

KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS
MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO

retranslated and edited
by
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**Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY**

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THE TEXT FOLLOWS

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

PROLOGUE

A ghost is haunting Europe – the ghost of Communism. All the Powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcize this specter: Pope and Czar, 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?

Everywhere the opposition has 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.

1. Communism is already acknowledged by all European Powers to be itself a Power.
2. 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 ghost 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 ONE
BOURGEOISIE AND PROLETARIANS

INTRODUCTION:

THE BOURGEOISIE HAVE SIMPLIFIED THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

A. Class struggle

The history of all societies that have existed up to now is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master 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 re-constitution 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.

B. The simplification of class struggle

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 distinctive feature: it has simplified the 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.

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PART ONE: THE BOURGEOISIE: THEIR REVOLUTIONARY ROLE

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CHAPTER ONE, PART ONE

THE BOURGEOISIE: THEIR REVOLUTIONARY ROLE

IN

ECONOMICS, POLITICS, SOCIETY

A.

THE BOURGEOIS ECONOMIC REVOLUTION

1. THE ORIGINS OF THE BOURGEOISIE, AND THEIR BREAKTHROUGH:

Origins: From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burghers, or free citizens, of the earliest towns. From these free citizens there developed first elements of the bourgeoisie.

Break-through: Discovering America and rounding of the Cape opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East-Indian and Chinese markets, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave

- a radically new impulse to commerce, to navigation, to industry, and thereby,
- a rapid development to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society.

2. THEIR DEVELOPMENT BY REVOLUTIONS IN PRODUCTION AND EXCHANGE

a. The feudal system (to 1500)

The feudal system of industry, under which industrial production was monopolized by closed guilds, now no longer sufficed for the growing wants of the new markets.

b. The manufacturing system took its place (1500-1800).

The guild-masters were pushed on one side by the manufacturing middle class; division of labor between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labor in each single workshop.

c. The modern large industrial system: the world market (1800 on)

Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacture no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionized industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by that giant, modern large industry, the place of the industrial middle class was taken by industrial millionaires, who are the leaders of whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois.

3. SUMMARY

The discovery of America prepared the way for modern large industry to establish the world-market. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its time, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased their 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.

B.

THE BOURGEOIS POLITICAL REVOLUTION

Each step in the economic development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance.

1. THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD (1200-1500).

During the Middle Ages, the future bourgeoisie were:

- an oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility,
- an armed and self-governing association in the mediaeval commune,
- often an independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany),
- sometimes a taxable “third estate” of the monarchy (as in France).

2. THE SMALL MANUFACTURING PERIOD (1500-1800).

Afterwards, in the period of small manufacturing, they served

- either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchies
- as a counterpoise against the nobility and
- and generally as the corner-stone of the great monarchies.

3. THE MODERN PERIOD OF LARGE INDUSTRY (1800 ON).

At last, since the establishment of modern large industry and of the world-market, the bourgeoisie has conquered for itself exclusive political sway in the modern democratic republic form of the state.

The executive of the modern state

is only a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

C.

THE BOURGEOIS SOCIAL REVOLUTION

I. THEY HAVE DEMYSTIFIED SOCIAL RELATIONS:

Wherever it has got the upper hand, the capitalist class has put an end
to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations.

It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties people than that bound people to their “natural superiors,”
and has left no other nexus between naked self-interest and callous “cash payment.”

It has taken the ecstasies of religious fervor, egotistical chivalrous enthusiasm, and philistine sentimentalism,
and drowned them in the icy water of calculation.

It has taken personal value
has changed it into exchange value.

In place of the many freedoms won over the years,
it has set up that single freedom – Free Trade.

In a word: In place of an exploitation veiled by exploitation that is religious and political illusions,
it has established an naked, shameless, direct, and brutal.

The capitalist class has taken every occupation that used to be honored and respected with reverent awe,
and has stripped it of its aura.

It has taken the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the scientist,
and converted them into its paid wage laborers.

The capitalist class has taken the family
and torn away its sentimental veil.

It has reduced the family relation
to a mere money relation.

2. THEY HAVE REVOLUTIONIZED SOCIETY

Their energy

Reactionaries love the Middle Ages, but the bourgeoisie have shown that the energy of the Middle Ages was really the most slothful indolence. The bourgeoisie have been the first to show what human activity can really achieve.

- They have accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals;
- They have conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former movements of nations and crusades.

Their need to constantly change everything

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with that the all social relations.

- All earlier industrial classes depended on conserving the old modes of production in unaltered form.
- But what distinguishes the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones is their
 - constant revolutionizing of production,
 - uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions,
 - everlasting uncertainty and agitation.
- All fixed, frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, and all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify.
- All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned,
- And people are at last compelled to face, with sober senses, their real conditions of life, and their real relations with their fellow human beings.

