality marked by a development of capitalism so tempestuous as to make crises seem only "accidental" stoppages. But this epoch has gone beyond return. In the last analysis, truth proved to be on Marx's side in this question as well.

6. "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." This succinct formula, which the leaders of the Social Democracy looked upon as a journalistic paradox, contains in fact the only scientific theory of the state. The democracy fashioned by the bourgeoisie is not, as both Bernstein and Kautsky thought, an empty sack which one can undisturbedly fill with any kind of class content. Bourgeois democracy can serve only the bourgeoisie. A government of the "People's Front," whether headed by Blum or Chautemps, Caballero or Negrin, is only "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." Whenever this "committee" manages affairs poorly, the bourgeoisie dismisses it with a boot.

7. "Every class struggle is a political struggle." "The organization of the proletariat as a class [is] consequently its organization into a political party." Trade unionists, on the one hand, and anarchosyndicalists, on the other, have long shied away – and even now try to shy away – from the understanding of these historical laws. "Pure" trade unionism has now been dealt a crushing blow

in its chief refuge: the United States. Anarchosyndicalism has suffered an irreparable defeat in its last stronghold – Spain. Here too the *Manifesto* proved correct.

8. The proletariat cannot conquer power within the legal framework established by the bourgeoisie. "Communists openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." Reformism sought to explain this postulate of the *Manifesto* on the grounds of the immaturity of the movement at that time, and the inadequate development of democracy. The fate of Italian, German, and a great number of other "democracies" proves that "immaturity" is the distinguishing trait of the ideas of the reformists themselves.

9. For the socialist transformation of society, the working class must concentrate in its hands such power as can smash each and every political obstacle barring the road to the new system. "The proletariat organized as the ruling class" – this is the dictatorship. At the same time it is the only true proletarian democracy. Its scope and depth depend upon concrete historical conditions. The greater the number of states that take the path of the socialist revolution, the freer and more flexible forms will the dictatorship assume, the broader and more deepgoing will be workers' democracy.

10. The international development of capitalism has predetermined the international character of the proletarian revolution. "United action, of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." The subsequent development of capitalism has so closely knit all sections of our planet, both "civilized" and "uncivilized," that the problem of the socialist revolution has completely and decisively assumed a world character. The Soviet bureaucracy attempted to liquidate the *Manifesto* with respect to this fundamental question. The Bonapartist degeneration of the Soviet state is an overwhelming illustration of the falseness of the theory of socialism in one country.

11. "When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character." In other words: the state withers away. Society remains, freed from the straitjacket. This is nothing else but socialism. The converse theorem: the monstrous growth of state coercion in the USSR is eloquent testimony that society is moving away from socialism.

12. "The workingmen have no fatherland." These words of the *Manifesto* have more than once been evaluated by philistines as an agitational quip. As a matter of fact they provided the proletariat with the sole conceivable directive in the question of the capitalist "fatherland." The violation of this directive by the Second International brought about not only four years of devastation in Europe, but the present stagnation of world culture. In view of the impending new war, for which the betrayal of the Third International has paved the way, the *Manifesto* remains even now the most reliable counsellor on the question of the capitalist "fatherland."

Thus, we see that the joint and rather brief production of two Young authors continues to give irreplaceable directives upon the most important and burning questions of the struggle for emancipation. What other book could even distantly be compared with the Communist Manifesto? But this does not imply that after ninety years of unprecedented development of productive forces and vast social struggles, the *Manifesto* needs neither corrections nor additions. Revolutionary thought has nothing in common with idol-worship. Programs and prognoses are tested and corrected in the light of experience, which is the supreme criterion of human reason. The *Manifesto*, too, requires corrections and additions. However, as is evidenced by historical experience itself, these corrections and additions can be successfully made only by proceeding in accord with the method lodged in the foundation of the Manifesto itself. We shall try to indicate this in several most important instances.

