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Workers of the World, Unite!

The Third International
to the
Workers of all Countries
CONCERNING THE POLISH QUESTION.

TYÖVÄENLIIKKEEN
KIRJASTO

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The Third International
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CONFRONT THE POLISH QUESTION

INTERNATIONAL
WORKERS

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1920

To the Workers of all Countries.

Concerning the Polish Question.

The governments of France, England and America who are alleged to have been waging a bloody war for the last four years in the name of democracy, liberty and the establishment of a stable and lasting peace between nations, are now eggng on Poland to fight Soviet Russia; this same Poland who has received her freedom and independence not out of the hands of the imperialist governments but as a result of the Russian and the German revolutions.

Before his retirement the following is the resolution that Celemnceau made at the 1st political conference: War with Soviet Russia to the last drop of blood of the last Polish soldier. The poor section of the Polish population arrayed in the Scotch uniform presentd to them by the charitable English are carrying on a bloody battle with Russian workers and peasants, along the whole length of the front with which the Poles have cut into Lithuania, White Russia and the Ukraine, utterly disregarding the will of the wide masses of the population.

Now after the conclusive defeat of Udenich, Kolchak and Denikin the Polish war against Russia seems at first sight scarcely a probability. Considering that the white generals who had mobilised under their banner of the «great and indivisible Russia» not only all the forces of the Russian bourgeoisie, and not only all that was left of the feudal-tzarist, regime; considering that the white generals who depended not only upon the support of international capitalism but also upon the fierce hatred of all the bourgeois elements of old Russia—failed to resist the mighty pressure of the Red Army, is it not all likely that a country like Poland, weak and left to its own resources should decide to

throw itself into a battle against the Russian Workers and Peasants Republic? This would indeed be an absurd and suicidal adventure on the part of the Polish Government.

Nevertheless, comrades, let us face the truth boldly,—such an adventure is possible, and it is the duty of the workers of the whole world to do everything to prevent it.

It is the Allies in the first place that are attempting by main force to compell Poland to take this desperate step.

At Versailles they made every endeavour economically and forever to destroy Germany and to split up Central Europ into small States,—to dismember it so that the sharks of international capital may the easier swallow the peoples of Germany, Austria and the Balkans piece by piece. But the peoples of Europe are neither Hindoos nor Negroes, and knowing this, the knights of French capital tremble with fear before the consequences of their own policy. The French capitalists do not believe that the German people with its neck in the Versailles noose will calmly and patiently bear the yoke of an ignominious slavery. Just us after the defeat of France in 1871 Bismark lived all the time under the fear of the possibility of a Franco-Russian Alliance against Germany, just so the present rulers of France are constantly faced with the threatening vision of the nations of Central Europe rising against them. And more especially do they quail before the idea that the Russian people who had now settled its countless enemies will form a fraternal alliance with the German nation which had also emancipated itself from the yoke of capital and younkerdom and the two will subsequently afford a powerful support to the French and the British workers against their exploiters.

The French bourgeoisie has other fears besides. It is in no small degree afraid of a strong «great» landlord, capitalist Russia. Should the Russian reaction, with the aid of the Allies, have succeeded in gaining a victory over Worker Peasant Russia,—it would then, in alliance with the defeated imperialist Germany, be compelled to fall upon its saviours for the express purpose of forcing from them a portion of the booty which the capitalists of France, England, of America and Japan have divided amongst themselves. For the only way in which it were possible for the Russian reaction further to fool the labour and peasant masses is by the glitter of foreign conquest, by a mirage of «Great Russia». This fear, on the

one hand, of an approaching alliance between the revolutionary proletariat of Russia with the revolutionary proletariat of Germany and on the other hand of a possible coalition of reactionary Germany with reactionary Russia is what dictates the entire policy of the Allies in regard to Poland; this primarily applies to bourgeois France.

