
Message from the Amsterdam Sub-Bureau of the Comintern to the American Communist Movement, March 20, 1920.

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Comrades:

We have leaned with the utmost indignation how ruthlessly the ruling class of America is persecuting you. The brutality with which it strikes at the best workers for the cause, flogs and tortures, imprisons and deports hundreds of brave men and women fills our hearts with the same bitter feeling of being powerless to assist you against your cruel oppressors, as we so often experienced when, in former days, the sad stories reached us of the suffering of the Russian revolutionaries.

But at the same time, the heroic way in which you are bearing up under the blow fills us with admiration and with confidence in the future of the American working class. We now you are as yet only a vanguard; we know how American Capitalism, by combining the brutality of the former Russian autocracy with the hypocrisy that is the proper gift of the Anglo-Saxon bourgeoisie, has succeeded till now in misleading the masses of the workers.

But we also know that persecutions have always been in the great epochs of proletarian class struggle "the seen of the church." So it was with Tsarism, so after the promulgation of the anti-socialist law in Germany under Bismarck; so in Russia after the terrible reaction of the years 1907-1910. Socialism always arose triumphant out of all persecutions. And so will Communism in our own days. Far from striking fear in the hearts of

the fighter pledged to the revolution, the White Terror in America will arouse in thousands of workers consciousness of the class war, and the true nature of bourgeois democracy. It will turn the thought of thousands and thousands to the principles of communism and make them realize that there is neither freedom, nor justice, nor any hope of a better life for the masses as long as the capitalist class owns and controls the machinery of production.

The social revolution is making great strides in Europe; the light that has arisen in Russia floods the West; the ideas of the mass struggle, the soviet system, and the dictatorship of the proletariat as means of realizing the reorganization of production on communist lines gain daily in strength and sweep onward like an irresistible flood. In the whole of Central Europe Capitalism is waiting for its deathblow; in the Latin countries — France, Italy, and Spain — it is considerably weakened, being undermined by economical and political difficulties. Till now Anglo-American Capitalism stands almost unshaken, powerful and strong. Great Britain still relies on her colonial empire; she hopes to be able to avert the revolution by offering to the classes some slight betterment of their lot, by lightening the chains a little of her exploited hundreds of millions of her colored subjects. Well, we think Britain will soon be disappointed in her hopes. Revolt already raises its head in Egypt an in the Indies.

As for the United States, the employing

classes hope to retain their power by widening the chasm between a small aristocracy of labor, led by treacherous leaders, and the masses of the workers. They hope to retain it by fooling and buying the minority, by coercing and victimizing the vanguard of the masses.

It is the glorious task of American Communists to carry on, on broader lines, the task that the IWW first took in hand, to lead the masses against capitalism; to become the nucleus, the heart and the brain, of a stronger and more determined working class movement.

The arising of such a movement is of the utmost importance for international communism and for the cause of the social revolution. We all know that the world revolution cannot triumph as long as Anglo-American capitalism remains in power, and we have reason to believe that the decisive struggle between Capitalism and Communism will be waged on the American continent. Nothing short of the fall of American Capitalism will mean the end of that gigantic historical drama of which the world war seems to have been the prologue. The ruling classes of America know this, and that is why they try to crush Communism before it has taken hold of the masses; they want to violently tear it out, before it has deeply struck

root into the American soil. But you, Comrades, will not let them destroy your organization or compel you to desert it; you will find ways and means to shift your methods of action, you will place your organization beyond the reach of your enemies and carry on, undaunted, the agitation amongst the masses. You will rally these to the flag of communism, to the worldwide uncompromising class war. And when the economic crisis that is spreading over the world reaches your country — when the revolutionary storm, kept back neither by mountain ranges nor broad oceans, rages over the American continent — when millions of starving workers no longer, like in former times, cry out for bread, but for power, then you will lead the way to the general attack on the capitalist system. Your persecutions, your martyrdom today, your heroic struggle against fearful odds, all of this will design you for leaders of the masses just as the fortitude and determination of the Russian Bolsheviks designed them to take the lead of the revolutionary struggle of 1917.

**The Executive Committee of
the Amsterdam Sub-Bureau of
the Communist International.**

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