1. Marx taught that no social system departs from the arena of history before exhausting its creative potentialities. The *Manifesto* excoriates capitalism for retarding the development of the productive forces. During that period, however, as well as in the following decades, this retardation was only relative in nature. Had it been possible in the second half of the nineteenth century to organize economy on socialist beginnings, its tempos of growth would have been immeasurably greater. But this theoretically irrefutable postulate does not invalidate the fact that the productive forces kept expanding on a world scale right up to the world war. Only in the last twenty years, despite the most modern conquests of science and technology, has the epoch of out-and-out stagnation and even decline of world economy begun. Mankind is beginning to expend its accumulated capital, while the next war threatens to destroy the very foundations of civilization for many years to come. The authors of the *Manifesto* thought that capitalism would be scrapped long prior to the time when from a relatively reactionary regime it would turn into an absolutely reactionary regime. This transformation took final shape only before the eyes of the present generation, and changed our epoch into the epoch of wars, revolutions, and fascism.

2. The error of Marx and Engels in regard to the historical dates flowed, on the one hand, from an underestimation of future possibilities latent in capitalism, and, on the other, an overestimation of the revolutionary maturity of the proletariat. The revolution of 1848 did not turn into a socialist revolution as the *Manifesto* had calculated, but opened up to Germany the possibility of a vast future capitalist ascension. The Paris Commune proved that the proletariat, without having a tempered revolutionary party at its head, cannot wrest power from the bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, the prolonged period of capitalist prosperity that ensued brought about not the education of the revolutionary vanguard, but rather the bourgeois degeneration of the labour aristocracy, which became in turn the chief brake on the proletarian revolution. In the nature of things, the authors of the *Manifesto* could not possibly have foreseen this "dialectic."

3. For the *Manifesto*, capitalism was the kingdom of free competition. While referring to the growing concentration of capital, the *Manifesto* did not draw the necessary conclusion in regard to monopoly, which has become the dominant capitalist form in our epoch and the most important precondition for socialist economy. Only afterwards, in *Capital*, did Marx establish the tendency toward the transformation of free competition into monopoly. It was Lenin who gave a scientific characterisation of monopoly capitalism in his *Imperialism*.

4. Basing themselves on the example of "industrial revolution" in England, the authors of the *Manifesto* pictured far too unilaterally the process of liquidation of the intermediate classes, as a wholesale proletarianisation of crafts, petty trades, and peasantry. In point of fact, the elemental forces of competition have far from completed this simultaneously progressive and barbarous work.

Capitalism has ruined the petty bourgeoisie at a much faster rate than it has proletarianised it. Furthermore, the bourgeois state has long directed its conscious policy toward the artificial maintenance of petty-bourgeois strata. At the opposite pole, the growth of technology and the rationalization of largescale industry engenders chronic unemployment and obstructs the proletarianisation of the petty bourgeoisie. Concurrently, the development of capitalism has accelerated in the extreme the growth of legions of technicians, administrators, commercial employees, in short, the so-called "new middle class." In consequence, the intermediate classes, to whose disappearance the *Manifesto* so categorically refers, comprise even in a country as highly industrialized as Germany about half of the population. However, the artificial preservation of antiquated petty-bourgeois strata in no way mitigates the social contradictions, but, on the contrary, invests them with a special malignancy, and together with the permanent army of the unemployed constitutes the most malevolent expression of the decay of capitalism.

5. Calculated for a revolutionary epoch the *Manifesto* contains (end of Chapter II) ten demands, corresponding to the period of direct transition from capitalism to socialism. In their preface of 1872, Marx and Engels declared these demands to be in part antiquated, and, in any case, only of secondary importance. The reformists seized upon this evaluation to interpret it in the sense that transitional revolutionary demands had forever ceded their place to the Social Democratic "minimum program," which, as is well known, does not transcend the limits of bourgeois democracy. As a matter of fact, the authors of the *Manifesto* indicated quite precisely the main correction of their transitional program, namely, "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the readymade state machinery and wield it for its own purposes." In other words, the correction was directed against the fetishism of bourgeois democracy. Marx later counterposed to the capitalist state, the state of the type of the Commune. This "type" subsequently assumed the much more graphic shape of soviets. There cannot be a revolutionary program today without soviets and without workers' control. As for the rest, the ten demands of the *Manifesto*, which appeared "archaic" in an epoch of peaceful parliamentary activity, have today regained completely their true significance. The Social Democratic "minimum program," on the other hand, has become hopelessly antiquated.

