

## The Russia We Love and Defend

*Damen, Onorato*  
1943

Published in December 1943 in the International Communist Party's publication *Prometeo*. From <https://www.marxists.org/archive/damen/1943/love-russia.htm>.

It is no accident that today we communists, the unwavering supporters and defenders of the Russian Revolution, of its ideas and of its first actions, have to defend ourselves from the accusation of now being against this great historic experience. This accusation is thrown at us by those who were the Revolution's most open and ferocious enemies during the period when the bourgeois liberal and social democratic coalition tried to strangle it either militarily with mercenary banditry or through starvation; and sought to isolate it from the capitalist world behind a barbed wire fence of defamation and conspiracy.

Such a complete change of mind, and of political sympathy, towards Russia is much less surprising than may be imagined. In the light of Marxism it is easily understandable. Today this sympathy and solidarity runs from the Church to the captains of industry, from the Socialists to the magnates of high finance.

We are not amongst these; and the workers who have defended, and still defend Russia as the first great experiment of their class, have to finally understand the reason why we communists do not hesitate to state our opposition to the Russia of Stalin while, at the same time, we proclaim ourselves faithful fighters for the Russia of Lenin.

For us the revolutionary events were not insignificant trifles and we adhere completely to the ideas of October through our absolute dedication to the cause of the Russian Revolution, the beginning of the international revolution. For more than twenty years most of us have given everything to its cause: financial interests, family affections, freedom, often ending up in prison, internment or concentration camps. And so it is that the thankless, but necessary and inescapable task of not remaining silent on the truth about Russia therefore falls to us. We have learned in the school of Marxism to struggle openly and firmly against myths, against any kind of 'taboo', and for the most concrete truths of the class struggle.

And before we set out our ideas we would like those workers who have held on to their critical capacities, and whose class instincts have not been contaminated, to consider the real reasons which lie behind the profound and sudden solidarity of so many bourgeois reactionaries with the Russia of today, and from which we can define its true nature. For ourselves, we want to clarify here some aspects of this vexed problem and we are sure we shall all reach the same conclusions.

1. The bourgeoisie's passionate and noisy love for Stalin's Russia is a direct result of their interest in preserving the capitalist system. It follows from this that what we love, the bourgeoisie through class antagonism, naturally hates. When our theoretical critique and our Party's actions put us at the forefront of the class struggle, the

bourgeoisie cannot stomach it.

2. The legitimisation of the Second imperialist war in Stalinist “people’s war for democracy,” and the official recognition by the Orthodox Church which naturally supported the war for the great Slav fatherland, has deeply impressed the honest bourgeois who are always full of love for the fatherland. To legitimise the war meant to tie the working masses to it, to chain them to that most brutal and hateful force, chauvinism, in order to make victory certain, and with it the salvation of capital.
3. The Bolshevisation of the Russian (Communist) Party and the International, the liquidation in these bodies of leading organised expressions of the proletariat and their substitution by the stupid servants of opportunism, the inequalities in wages which inevitably restored social differences; the role assumed by the State and party bureaucracy, the dominance of the class of technicians which came from forced industrialisation and the rise of the Church as a prominent force; the pre-eminence of the State in the place of the dictatorship of proletariat; the Five Year Plans for the intensive exploitation of a re-created subject class of workers – these are all the surface features which confirm that the interests of Russia are no longer those of the proletariat ... At this point those who have ditched the revolution deemed it opportune to demonstrate their loyalty and consistency of the new direction in Russian policy to the international bourgeoisie, sacrificing on the altar of democratic concord the men of the old guard, the incorruptible builders of the October Revolution. This is the Russia dear to the hearts of Roosevelt, of Churchill and all international radicals – but it is not ours.
4. The Russia which we love and defend, as a revolutionary achievement, is that Russia of the proletariat and poor peasantry who under the guidance of Lenin and the revolutionary party dared to break the framework of feudalism and capitalism and to pose the class dictatorship – the transitional proletarian state power whose goal has to be to signal the destruction of that very state and that very class. The Russia which we love and defend is that Russia which for years its proletariat and to the international proletariat the consciousness of its force, the historic sense of its revolutionary role, the organic demonstration of the new workers’ world that has its creative heart in the ‘Soviets’.

The Russia which we love and defend is that Russia which for years had to operate clandestinely in the shadow of the present ‘Bolshevik’ Party and which in the prisons, in the deportations throughout the Russian wastes preserved intact its faith in the principles of October and which is waiting for the time when it will be able to unite its revolutionary re-awakening with that of the international proletariat. This is the Russia of our anti-bourgeois struggle, the Russia of our unchanging revolutionary passion.