Formerly French capital was an indifferent onlooker of the manner in which the Tzarist Government dealt with Poland; the French bourgeois press systematically maintained silence regarding the brutalities committed by the Tzarist satraps in Poland. Whereas now, so soon as Beseller's military heel was removed from the neck of the Polish people, France began to evince a particular interest to the young Polish Republic, supplying it from the first day of its establishment with articles of military equipment. Having driven Poland as a wedge between Russia and Germany, French capital resolved to convert her, Poland, into a fortress against Germany, into a base for maintaining in the East a new European political equilibrium favourable to the French bourgeoisie.

In the forthcoming conflict with Germany, the phantom of which is depriving the French Stock Exchange kings of their rest, capitalist France cannot count upon the assistance of her former Allies. American capital is leaving petty European intrigues, concentrating its attention on the Pacific Ocean, on the conflict with Japan, which it is expected will give the American bourgeoisie an opportunity of arousing once again the popular masses to fight for the interests of capital, to fight for new sources of capitalist profits. The position of British imperialism is growing more difficult daily. In England herself, the disaffection of the wide masses of the population is constantly increasing; a disaffection due to economic disorganisation and new taxes which fall, a heavy burden, not only upon the working masses but also upon the middle classes. Ireland is on the eve of revolution. Mass disturbances threatening to take the form of a revolution against British domination are prevalent in Egypt and India... In the event of war with the German workers or the German capitalists the only hope left to the French bourgeoisie is Poland. This country must at all costs be fully adapted to the role of watch dog of French capital in the East.

But bourgeois France intends to make use of Poland not only in the presumed coming war with Germany. France intends to force upon her the duties of executioner of Soviet Russia, to compel her to stifle that country with her own hands, and the sooner the better—at all events, if possible, before the victory of the working class in Germany. If by the time of that victory Soviet Russia is wiped off the face of the earth Marshal Foch will occupy, unimpeded, the Rhine coal basin with black and yellow troops, cutting off the proletarian German revolution from its most important source of life and of power. Once the Russian and the German revolutions are severally settled the French exploiters calculate that to put an end to the insurrection of their own proletariat will be a comparatively easy matter.

This is the reason why France is so persistently, so anxiously encouraging Poland to fight Soviet Russia. The reason for the impatience evinced by France is the apprehension lest the Worker Peasant Government in Russia gather sufficient strength to impress Poland of the hopelessness of her, Poland's, undertaking, and lest the movement of the Polish working masses, which is growing from day to day, compel the ruling classes of that country to repudiate this military adventure.

What is the attitude of capital, which has a presentiment of its inevitable ruin, towards this adventurous policy of independent Poland? Independent Poland did not arise as the result of the insurrection of the wide Polish masses. The wide masses of Poland submissively bore the yoke of national oppression, mutely dying for their several (d'otherlands) at once in the war, or, in the person of the leading Polish proletariat, closing its ranks under the banner of socialism, bravely fought against the war. The ruling landlord and capitalist classes of Poland made use of the banner of independence to carry on during the war an auction with the three governments with whom they were historically connected. The Polish landlords in Galicia clamoured for Polish «independence» under the sceptre of the Hapsburgs, giving up all idea of the liberation of the Poles groaning under the yoke of the Hohenzollerns,—for the sole reason that Wilhelm Hohenzollern was the friend and the ally of that same Carl Hapsburg who was the Polish Landgrave's nominee for the throne of the future independent Poland. On the other side of the trenches

the Polish capitalists and landlords hoped that with his victory over imperialism the Russian Tzar would with the assistance of the sharks of the French Stock Exchange establish an independent Poland under his protectorate. All the plans for the establishment of an independent Poland with the assistance of Austrian and German Imperialism ended in that the champion of these plans, the Polish social compromiser who was a revolutionary once upon a time but who during the war had become the leader of the Polish legions, Joseph Pilsudsky, has found himself behind the bars of the Magdeburg fortress. Poland has attained a certain degree of independence only owing to the fact that under the pressure of the wide masses of Russia and Germany imperialism gave way in these countries. The Polish ruling classes were at the head of the government and being under the domination of the victorious countries, hoped that these will not only assist them to suppress the Polish revolutionary movement and put the Lithuanians, White Russians and the Ukrainians completely under their domination, but will also render every aid for the revival of Polish capitalism.