6. Basing its expectation that "the German bourgeois revolution ... will be but a prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution," the *Manifesto* cites the much more advanced conditions of European civilization as compared with what existed in England in the seventeenth century and in France in the eighteenth century, and the far greater development of the proletariat. The error in this prognosis was not only in the date. The revolution of 1848 revealed within a few months that precisely under more advanced conditions, none of the bourgeois classes is capable of bringing the revolution to its termination: the big and middle bourgeoisie is far too closely linked with the landowners, and fettered by the fear of the masses; the petty bourgeoisie is far too divided and in its top leadership far too dependent on the big bourgeoisie. As evidenced by the entire subsequent course of development in Europe and Asia, the bourgeois revolution, taken by itself, can no more in general be consummated. A complete purge of feudal rubbish from society is conceivable only on the condition that the proletariat, freed from the influence of bourgeois parties, can take its stand at the head of the peasantry and establish its revolutionary dictatorship. By this token, the bourgeois revolution becomes interlaced with the first stage of the socialist revolution, subsequently to dissolve in the latter. The national revolution therewith becomes a link of the world revolution. The transformation of the economic foundation and of all social relations assumes a permanent (uninterrupted) character.

For revolutionary parties in backward countries of Asia, Latin America, and Africa, a clear understanding of the organic connection between the democratic revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat – and thereby, the international socialist revolution – is a life-and-death question.

7. While depicting how capitalism draws into its vortex backward and barbarous countries, the *Manifesto* contains no reference to the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial countries for independence. To the extent that Marx and Engels considered the social revolution "in the leading civilized countries at least," to be a matter of the next few years, the colonial question was resolved automatically for them, not in consequence of an independent movement of oppressed nationalities but in consequence of the victory of the proletariat in the metropolitan centres of capitalism. The questions of revolutionary strategy in colonial and semi-colonial countries are therefore not touched upon at all by the *Manifesto*. Yet these questions demand an independent solution. For example, it is quite self-evident that while the "national fatherland" has become the most baneful historical brake in advanced capitalist countries, it still remains a relatively progressive factor in backward countries compelled to struggle for an independent existence.

"The Communists," declares the *Manifesto*, "everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things." The movement of the coloured races against their imperialist oppressors is one of the most important and powerful movements against the existing order and therefore calls for the complete, unconditional, and unlimited support on the part of the proletariat of the white race. The credit for developing revolutionary strategy for oppressed nationalities belongs primarily to Lenin.

8. The most antiquated section of the Manifesto – with respect not to method but to material – is the criticism of "socialist" literature for the first part of the nineteenth century (Chapter III) and the definition of the position of the Communists in relation to various opposition parties (Chapter IV). The movements and parties listed in the *Manifesto* were so drastically swept away either by the revolution of 1848 or by the ensuing counterrevolution that one must look up even their names in a historical dictionary. However, in this section, too, the *Manifesto* is perhaps closer to us now than it was to the previous generation. In the epoch of the flowering of the Second International, when Marxism seemed to exert an undivided sway, the ideas of pre-Marxist socialism could have been considered as having receded decisively into the past. Things are otherwise today. The decomposition of the Social Democracy and the Communist International at every step engenders monstrous ideological relapses. Senile thought seems to have become infantile. In search of all-saving formulas the prophets in the epoch of decline discover anew doctrines long since buried by scientific socialism.