Their global reach and need for centralization

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

Their globalization

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world-market given a global character to production and consumption in every country.

- To the great chagrin of reactionaries, it has pulled out 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:
 - introducing these new industries becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations;
- These industries no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest corners of the planet.
- The products of these industries are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe.
- In place of the old wants, satisfied by the productions of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climates.
- In place of the old seclusion and self-sufficiency (both local and national) we now have business 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.

Their globalized bourgeois civilization

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most underdeveloped third-world nations into modern Western civilization.

- The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all the 'Great Walls of China,' and it uses these cheap prices to conquer the third world's hatred of foreign imperialists.
- It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the capitalist mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls "civilization" into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world that is made after its own image.

Massive urbanization

The bourgeoisie has

- subjected rural areas to the rule of the cities,
- created enormous metropolitan centers,
- greatly increased urban population as vs. rural population,
thus rescuing many from the backwardness of rural life.

"Westernization"

Just as it has made the countryside dependent on the towns,

- so it has made third-world and semi-third-world countries dependent on first-world countries, and
- made nations of peasants dependent on nations of bourgeois,
- made the East dependent on the West.

Centralization

More and more the bourgeoisie unifies the heretofore scattered population, means of production, and ownership.

- It has centralized production and has concentrated ownership in the hands of a few.
- The necessary consequence of this has been political centralization. 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.

SUMMARY:

WHAT THE BOURGEOISIE HAVE DONE:

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 human control;
- machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture;
- world travel; whole continents cleared for cultivation,
- rivers channeled; whole populations transported from one place to another.

What earlier century even had a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor?

REVIEW:
HOW THE BOURGEOIS REVOLUTIONS OF 1776 AND 1789 CAME ABOUT

First, the development of feudalism:

The means of production and of exchange,
on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up,
were generated in feudal society.

These feudal means of production and of exchange included:

- the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged,
- the feudal organization of agriculture and manufacturing industry,
- In one word, the FEUDAL RELATIONS OF OWNERSHIP AND EXCHANGE.

Second, the conflict of feudalism and the bourgeoisie:

At a certain stage in history,

THE RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION became incompatible with
THE FORCES OF PRODUCTION that had already developed.

The relations of production became so many fetters on the forces of production.

Third, therefore the bourgeois revolutions:

The relations of production had to be burst asunder – and they were burst asunder.

In place of the former feudal relations of production
we now had bourgeois relations of production:

- economically: capitalist free enterprise
- socially: domination by the bourgeois class
- politically: a constitution adapted to the bourgeois class.

END CHAPTER ONE, PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE, PART TWO

THE PROLETARIAT: THEIR REVOLUTIONARY ROLE

A.

A NEW REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION HAS COME ABOUT

A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society with its relations of production, of exchange and of ownership, 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 that he has called up by his spells.

1. A NEW CONFLICT NOW, BETWEEN THE BOURGEOIS RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION AND PROLETARIAN FORCES OF PRODUCTION

For many decades now the history of industry and commerce has been nothing except the history of the revolt of the modern forces of production against the modern conditions of production, which are the ownership relations governing the existence and the rule of the bourgeoisie..

Commercial crises: It is enough to mention the commercial crises that periodically return and thereby put on trial and threaten the very existence of the entire bourgeois society.

Over-production: 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.

Capitalism cannot accommodate its workers. Why? Because there is too much civilization, 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 relations/conditions of bourgeois ownership. On the contrary, the forces have become too powerful for these conditions and relations.
- The relations of ownership are fetters on the forces of production. As soon as the forces of production overcome these fetters,
 - they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society,
 - they endanger the existence of bourgeois ownership.
- The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by those conditions.

2. THE BOURGEOIS SOLUTION TO THESE CRISES IS USELESS:

And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises?

- On the one hand they destroy a mass of productive forces.
- On the other, they conquer new markets and exploit of the old ones more thoroughly.

That is to say, they “overcome the crisis”

- by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises;
- by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

3. SUMMARY: THE THESIS RESTATED.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie brought down feudalism are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

The bourgeoisie has (1) forged the weapons that bring death to itself and (2) called into existence the people who are to wield those weapons: the modern working class, the proletarians.

B.

THE PROLETARIAT: ITS STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

There is a direct proportion between the development of the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, and the development of the proletariat, the modern working class.

1. Who are the proletariat?

A commodity. They are a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piece-meal, 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, where commodities are bought and sold.

