

Declaration of the Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine (Makhnovist)

Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine

7 January 1920

To all the peasants and workers of Ukraine. To be sent by telegraph, telephone or post to all villages, rural districts, and governments of Ukraine. To be read at peasant gatherings, in factories and in workshops.

Fellow workers! The Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine (Makhnovist) was called into existence as a protest against the oppression of the workers and peasants by the bourgeois-landlord authority on the one hand and the Bolshevik-Communist dictatorship on the other.

Setting for itself one goal — the battle for total liberation of the working people of Ukraine from the oppression of various authorities and the creation of a **true soviet socialist order**, the insurgent Makhnovist army fought stubbornly on several fronts for the achievement of these goals and at the present time is bringing to a victorious conclusion the struggle against the Denikinist army, liberating region after region, in which every coercive power and every coercive organization is in the process of being removed.

Many peasants and workers are asking: What will happen now? What is to be done? How shall we treat the decrees of the exiled authorities, etc.

All of these questions will be answered finally and in detail at the All-Ukrainian worker-peasant Congress, which must convene immediately, as soon as there is an opportunity for the workers and peasants to come together. This congress will map out and decide all the urgent questions of peasant-worker life.

In view of the fact that the congress will be convened at an indefinite time, the insurgent Makhnovist army finds it necessary to put up the following announcement concerning worker-peasant life:

1. All decrees of the Denikin (volunteer) authority are abolished. Those decrees of the Communist authority which conflict with the interests of the peasants and workers are also repealed.¹
2. The lands of the service gentry, of the monasteries, of the princes and other enemies of the toiling masses, with all their live stock and goods, are passed on to the use of those peasants who support themselves solely through their own labour. This transfer will be carried out in an orderly fashion determined in common at peasant assemblies, which must remember in this matter not only each of their own personal interests, but also bear in mind the common interest of all the oppressed, working peasantry.
3. Factories, workshops, mines and other tools and means of production become the property of the working class as a whole, which will run all enterprises themselves, through their trade unions, getting production under way and striving to tie together all industry in the country in a single, unitary organization.
4. It is being proposed that all peasant and worker organizations start the construction of free worker-peasant Soviets. Only labourers who are contributing work necessary to the social economy should participate in the Soviets. Representatives of political organizations have no place in worker-peasant Soviets, since their participation in a workers' soviet will transform the latter into deputies of the party and can lead to the downfall of the soviet system.
5. The existence of the Cheka, of party committees and similar compulsory authoritative and disciplinary institutions is intolerable in the midst of free peasants and workers.
6. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, unions and the like are inalienable rights of every worker and any restriction on them is a counter-revolutionary act.
7. State militia, policemen and armies are abolished. Instead of them the people will organize their own self-defence. Self-defence can be organized only by workers and peasants.
8. The worker-peasant Soviets, the self-defence groups of workers and peasants and also every peasant and worker must not permit any counter-revolutionary manifestation whatsoever by the bourgeoisie and officers. Nor should they tolerate the appearance of banditry. Everyone convicted of counter-revolution or banditry will be shot on the spot.
9. Soviet and Ukrainian money must be accepted equally with other monies. Those guilty of violation of this are subject to revolutionary punishment.
10. The exchange of work products and goods will remain free; for the time being this activity will not be taken over by the worker-peasant organizations. But at the same time, it is proposed that the exchange of work products take place chiefly **between working people**.

¹ Note: Which decrees of the Communist authority are harmful to the working people must be decided by the working people themselves — the peasants in assemblies, the workers in their factories and workshops.

11. All individuals deliberately obstructing the distribution of this declaration will be considered counterrevolutionary.

Revolutionary Military Soviet and Command Staff of the Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine (Makhnovist)

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