As touches the question of opposition parties, it is in this domain that the elapsed decades have introduced the most deep-going changes, not only in the sense that the old parties have long been brushed aside by new ones, but also in the sense that the very character of parties and their mutual relations have radically changed in the conditions of the imperialist epoch. The *Manifesto* must therefore be amplified with the most important documents of the first four

congresses of the Communist International, the essential literature of Bolshevism, and the decisions of the conferences of the Fourth International.

We have already remarked above that according to Marx no social order departs from the scene without first exhausting the potentialities latent in it. However, even an antiquated social order does not cede its place to a new order without resistance. A change in social regimes presupposes the harshest form of the class struggle, i.e., revolution. If the proletariat, for one reason or another, proves incapable of overthrowing with an audacious blow the outlived bourgeois order, then finance capital in the struggle to maintain its unstable rule can do nothing but turn the petty bourgeoisie ruined and demoralized by it into the pogrom army of fascism. The bourgeois degeneration of the Social Democracy and the fascist degeneration of the petty bourgeoisie are interlinked as cause and effect.

At the present time, the Third International far more wantonly than the Second performs in all countries the work of deceiving and demoralizing the toilers. By massacring the vanguard of the Spanish proletariat, the unbridled hirelings of Moscow not only pave the way for fascism but execute a goodly share of its labours. The protracted crisis of the international revolution, which is turning more and more into a crisis of human culture, is reducible in its essentials to the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

As the heir to the great tradition, of which the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* forms the most precious link, the Fourth International is educating new cadres for the solution of old tasks. Theory is generalized reality. In an honest attitude to revolutionary theory is expressed the impassioned urge to reconstruct the social reality. That in the southern part of the Dark Continent our co-thinkers were the first to translate the *Manifesto* into the Afrikaans language is another graphic illustration of the fact that Marxist thought lives today only under the banner of the Fourth International. To it belongs the future. When the centennial of the *Communist Manifesto* is celebrated, the Fourth International will have become the decisive revolutionary force on our planet.

The Communist Manifesto

by Karl Marx & Frederich Engels, February 1848



Manifesto of the Communist Party

A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.

Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as communistic by its opponents in power? Where is the opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?

Two things result from this fact:

I. Communism is already acknowledged by all European powers to be itself a power.

II. It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the Spectre of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself.

To this end, Communists of various nationalities have assembled in London and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish and Danish languages.

Chapter I

Bourgeois and Proletarians[1]

The history of all hitherto existing society[2] is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master[3] and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.

The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East-Indian and Chinese markets, the colonisation of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry, an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.

The feudal system of industry, in which industrial production was monopolised by closed guilds, now no longer sufficed for the growing wants of the new markets. The manufacturing system took its place. The guild-masters were pushed on one side by the manufacturing middle class; division of labour between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labour in each single workshop.

Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacturer no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionised industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant, Modern Industry; the place of the industrial middle class by industrial millionaires, the leaders of the whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois.

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange.

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune[4]: here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany); there taxable "third

estate" of the monarchy (as in France); afterwards, in the period of manufacturing proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors", and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment". It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom — Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.

The bourgeoisie has disclosed how it came to pass that the brutal display of vigour in the Middle Ages, which reactionaries so much admire, found its fitting complement in the most slothful indolence. It has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilised ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.

The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralised the means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralisation. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments, and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier, and one customs-tariff.

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground — what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?

We see then: the means of production and of exchange, on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up, were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organisation of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word, the feudal relations of property became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they became so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder.

Into their place stepped free competition, accompanied by a social and political constitution adapted in it, and the economic and political sway of the bourgeois class.

A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society, with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeois and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on its trial, each time more threateningly. In these crises, a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity — the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons — the modern working class — the proletarians.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed — a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery, and to the division of labour, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him. Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for maintenance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and therefore also of labour, is equal to its cost of production. In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labour increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by the increase of the work exacted in a given time or by increased speed of machinery, etc.

