

# Platform of the Communist Party (1930)

## Abstract

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This party platform by the German Communist Party (KPD) from August 24, 1930, outlines the party's agenda under the leadership of Ernst Thälmann. Founded in December 1918, the KPD competed with the Social Democrats for the votes of the labor movement, accusing the SPD in particular of having betrayed workers through its less radical agenda. Instead of a parliamentary democracy based on free elections, they demanded the establishment of a socialist republic governed by councils based on the Bolshevik model. The Communist Party's platform calls for a "dictatorship of the proletariat" in a "Soviet Germany" and denounces the Treaty of Versailles, the Young Plan, Germany's war reparations payments, as well as the Weimar Republic's dependence on capitalism and foreign loans. In contrast to Chancellor Brüning's policy to reduce wages, the Communist Party calls for a wage increase for all workers, and an increase in social welfare programs. Following the national elections on September 14, 1930, the Communist Party was able to increase its number of seats, becoming the third-largest party in the Reichstag.

## Source

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Berlin, August 24, 1930

"We Communists pledge that after overthrowing the power of the capitalists and large landowners, after establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat in Germany, we will first and foremost implement the following program in a fraternal alliance with the workers of all other countries in order to oppose National Socialist demagoguery:

We will tear up the exploitative "Peace Treaty" of Versailles and shred the Young Plan, which places a yoke around Germany's neck. We will cancel all the international debts and reparation payments that have been imposed on German workers.

We Communists will fight for the full right of self-determination for all nations. With the agreement of the revolutionary workers of France, England, Poland, Italy, Czechoslovakia, etc., we will give the German territories that wish to join Soviet Germany the opportunity to do so.

We Communists will establish a strong political and economic alliance between Soviet Germany and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. On the basis of this alliance, factories in Soviet Germany will supply manufactured goods to the Soviet Union and receive foodstuffs and raw materials in return.

We make the following pledge to the workers of Germany: whereas present-day Germany is defenseless and isolated, Soviet Germany, which will be supported by more than nine-tenths of its population and enjoy the sympathies of workers around the world, will have no need to fear attacks by foreign imperialists. We would like to point out to German workers that it has only been the support of the world's workers that has enabled the Soviet Union—together with its invincible Red Army—to repel the interventions of world imperialism.

In contrast to the hypocritical fascist slogans directed against large banks and commercial enterprises, in contrast to the empty National Socialist invective against parasites and corruption, we will execute the following program:

Once in power, we will ruthlessly curb the activities of the banking magnates who openly force their will

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upon the entire country. We will carry out the proletarian nationalization of banks and cancel all debts to German and foreign capitalists.

Today, wholesale companies and retail magnates are bankrupting small businesses, throwing thousands of employees out of work, destroying hundreds of thousands of middle-class existences, sucking farmers dry through usury and driving up prices for mass consumer goods. Once we are in power, we will stop the activities of the retail magnates, nationalize the wholesale trade, create strong consumer cooperatives that represent the interests of all workers, and liberate workers from predatory profiteers. With an iron fist we will squash all speculation that takes advantage of the hardships of working people.

We will destroy all forms of capitalism in the public sector, seize large holdings of buildings without compensation and accommodate workers and the urban poor in the homes of the rich. We will tier rents according to the class principle and reduce them to a minimum for members of the proletariat and the working poor. We will do the same for the price of gas, water, electricity, transportation and all municipal services.

We will end the tax policies of the bourgeoisie. The working class will create all the required conditions for a class-based budget of the proletarian state by seizing power, by expropriating, without compensation, industrial plants, banks, large building holdings and the wholesale sector. We will operate all types of social insurance at the expense of the state (unemployment, disability, health, old-age, and accident insurance; support for disabled veterans and surviving dependents).

We will free the treasury of the German Soviet Republic from all the unproductive expenses generated by the police, the church, and pensions paid to deposed and banished imperial princes, kings, dukes, prince-electors, marshals, generals, and admirals. We will release the treasury from the expenses of ministerial salaries and pensions, the salaries of reactionary public servants, and the costs of corruption and every sort of luxury.

We will cast off the rule of the large landowners, expropriate their land without compensation and hand it over to farmers with little land of their own. We will produce Soviet goods using the most modern machines, ensure that the working conditions of the rural proletariat are on an equal footing with those of urban workers, and enlist the aid of millions of working farmers to build socialism.

With an iron proletarian broom, we will sweep away all parasites, large-scale industrialists, bankers, Junkers, powerful merchants, generals, bourgeois politicians, traitors to the working class, speculators, and racketeers.

We will smash the apparatus of power designed to oppress and subjugate workers. From the factory floor to the German Soviet government, the proletariat will rule in a workers' alliance in a broadly-based Soviet democracy.

We will eliminate unemployment by introducing a seven-hour day and a four-day week, establishing a strong economic alliance with the Soviet Union and increasing the purchasing power of the masses. We will give everyone the chance to work. We will harness the productive forces of industry and agriculture solely for workers. We will ensure full political equality and equal wages for working women and working youth.

We will raise wages by abolishing entrepreneurial profit, the unproductive expenses of the capitalist economic system and reparation payments. With a Bolshevik ruthlessness, we will put the following principle into action for all bourgeois idlers: anyone who refuses to work will not eat.

We Communists will give workers the program that secures their social liberation from the yoke of capital. We will ignite the enthusiasm of the masses for both the defeat of the bourgeoisie and the social

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and national liberation of workers in Germany. The chains of the Young Plan and national oppression can only be shattered by the hammer wielded by the dictatorship of the proletariat. The national question in Germany can only be resolved by the social revolution of the working class.

If all workers, poor farmers, salaried employees, the working middle class—both men and women, youth and adults—if all those suffering from the crisis, from unemployment, hardship and exploitation unite around the Communist Party of Germany, they will form a group of such invincible power that they will be able to overthrow the rule of big business and render any opposition futile, both from within and without.

We therefore demand that all workers who are still under the spell of the cunning fascist frauds finally and decisively break with National Socialism and join the army fighting the proletarian class struggle. We demand that all workers who continue to ally themselves with the traitorous Social Democrats break with this party of coalition politics, the Peace Treaty of Versailles, the Young Plan and the subjugation of the working masses of Germany. We demand that they form, with the Communists, a revolutionary front consisting of millions of workers to fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Down with the Young Plan! Down with the government of the capitalists and the Junkers! Down with fascism and social democracy! Long live the dictatorship of the proletariat! Long live Soviet Germany!”

Source of original German text: “Programmerklärung der Kommunistischen Partei (1930),” in *Deutsche Parteiprogramme 1861-1954*, ed. Wolfgang Treue, *Quellensammlung zur Kulturgeschichte*, vol. 3 (Göttingen, Frankfurt, Berlin: Musterschmidt Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1955), 152–55.

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