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Comrade peasants!

Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine

8 February 1920

Comrade peasants! For many years the working peasantry of Ukraine has been struggling with its ancient enemies and oppressors. Thousands of the best Sons of the Revolution have fallen in the battle for the complete liberation of the Working People from every oppression. Through the heroic efforts of the peasant Insurgent Army of Ukraine, the hangman Denikin was dealt a fatal blow. The insurgent Peasants, with their leader — Bat'ko Makhno — at their head, remaining for long months in the home front of the white guard, surrounded ten times by a strong enemy, exhausted by the worst disease — typhus, which took from action a hundred of our best fighters daily, frequently lacking ammunition, together attacked the enemy with bare hands and under their powerful blow the best Denikinist forces — the detachments of generals Shkuro and Mamontov — fled. Through incredible efforts and the blood of the best fighters the insurgent peasants smashed the Denikinist front and opened the gates for their northern brothers — for Peasants and Workers; comrades of the red army came to take the place of the Denikinist hordes in Ukraine — workers and peasants of the North. Before the Working Peasantry of Ukraine a question now arose, apart

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from the common Task — struggle with the white guard — the Building of a Truly Soviet System, under which the Soviets, elected by the Working People, would be servants of the People, implementers of those laws, of those orders, which the Working People themselves will write at the All-Ukrainian Working Congress. But the leadership of the Communist Party, which has made out of the Red Army a blind, obedient tool for the defence of the commissarocracy, smearing with filth and vile slanders the best of the insurgent leaders, decided “to root out the splinter” — to do away with the Revolutionary insurgency, which is preventing the Lord Commissars from wielding power over the Working People of Ukraine. The Commissarocrats wish to see in the Working People only “human materiel” as Trotsky called them at the congress, only cannon fodder to be hurled against anyone, but to whom it is on no account possible to give any rights whatsoever. Working activity and order will be established without the help of the Communists.

Comrade Peasants! The Insurgent Army of Ukraine (Makhnovist) came from your midst. Your sons, brothers, and fathers filled up our ranks. The Insurgent Army is Your army, Your blood, Your flesh. Making tens of thousands of sacrifices the Insurgent Army fought for the right of the working people themselves to build their own order, to dispose of their own wealth themselves, and not for the transfer of everything to the hands of the Commissars. The Insurgent Army fought and is fighting for the true Soviets, and not for the Cheka and the Commissarocracy. In the time of the hangman Hetman, the Germans and the Denikinists, the insurrection stood up staunchly against the oppressors in defence of the Working People. And now the Insurgent Army considers its sacred task to be the defence of the interests of the Working Peasantry against the attempts of the Lord Commissars to harness to their collar the working peasantry of Ukraine. The Insurgent Army well knows and remembers the last commissar —

“liberator”. The Autocrat Trotsky ordered the Insurgent Army of Ukraine, which was created by the peasants themselves, to disarm, for he well knows that while the peasants have their own army, defending their interests, he will never succeed in forcing the Ukrainian working people to dance to his tune. The Insurgent Army, not wishing to spill fraternal blood, avoiding clashes with Red Army people, but subject only to the will of the Working People, will stand guard over the interests of the working people and lay down arms only by command of the free working All-Ukrainian Congress, in which the working people themselves will express their will. The Insurgent Army, the sword in the hands of the working people, calls You, comrade peasants, to convene quickly your working-men’s congress and to take into your own hands both the long-range building of your own fortune and your own working peoples’ wealth; true, the power-loving commissars will without a doubt take every measure to ban the free working congress; therefore, it is in the interests of the working people themselves not to allow the commissars to suppress their working congress; that is why the congress must be secret and in a secret place.

Comrade Peasants, Prepare for your Congress!

Hasten to Work for Your Cause!

The Enemy Does Not Sleep

And You Must Not Sleep,

In This is the Guarantee of Victory!

Long live the Regional Free Working Congress! Down With the Commissarocracy! Long Live the Peasant Insurgent Army!

Staff of the Insurgent Army of Ukraine (Makhnovist)

8 February 1920