Modern Industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organised like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its end and aim, the more petty, the more hateful and the more embittering it is.

The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex.

No sooner is the exploitation of the labourer by the manufacturer, so far, at an end, that he receives his wages in cash, than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.

The lower strata of the middle class — the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants — all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialised skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual labourers, then by the workpeople of a factory, then by the operative of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labour, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage, the labourers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover yet, for a time, able to do so. 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 bourgeois. 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 equalised, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, 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 beforehand 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 battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralise 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 proletarian, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

This organisation 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 time with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles, it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for 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 class 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 progress of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts 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 movement as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, 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 only so 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", [lumpenproletariat] the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of the 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 condition of the proletariat, those of 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 industry labour, 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, in the interest 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 that war breaks out 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 the feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process 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 conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by the revolutionary 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.

Chapter 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 the 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 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.

The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. The abolition of existing property relations is not at all a distinctive feature of communism.

All property relations in the past have continually been subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

The French Revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favour of bourgeois property.

The distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few.

In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.

We Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labour, which property is alleged to be the groundwork of all personal freedom, activity and independence.

Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of petty artisan and of the small peasant, a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form? There is no need to abolish that; the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it, and is still destroying it daily.

Or do you mean the modern bourgeois private property?

But does wage-labour create any property for the labourer? Not a bit. It creates capital, i.e., that kind of property which exploits wage-labour, and which cannot increase except upon condition of begetting a new supply of wage-labour for fresh exploitation. Property, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of capital and wage labour. Let us examine both sides of this antagonism.

To be a capitalist, is to have not only a purely personal, but a social status in production. Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion.

Capital is therefore not only personal; it is a social power.

When, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social character of the property that is changed. It loses its class character.

Let us now take wage-labour.

The average price of wage-labour is the minimum wage, i.e., that quantum of the means of subsistence which is absolutely requisite to keep the labourer in bare existence as a labourer. What, therefore, the wage-labourer appropriates by means of his labour, merely suffices to prolong and reproduce a bare existence. We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products

of labour, an appropriation that is made for the maintenance and reproduction of human life, and that leaves no surplus wherewith to command the labour of others. All that we want to do away with is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the labourer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interest of the ruling class requires it.

In bourgeois society, living labour is but a means to increase accumulated labour. In Communist society, accumulated labour is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the labourer.

In bourgeois society, therefore, the past dominates the present; in Communist society, the present dominates the past. In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality.

And the abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at.

By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying.

But if selling and buying disappears, free selling and buying disappears also. This talk about free selling and buying, and all the other "brave words" of our bourgeois about freedom in general, have a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted selling and buying, with the fettered traders of the Middle Ages, but have no meaning when opposed to the Communistic abolition of buying and selling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself.

You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property, the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society.

In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.

From the moment when labour can no longer be converted into capital, money, or rent, into a social power capable of being monopolised, i.e., from the moment when individual property can no longer be transformed into bourgeois property, into capital, from that moment, you say, individuality vanishes.

You must, therefore, confess that by "individual" you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible.

Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriations.

It has been objected that upon the abolition of private property, all work will cease, and universal laziness will overtake us.

According to this, bourgeois society ought long ago to have gone to the dogs through sheer idleness; for those of its members who work, acquire nothing, and those who acquire anything do not work. The whole of this objection is but another expression of the tautology: that there can no longer be any wage-labour when there is no longer any capital.

All objections urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating material products, have, in the same way, been urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating intellectual products. Just as, to the bourgeois, the disappearance of class property is the disappearance of production itself, so the disappearance of class culture is to him identical with the disappearance of all culture.

That culture, the loss of which he laments, is, for the enormous majority, a mere training to act as a machine.

But don't wrangle with us so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of bourgeois property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, etc. Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of existence of your class.