2. How do they work and how much do they cost?

First they are reduced to nothing: Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to the division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and consequently, all charm for the workers. They become an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired skill, that is required of them.

Then they become cheap to rent: Hence, the price of renting workers is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that they require for their maintenance, and for the propagation of their race.

- But the price of a commodity – and the labor-power of the workers is just another commodity – is equal to what it costs to produce that commodity. [In this case it comes down to: what it costs to get a worker to work.]
- In proportion therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases.
- What is more, in direct proportion to the use of machinery and division of labor increases, the burden of work also increases,
 - either by prolonging the working hours
 - or by increasing the work demanded in a given time (speed-up),
 - or by increased speed of the machinery, etc.

3. What is their work-situation like?

Virtual slavery. Modern industry has converted the little workshop run by the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of laborers, crowded into the factory, are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a strict 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 over-looker, 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 embittering it is.

Unskilled labor. The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labor, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labor 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 labor: they cost about the same to rent, depending on their age and sex.

Exploitation during and after work. No sooner do the workers receive their wages in cash (and the manufacturer thus finishes exploiting them) than they are set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie: the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.

Those who fill the ranks of the proletariat. The lower strata of the middle class – the small tradespeople, owners of small businesses, retired people, skilled laborers, and small farmers – all these sink gradually into the proletariat,

- partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which modern large industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists,
 - partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by the new methods of production.
- Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

C.

HOW THE PROLETARIAT DEVELOPS AND ACHIEVES VICTORY

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie.

1. The origins and growth of their struggle.

At first the contest is carried on by individual laborers, then by the workers of a given factory, then by the operatives of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them.

2. The first object of their attacks: the means of production.

To begin with, they direct their attacks not against the bourgeois relations of production, but against the instruments of production themselves, by sabotage. They destroy imported wares that compete with their labor, 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.

3. At first, they are united passively by the bourgeoisie.

At this stage the laborers 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. The bourgeois class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and for a while it is still able to do that.

4. They even help the bourgeoisie by attacking the enemies of their enemy.

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 bourgeoisie. Thus the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

5. As industry grows, the proletariat struggle grows stronger.

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 equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labor, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level.

- The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the workers' wages ever more fluctuating.
- The unceasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their jobs 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 trade unions against the bourgeois; they join together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for strikes. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots.

6. The struggle becomes national: class-based and political.

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 centralize 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 proletarians, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

7. National legislation.

This organization 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.

8. The struggle is aided by the struggle of bourgeois vs. aristocracy.

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 times, with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own instruments of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

9. Sections of the bourgeoisie defect to the proletariat cause.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the ruling classes 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.

10. Revolution.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of 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.

D.

THE PROLETARIAT IS THE ONLY REVOLUTIONARY CLASS

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.

1. The lower-middle class is not revolutionary.

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. What is more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only 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.

2. The lumpenproletariat are not revolutionary.

The dangerous “lumpenproletariat,” the social outcasts, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of 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.

3. The proletariat are revolutionary:

Their lifestyle. In the proletariat, the conditions of the old society in general are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without ownership; their relations to their spouses and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeois family-relations. Modern industrial labor, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped workers 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.

Their mission. 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, bourgeois ownership.

The nature of their movement. All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests 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.

E.

REVIEW AND PROSPECT

1. Review:

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.

2. Prospect:

Oppressors at least have to maintain their slaves. 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. For example, the serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois.

But capitalism impoverishes its slaves. The modern laborer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress 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. The bourgeoisie is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slaves within their slavery, because it cannot help letting them sink into such a state, that it has to feed them, instead of just being fed by them. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

Thus capitalism is preparing its own gravediggers. The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labor. Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their 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, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

CHAPTER TWO PROLETARIANS AND COMMUNISTS

INTRODUCTION

What is the relation of the Communists to the proletarians as a whole?

- The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to 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 in this:
 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of entire proletariat, independently of 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.

CHAPTER TWO, PART ONE

THESIS:

THE GOAL OF COMMUNISM

IS

TO ABOLISH PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

OF THE MAJOR MEANS OF WEALTH-PRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE AIM OF THE COMMUNISTS

The aim of the communists

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

This aim grows out of the class struggle.

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.

All revolutions change relations of ownership.

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.

Communist revolution will change bourgeois relations of ownership.

The distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property—that is, the *private* appropriation of *socially produced wealth*—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.

Summary:

In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property, i.e., abolition of the *private* appropriation of *socially produced wealth*

CHAPTER TWO, PART TWO
BOURGEOIS OBJECTIONS AND COMMUNIST RESPONSES

OBJECTION NO. 1:

**COMMUNISM ALLEGEDLY ABOLISHES
“PERSONAL APPROPRIATION” and “FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUALITY”**

The objection stated:

The bourgeoisie accuse the communists of seeking to

1. abolish the right of personally appropriating the fruit of one's own labor,
2. whereas such appropriation is thought to be the basis of all personal freedom, activity and independence.