Whilst taking an interest in the military strength of Poland, the Allies, however, evinced not the slightest regard as to the revival of Polish industry. They gave the Poles neither machinery, nor raw material, nor corn... The trains that went from Paris via Coblenz to Warsaw carried only military freight, instruments for the extermination of man by man. Poland's economic position was driven into an ever growing impasse. The masses of the people are starving; speculators and prostitute officials are holding banquets;—a festival in time of plague, it may be called. The wave of public indignation is growing with every day.

The hope entertained, that Poland as a country not loaded with State debt, will be helped by the Allies to obtain a large credit abroad,—was completely shattered. Polish currency is at a lower rate than that of defeated Germany: For all the goods received from the Allies the Poles have to pay at exorbitant prices; on the other hand French, American and English speculators export unhindered the last remnants of the wealth of devastated Poland.

The result of all this is the growing distrust, irritation and hatred towards the Allies not only of the mass of the people but even of a part of the bourgeoisie and of the Polish offi-

cers; unpleasant collisions between the Polish and the Allied officers have become a common occurrence.

In the Polish Seim the majority belongs to the politically ignorant profiteering peasants. At the head of the Government at first stood a famous musician, his place has now been taken by a provincial druggist. One of the most influential men is the romantic Joseph Pilsudsky, — whose hatred of Tzarism had made him a revolutionary, and whose hatred subsequently of the labour revolution has turned him into a reactionary general. Now, being part of the Government which is shooting workers wholesale he at the same time belongs to the Polish Socialist Party, who has stated in Parliament (Seim) through Dashinsky that the yoke of the Polish reaction drops a heavier burden on the shoulders of the masses than did Tzarist despotism.

Such are the conditions under which the current events are taking place.

The ruling classes of Poland labouring under this mortal fear and agged on by the Allies are likely at any moment to throw themselves desperately into any kind of adventure. We repeat this is the reason which makes a Polish war against Soviet Russia an absolute possibility.

We are confident that Soviet Russia has little to fear from this war. We are equally confident that the masses of Worker Peasant Russia who have so heroically resisted the attacks of Kolchak, Udenitch, Denikin and the like will be able to deal accordingly with the Polish landlords and capitalists, and will not allow the Polish adventurers to revive that in-terregnum when the Polish landed gentry reigned in the Kremlin...

But the Communist International is averse to the Polish and Russian workers paying with their blood for the adventures of the Polish bourgeoisie. Soviet Russia wants peace. Soviet Russia desires to avoid war so as to be able to put an end to the poverty and ruin called out by the war and to begin a constructive, peaceful life. The Communist International is aware that the workers' government in Poland can only be firm, when the Polish workers and peasants themselves will achieve their victory, and will overthrow the domination of the Polish landlords and capitalists.

Soviet Russia has upon many occasions offered to begin peace negotiations with the Polish Republic; Soviet Russia

emphasised not only her readiness for the complete recognition of Polish independence but also its willingness to solve all disputed questions by the means of peaceful negotiations. Soviet Russia has done all in her power to prevent a new war and new bloodshed.

The rest remains with you, comrades, workers of the world!

The Polish workers have made demonstrations and strikes as a protest against the war. All hail to the Polish workers, who are doing their duty under the most difficult conditions!

French and British workers! The issue is in your hands; it now depends on your supporting the Polish proletariat in their struggle against the war. Save Poland from the horrors of war. Help the Polish workers to liberate their country, to help Soviet Russia, to prevent a new war.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International appeals to you to take your part in the struggle against the military adventure of the French imperialists.

Workers of France! Put an end to this ignoble incitation of Poland against the Soviet Republic.