The selfish misconception that induces you to transform into eternal laws of nature and of reason, the social forms springing from your present mode of production and form of property – historical relations that rise and disappear in the progress of production – this misconception you share with every ruling class that has preceded you. What you see clearly in the case of ancient property, what you admit in the case of feudal property, you are of course forbidden to admit in the case of your own bourgeois form of property.

Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form, this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty.

But, you say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social.

And your education! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, etc.? The Communists have not invented the intervention of society in education; they do but seek to alter the character of that intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.

The bourgeois clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parents and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of Modern Industry, all the family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour.

But you Communists would introduce community of women, screams the bourgeoisie in chorus.

The bourgeois sees his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion that the

lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous than the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women which, they pretend, is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial.

Our bourgeois, not content with having wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives.

Bourgeois marriage is, in reality, a system of wives in common and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalised community of women. For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, i.e., of prostitution both public and private.

The Communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality.

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation, it is so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word.

National differences and antagonism between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.

The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action, of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat.

In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another will also be put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.

The charges against Communism made from a religious, a philosophical and, generally, from an ideological standpoint, are not deserving of serious examination.

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conception, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

When people speak of the ideas that revolutionise society, they do but express that fact that within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence.

When the ancient world was in its last throes, the ancient religions were overcome by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the 18th century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely gave expression to the sway of free competition within the domain of knowledge.

"Undoubtedly," it will be said, "religious, moral, philosophical, and juridical ideas have been modified in the course of historical development. But religion, morality, philosophy, political science, and law, constantly survived this change."

"There are, besides, eternal truths, such as Freedom, Justice, etc., that are common to all states of society. But Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience."

What does this accusation reduce itself to? The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs.

But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, viz., the exploitation of one part of society by the other. No wonder, then, that the social consciousness of past ages, despite all the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms.

The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involved the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.

But let us have done with the bourgeois objections to Communism.

We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class to win the battle of democracy.

The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degree, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible.

Of course, in the beginning, this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property, and on the conditions of bourgeois production; by means of measures, therefore, which appear economically insufficient and untenable, but which, in the course of the movement, outstrip themselves, necessitate further inroads upon the old social order, and are unavoidable as a means of entirely revolutionising the mode of production.

These measures will, of course, be different in different countries.

Nevertheless, in most advanced countries, the following will be pretty generally applicable.

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.

2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.

3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.

4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.

5. Centralisation of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.

6. Centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.

7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.

8. Equal liability of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of all the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the populace over the country.

10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc, etc.

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organise itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

Footnotes

1. By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour.

By proletariat, the class of modern wage labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live. [Engels, 1888 English edition]

2. That is, all written history. In 1847, the pre-history of society, the social organisation existing previous to recorded history, all but unknown. Since then, August von Haxthausen (1792-1866) discovered common ownership of land in Russia, Georg Ludwig von Maurer proved it to be the social foundation from which all Teutonic races started in history, and, by and by, village communities were found to be, or to have been, the primitive form of society everywhere from India to Ireland. The inner organisation of this primitive communistic society was laid bare, in its typical form, by Lewis Henry Morgan's (1818-1881) crowning discovery of the true nature of the gens and its relation to the tribe. With the dissolution of the primeval communities, society begins to be differentiated into separate and finally antagonistic classes. I have attempted to retrace this dissolution in The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State, second edition, Stuttgart, 1886. [Engels, 1888 English Edition and 1890 German Edition (with the last sentence omitted)]

3. Guild-master, that is, a full member of a guild, a master within, not a head of a guild. [Engels, 1888 English Edition]

4. This was the name given their urban communities by the townsmen of Italy and France, after they had purchased or conquered their initial rights of self-government from their feudal lords. [Engels, 1890 German edition]

"Commune" was the name taken in France by the nascent towns even before they had conquered from their feudal lords and masters local self-government and political rights as the "Third Estate." Generally speaking, for the economical development of the bourgeoisie, England is here taken as the typical country, for its political development, France. [Engels, 1888 English Edition]