FIRST PART OF THE OBJECTION: “PERSONAL APPROPRIATION OF THE FRUIT OF ONE'S LABOR”

1. THESIS: WHAT KIND OF OWNERSHIP WILL COMMUNISM ABOLISH?

Everyone talks about hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned ownership. But do they mean

- a. ownership by the manual laborer? the small farmer? i.e., the form of ownership that preceded the bourgeois form?

But there is no need to abolish that! The development of industry has already destroyed most of it, and is still destroying it daily.

- b. Or do they mean modern bourgeois private ownership?

Does wage-labor create any ownership for the laborer? Not a bit. It creates capital, i.e., the kind of ownership that exploits wage-labor and that cannot increase except upon condition of begetting a new supply of wage-labor for fresh exploitation. Ownership, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of (i) capital and (ii) wage-labor. Let us examine both sides of this antagonism.

2. TWOFOLD JUSTIFICATION FOR ABOLISHING CAPITALISM'S PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.

A. FIRST JUSTIFICATION: FROM THE VERY NATURE OF CAPITAL:

Capital is a social, collective product. 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 – in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society – can it be set in motion. Capital is, therefore, not a personal, it is a social power.

Therefore, what is socially produced should be socially owned. When, therefore, capital is converted into common ownership, into the property of all members of society, it is not a matter of transforming personal ownership into social ownership. Rather, it means changing the social character of the ownership: ownership loses its single-class character.

B. SECOND JUSTIFICATION: FROM THE VERY NATURE OF WAGE LABOR:

How much does a worker appropriate from his or her labor? Let us now take wage-labor. The average price of wage-labor is the “required-minimum wage.” The “required-minimum wage” is equal to what it takes to sustain a laborer in existence and to keep him or her coming to work. The amount of money, therefore, that the wage-laborer appropriates by means of his or her labor, merely equals what it takes to prolong and reproduce one's existence as a laborer.

Communism will not abolish this appropriation. We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products of labor, an appropriation that is made for the maintenance and reproduction of human life, and that leaves no surplus wherewith to command the labor of others.

What Communism will abolish. All that we want to do away with, is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the laborer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interest of the ruling class requires it. [That is, Communism will abolish the system whereby the laborer is not paid for the surplus value that he or she creates, but that the capitalist alone gets to appropriate.]

C. SUMMARY: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM:

In bourgeois society, living labor – human creativity – is but a means to increase congealed, accumulated labor: money.
In communist society, congealed labor is the means to widen, enrich, promote the existence of the laborer.

In bourgeois society, therefore, the past (congealed labor) dominates the present (creative labor).
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.

SECOND PART OF THE OBJECTION: “APPROPRIATION IS THE BASIS OF FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUALITY”

1. ENDING PRIVATE APPROPRIATION OF THE SOCIAL PRODUCT MEANS ENDING BOURGEOIS FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUALITY

The bourgeois rightly call the abolition of this state of things the abolition of individuality and freedom. There is no doubt that we aim at abolishing bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom.

2. ENDING BOURGEOIS “FREEDOM”

What is freedom? Under the present bourgeois conditions of production, “freedom” means free trade, free buying and selling. But if the bourgeois conditions of production disappear, the “free” buying and selling disappears also. This talk about free buying and selling, and all the other “brave words” of our bourgeoisie 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.

Capitalism has already abolished private ownership of one’s own creative labor. You are horrified at our intending to do away with private ownership of the social product.. But in your existing society, private ownership 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 ownership, the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any ownership for the immense majority of society.

Yes, communism abolishes bourgeois ownership of the social product. In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your private ownership. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.

3. ENDING BOURGEOIS “INDIVIDUALITY”

From the moment when human labor can no longer be converted into capital, money, or rent be converted into a social power that one class can monopolize, i.e., from the moment when the individual’s ownership of his or her own labor can no longer be transformed into bourgeois ownership of that labor – i.e., into capital – from that moment, you say individuality vanishes.

You must, therefore, confess that by the “individual” you mean no one except yourselves, the bourgeois, the upper-class owner of property. Yes, that kind of person must certainly be swept out of the way, and made impossible.

SUMMARY:

Communism deprives no one of the power to appropriate the products of society; all it does is to deprive people of the power to subjugate the labor of others by means of such appropriation.

OBJECTION NO. 2

“COMMUNISM INCULCATES UNIVERSAL LAZINESS!”