Workers of Poland! Force your bourgeoisie to abandon this new adventure, compell them to give up the war with Worker Peasant Russia.

Down with the international robbers!

Long live the international proletariat!

**President of the Executive Committee of the
Communist International. G. ZINOVIEFF.**

February 17th 1920.

To the International Proletariat.

Workers of all countries. Once again blood is being shed. Once again vast territories are being laid waste by war operations, once again the working masses of Russia hungering for peace, hungering to get on with their work of reconstructing their land from out of the ruins, are forced to take up the rifle. The war of capitalist and landlord Poland against Soviet Russia is causing an interruption in the constructive work which the workers and peasants of Russia have undertaken so soon as they have defeated the attacks of Kolchak, Denikin and Udenitch, so soon as they have liberated their land, their factories and their freedoms from the attacks of international capitalism.

Who is the instigator of these crimes. You are aware of the fact that Soviet Russia has recognised Poland's independence with the first day of the establishment of that Government. You know that Soviet Russia has made offers of peace negotiations to the Polish Government from the very first day of the establishment of the Polish Republic. You know, that anxious to save the blood of the workers and peasants of Russia and Poland, Soviet Russia was prepared to compromise with the Polish landlords and capitalists and to make concessions of a political and economic character; that the Soviet Government is firmly convinced that the Polish workers, the allies of the Russian proletariat, will sooner or later take the government power into their own hands and remove every injustice and that in view of this the Soviet Government was prepared temporarily to hand over to the Polish ruling class such territories of the Russian Republic even the population of which is not Polish. You know that Soviet Russia was prepared to conduct peace negotiations not only at Warsaw, but even at Paris or London, the capitals of the governments closely connected with the Polish landlords and capitalists. Poland's

reply to the Soviet proposal for a general armistice and for peace negotiations was an insidious attack upon the Ukraine, an attack led under the banner of the restoration of the power of Petlura, an adventurer, who sold himself in turns to the Allied capitalists and to German imperialism and who, repeatedly overthrown by the workers and peasants of the Ukraine has given himself to the disposal of the Polish Landlords, these longstanding exploiters and oppressors of the Ukrainian people. Poland is carrying on a war for the purpose of robbing the Ukrainian peasants of their lands which is to be transferred to the Polish landlords. Poland is carrying on a war to lay a heavy indemnity upon defeated Soviet Russia, upon Russia ruined by the attacks of Allied capital. This is what Poland is fighting for!

But the Polish landlords and capitalists are not the only party guilty of this war. The governments of the Entente are equally guilty. It is they who have armed and are arming White guard Poland. Conducting trade negotiations with Soviet Russia they at the same time have not given up the hope of breaking the power of the workers and Peasants of Russia. It is their hope by means of trading with Soviet Russia to disorganise that country from within, but still more hopes are laid by a number of persons who form the composite government of the Entente upon the expectation that with the attack of some counter-revolutionary power against Worker Peasant Russia it will be possible with the assistance of these bands once more to harness the Russian proletariat and the Russian peasantry. The French capitalists have sent to Poland not only a vast quantity of armaments but they have also dispatched 600 officers with general Anri at the head, who are to assist the incapable Polish officers to lay waste to Soviet Russia. One firm remonstrance, a resolute word to Poland on the part of the British Government, a reminder that we had sufficient war and devastation and that Russia is universally needed as the source of corn and raw material,—this alone would suffice to stem the tide of the war; but the Government of Lloyd George, which is sending notes to the Soviet Government, appealing to its humanitarian sentiments, demanding an amnesty for the Rus-

sian counter-revolutionaries of Archangel and the Crimea, never even thought of telling Poland that we had enough of bloodshed, enough of tears. The Polish bandits have promised the government of Lloyd George that with the defeat of the Ukraine they will supply it from that country with the requisite quantity of raw material and corn; and this was quite sufficient for the British Government whilst in the process of carrying on trade negotiations with Soviet Russia to untie at the same time the hands of white Poland and let her out upon a war against Soviet Russia. The Italian government of Nitti, in mortal fear before its revolutionary masses, avows its friendly feelings towards the Russian people, yet it had not courage openly to protest against the war of white-guard Poland but is sending her armaments through Austria. It is needless to add a word as regards the American Government. American airman are dropping bombs upon Ukrainian towns. The Governments of all the Allied countries are guilty of this war, by each supporting the Polish aggressors and robbers to a larger or lesser degree.