Political Education Programme

MARXIST WORKERS PARTY

Topic 1
Introduction to Marxism: who were Marx & Engels and what did they say?
Reading 1: Marx the Revolutionary (MWT)
Reading 2: The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism (Lenin)
Reading 3: Ninety Years of the Communist Manifesto (Trotsky)
Reading 4: The Communist Manifesto, Chapters 1 and 2 (Marx & Engels)

Topic 2
How do Marxists understand the world? Marxism's dialectical and historical materialism
Reading 1: Dialectical Materialism: the Foundation of Revolutionary Theory (MWP)
Reading 2: The Preface to "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" (Marx)
Reading 3: The Materialist Conception of History (Engels)
Reading 4: How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, Chapter 2 (Rodney)

Topic 3
How is the working class exploited? Introduction to Marxist economics
Reading 1: Capitalism's Big Con: Understanding Marxist Economics (CWI)
Reading 2: Value, Price and Profit (Marx)
Reading 3: Capital, selected chapters (Marx)

Topic 4
Social grants & police brutality – the Marxist theory of the State
Reading 1: The State (Lenin)
Reading 2: The State and Revolution, extracts (Lenin)
Reading 3: Should We Participate in Bourgeois Parliaments? (Lenin)

Topic 5
How can we win the working class to revolutionary socialism? Trotsky's Transitional Programme
Reading 1: The Transitional Programme (Trotsky)
Reading 2: Founding the Fourth International (CWI)
Reading 3: On the Radicalisation of the Masses (Trotsky)

Topic 6
When the working class took power The lessons of the Russian Revolution
Reading 1: The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalinism (MWT)
Reading 2: The Lessons of October (Trotsky)

Topic 7
The rise and fall of Stalinism: how and why did the bureaucratic dictatorship fail?
Reading 1: The Rise of Stalinism, (MWT)
Reading 2: The Nature of the Soviet Regime, (MWT)
Reading 3: The Crisis of the Stalinist States, (MWT)
Reading 4: From Perestroika to Capitalist Restoration (CWI)

Topic 8
The socialist revolution in the neo-colonial world – Trotsky's Permanent Revolution vs the SACP's National Democratic Revolution
Reading 1: The Theory of the Permanent Revolution (MWT)
Reading 2: The "New" SACP's Explanation of Stalinism (MWT)
Reading 3: Results & Prospects (Trotsky)
Reading 4: The Right of Nations to Self-Determination (Lenin)

Topic 9
Lenin's theory of imperialism: why was Africa colonized and how is it exploited today?
Reading 1: Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism (Lenin)
Reading 2: The Colonial Revolution (MWT)
Reading 3: A History of Pan-African Revolt, excerpts (CLR James)
Reading 4: Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions (Lenin)

Topic 10
Apartheid and the liberation struggle
Reading 1: The Nature and Tasks of the Revolution (MWT)
Reading 2: Lessons of the 1950s (MWT)
Reading 3: The Soweto Uprising (MWT/MWP)
Reading 4: Tasks of the South African Revolution (MWT)
Reading 5: Letter to South African Revolutionaries (Trotsky)

Topic 11
Africanism vs. Marxism
Reading 1: Class & Race: Marxism, Racism and the Class Struggle (MWP)
Reading 2: Africanism vs. Marxism (MWP)
Reading 3: The Third International After Lenin, selected chapters (Trotsky)
Reading 4: African Socialism Revisited (Nkrumah)

Topic 12
The revolutionary party & democratic centralism – organising a Bolshevik party
Reading 1: Our Organising Principles (MWP)
Reading 2: A Letter to a French Syndicalist (Trotsky)
Reading 3: The Class, the Party and the Leadership (Trotsky)
Reading 4: Tactics & Revolution, selected articles (Lenin & Trotsky)

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