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

THE RESPONSE: According to this, bourgeois society should have gone to the dogs long ago through sheer idleness; because the members of society who actually work get nothing from it, while those who get everything do no work. This whole objection is only another expression of the tautology: that there will no longer be any wage-labor when there is no longer any capital.

OBJECTION NO. 3

“COMMUNISM DESTROYS OUR SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE!”

THE OBJECTION: The bourgeois objections urged against the communist mode of producing and appropriating material products, are also made against the communist modes of producing and appropriating intellectual products. To the bourgeois, the disappearance of class ownership is the disappearance of production itself; so too the bourgeoisie think that the disappearance of class-based culture is the same as the disappearance of all culture.

THE RESPONSE: That culture whose loss they lament is, for the vast majority of people, only a matter of being trained to act like a machine.

Please don't complain to us so long as you continue to apply the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, etc. to our intended abolition of bourgeois ownership.

Your very ideas are nothing but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and ownership, just as your jurisprudence is only the will of your class turned into a law for everyone, when in fact it is a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the economic conditions of existence of your class.

This selfish misconception leads you
to take the social forms that derive from your present mode of production and the current relations of ownership
(which arise and disappear in the historical evolution of production)
and to transform them into eternal laws of nature and of reason.

This misconception is one you share with every ruling class that has preceded you.

What you see clearly in the case of ancient ownership,
what you admit in the case of feudal ownership,
you cannot admit in the case of your own bourgeois form of ownership.

OBJECTION NO. 4

“COMMUNISM ABOLISHES THE FAMILY!”

THE OBJECTION: Abolition of the family! Even the most radical people are outraged by this alleged proposal of the communists!

THE RESPONSE: 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 the other side of the coin is (a) the practical absence of the family among the proletariat, and (b) prostitution.

The bourgeois family will end as a matter of course when the other side of the coin ends, and both will end with the disappearance of capital.

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

OBJECTION NO. 5

“COMMUNISM FAVORS PUBLIC EDUCATION!”

THE OBJECTION: But, you will say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by public education.

THE RESPONSE: And what about your education? It too is social education: it too is by such things as the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention, direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, and so on. 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 relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more modern industry tears apart all family ties among the proletarians, transforming their children into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labor.

OBJECTION NO. 6

“COMMUNISM WILL INSTITUTE COMMUNAL WIVES!”

THE OBJECTION: “You Communists would introduce community of women!” screams the whole bourgeoisie in chorus.

THE RESPONSE: The bourgeois sees his wife as a mere instrument of production. He hears that under communism the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and so, naturally, he comes to the conclusion that women too will become common property under communism. He has not the least suspicion that the whole point 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 claim will be openly and officially established by the communists. The communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed virtually from time immemorial.

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

Bourgeois marriage is in reality nothing but a system of having wives in common! Are you claiming that the communists mean to take your hypocritical, concealed “community of women” and substitute for it an openly legalized “community of women”? Nonsense! 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.

OBJECTION NO. 7

“COMMUNISM FAVORS INTERNATIONALISM!”

THE OBJECTION: The communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality.

THE RESPONSE: Working men and women have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. The first step is for the proletariat to acquire political supremacy, to rise to being the leading class of the nation, to constitute itself as the nation, to become national, although not in the bourgeois sense of the word.

National differences and antagonisms 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 civilized 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 is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be brought to an end. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.

OBJECTION NO. 8

“RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OPPOSE COMMUNISM!” (Re: “ETERNAL TRUTHS”)

THE OBJECTION: Various charges are made against Communism from a religious, a philosophical, and, generally, from an ideological standpoint.

THE RESPONSE: Those kinds of charges against communism 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 a human being's ideas, views and conceptions, in a word, our consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of our material existence, our social relations and social life?

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

When people speak of ideas that revolutionize society, they merely express the 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 eighteenth 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 come down 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, namely, 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 ownership relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.

So much for the bourgeois objections to communism.

CHAPTER TWO, PART THREE

THE TWO-STEP STRATEGY OF THE COMMUNISTS

A. THE FIRST STEP: WE MUST WIN THE BATTLE OF DEMOCRACY

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 as to win the battle of democracy.

The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; and to increase the total of 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 ownership, 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 revolutionizing the mode of production.

These measures will of course be different in different countries. Nevertheless in the most advanced countries, the following will be pretty generally applicable.

1. Abolition of ownership in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all right of inheritance.
4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.
6. Centralization 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 labor. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.
9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.
10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production.

B. THE SECOND STEP: ENDING CLASS AND “STATE,” INCLUDING THE PROLETARIAT AS A CLASS

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,

public power will lose its political character.

Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another.

If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize 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.
