

**FOLLOWING IS A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY PLATFORM, PUT TOGETHER SHORTLY AFTER WW1 AND AS THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC WAS ESTABLISHED. SINCE THIS PARTY BECAME THE MAJOR COMPETITION FOR THE NAZI'S IN TRYING TO DESTROY THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY STOOD FOR. MUCH OF WHAT YOU WILL READ IS THEORY AND WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO PUT INTO PRACTICE.**

**THE GREAT DANGER THAT THIS PARTY POSED FOR GERMANY AND WHICH THE NAZIS EXPLOITED WAS THAT A COMMUNIST PARTY IN CONTROL OF GERMANY WOULD HAVE BEEN CLOSELY ALLIGNED WITH THE SOVIET UNION—A FEAR WHICH MOST GERMANS SHARED.**

### **Communist Party Platform**

We are committed to the overthrow of the presently existing, oppressive Republic and all of its economic and social institutions. The party favors:

1. The abolition of private property.
2. The establishment of land reform programs, in which the government will take over the land and distribute it for the common good of all.
3. The ownership of all industrial productive forces by the government, so that they can be operated for the benefit of all the people rather than the capitalists.
4. A foreign policy that will build friendly relations between Germany and the Soviet Union, since both are allies against capitalism.

To the German people: The cause of your misery is the fact that French, British, and American capitalists are exploiting German workers to get rich themselves. Germans, unite to get rid of this terrible burden.

### **Proletarians! Men and Women of Labor! Comrades!**

The revolution has made its entry into Germany. The masses of the soldiers, who for four years were driven to the slaughterhouse for the sake of capitalistic profits, and the masses of workers, who for four years were exploited, crushed, and starved, have revolted. The fearful tool of oppression—Prussian militarism, that scourge of humanity—lies broken on the ground. Its most noticeable representatives, and therewith the most noticeable of those guilty of this war, the Kaiser and the Crown Prince, have fled from the country. Workers' and soldiers' councils have been formed everywhere.

Proletarians of all countries, we do not say that in Germany all the power has really been lodged in the hands of the working people, that the complete triumph of the proletarian revolution has already been attained. There still sit in

the government all those socialists who in August 1914 abandoned our most precious possession, the [Second] International [Workingmen's Association], who for four years betrayed the German working class and at the same time the International.

But, proletarians of all countries, now the German proletarians are speaking to you. We believe we have the right to appeal before your forum in their name. From the first day of this war we endeavored to do our international duty by fighting that criminal government with all our power, and by branding it as the one really guilty of the war.

Now, at this moment, we are justified before history, before the International, and before the German proletariat. The masses agree with us enthusiastically; constantly widening circles of the proletariat share the knowledge that the hour has struck for a settlement with capitalist class rule.

But this great task cannot be accomplished by the German proletariat alone: it can fight and triumph only by appealing to the solidarity of the proletarians of the whole world.

Comrades of the belligerent countries, we are aware of your situation. We know very well that your governments, since they have won the victory, are dazzling the eyes of many strata of the people with the external brilliance of this triumph. We know that they thus succeed through the success of the murdering in making its causes and aims forgotten [...]

The imperialism of all countries knows no "understanding"; it knows only one right—capital's profits; it knows only one language—the sword; it knows only one method—violence. And if it is now talking in all countries, in yours as well as ours, about the "league of Nations," "disarmament," "rights of small nations," "self-determination of the peoples," it is merely using the customary lying phrases of the rulers for the purpose of lulling to sleep the watchfulness of the proletariat.

Proletarians of all countries! This must be the last wass! We owe that to the twelve million murdered victims; we owe that to our children; we owe that to humanity.

Europe has been ruined through the infamous international murder. Twelve million bodies cover the gruesome scenes of the imperialistic crime. The flower of youth and the best men of the nations have been mowed down. Uncounted productive forces have been annihilated. Humanity is almost ready to bleed to death from the bloodletting. Victors and vanquished stand at the edge of the abyss. Humanity is threatened with the most dreadful famine, a halting of to the entire mechanism of production, plagues, and degeneration.

The great criminals of this fearful anarchy, of this chaos let loose—the ruling classes—are not able to control their own creation. The beast of capital that conjured up the hell of the world war is not capable of banishing it again, of restoring real order, of insuring bread and work, peace and civilization, and justice and liberty to tortured humanity.

What is being prepared by the ruling classes as peace and justice is only a new work of brutal force from which the hydra of oppression, hatred, and fresh bloody wars raises its thousand heads.

Socialism alone is in a position to complete the great work of permanent peace, to heal the thousand wounds from which humanity is bleeding, to transform the plains of Europe, trampled down by the apocryphal horsemen of war, into blossoming gardens, to conjure up ten productive forces for every one destroyed, to awaken all the physical and moral energies of humanity, and to replace hatred and dissension with fraternal solidarity, harmony, and respect for every human being[...]

Proletarians of all countries, when we now summon you to a common struggle, it is not done for the sake of the German capitalists who, under the label of “German nation,” are trying to escape the consequences of their own crimes: it is being done for our sake as well as yours. Remember that your victorious capitalists stand ready to suppress in blood our revolution, which they fear as their own. You yourselves have not become any freer through the “victory,” you have only become still more enslaved. If your ruling classes succeed in throttling the proletarian revolution in Germany, as well as in Russia, then they will turn against you with redoubled violence. Your capitalists hope that victory over us and over revolutionary Russia will give them the power to scourge you with a whip of scorpions and to erect the thousand-year empire of exploitation upon the grave of socialism.

Therefore the proletariat of Germany is looking toward you in this hour. Germany is pregnant with the social revolution, but socialism can be realized only by the proletariat of the world.

And therefore we call to you: “Arise for the struggle! Arise for action! The time for empty manifestoes, platonic resolutions, and high-sounding words has passed! The hour of action has struck for the International?” We ask you to elect workers’ and soldiers’ councils everywhere that will seize political power and, together with us, will restore peace.

Not David Lloyd George and [Raymond] Poincare, not [Sidney] Sonnino, [Woodrow] Wilson, and [Mathias] Erzberger or [Philipp] Scheidemann: these must not be allowed to make peace. Peace is to be concluded under the waving banner of the socialist world revolution.

Proletarians of all countries! We call upon you to complete the work of socialist liberation, to give a human aspect to the disfigured world, and to make true those words with which we often greeted each other in the old days and which we sang as we parted: "And the International shall be the human race."

#### Questions (Spartacus)

1. What and whom do the Spartacists criticize?
2. What are their objectives?