Workers of all countries! Soviet Russia will destroy the impudent bands of Polish imperialism just as she has destroyed those of Udenitch, Kolchak and Denikin whom your governments supported. Following the easy victories in the Ukraine the Poles will begin to feel the wrath of the workers and peasants of the whole of Russia, the wrath even of non-party circles who have finally learned to see in the Soviet Government the protector of the independence of a great country which having given freedom to all oppressed nations demands now that right which she herself has recognised even for the smallest peoples,—the right of arranging her life upon her own territory in accordance with the expressed will of the popular masses of Russia. The question is, how long will this war continue, how much more devastation will it bring, how many more wounds will it inflict upon the toiling Russian People. It depends upon you, workers of all countries, to put an end to this war in

the shortest possible period by finally defeating the Polish capitalists and landlords.

Workers of the ammunition factories of France, England, Italy and America! Refuse to turn out for Poland a single bullet, a single rifle, a single cannon!

Transport Workers, Railwaymen, Dock laborers and sailors! Refuse to send Poland either ammunition or provisions for it is all to be thrown in the war against Worker Peasant Russia.

Workers of all countries. Get out into the street, make demonstrations and strikes and let your war cry be: «Down with the hypocritical game of the Allied capitalists and Governments against Soviet Russia. Down with support to white guard Poland. The Allies should chain their dog—the Polish capitalists and landlords, and should themselves conclude an open peace with Soviet Russia».

Workers of Germany and Austria! You know that Soviet Russia is the pillar of the universal revolution, which alone can liberate you from the yoke of your own capitalists and of the noose thrown upon your necks by the treaties of Versailles and St. Germain. **Railwaymen of Germany!** Do not let trains pass from France into Poland. **German port labourers at Dantzic!** Refuse to unload steamers intended for Poland. **Austrian Railwaymen.** Not a single train should be let pass through Italy to Poland.

Workers of Roumania, Finland and Lettland! Your white governments bound by secret treaties with the Polish landlords are able to draw you into this war. Be on your guard, strain all your power to prevent this.

Workers of Poland. You who are tied with the Russian proletariat by the mutual thirty years struggle, little need we speak to you regarding your duties; you will fulfill them during the course of the war of the capitalists and landlords against Worker Peasant Russia by making demonstrations and calling strikes in the name of peace with Soviet Russia, by paying for your struggle with thousands of sacrifices. The IIIrd International amongst whose founders were your glorious leaders Rosa Luxembourg and Leo Tyczko, the Communist International is convinced that you will now strain all your power to strike

a blow in the rear of the army of white Poland by strong detachments, so as together with the Russian workers to gain a victory over the Polish landlords and capitalists. You know that Soviet Russia brings Poland not oppression but national freedom, emancipation from the chains of Allied capital and help in the struggle against their own capitalists. The victory of Worker Peasant Russia will be the victory of the Polish Proletariat the brother and ally of the Russian Workers and Peasants. To the attack, workers of Poland! Set out now upon your last fight, the day is approaching when we shall be the Judges!

Down with the Polish landlords and capitalists.

Long live Soviet Worker Peasant Russia.

Down with the war.

Long live peace between the toiling masses of Russia and Poland.

Down with the criminal game of the Allied Governments.

Long live the International Proletarian Revolution.

**The Executive Committee of the
Communist International.**

May 16th. 1920.

**TYÖVÄENLIKKEEN
KIRJASTO**

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