

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

¶1 **A** specter is haunting Europe—the specter of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this specter: Pope and Czar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals, and German police-spies.

¶2 Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as communistic by its opponents in power? Where the opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?

¶3 Two things result from this fact.

I. Communism is already acknowledged by all European powers to be itself a power.

II. It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the specter of communism with a manifesto of the party itself.

¶4 To this end, Communists of various nationalities

1. Marx and Engels' examples represent the geographical and ideological diversity of their opponents. Prince Metternich was Austria's reactionary foreign minister for more than thirty years. François Guizot was a moderate French politician who became premier in 1847. The French Radicals opposed monarchy but supported capitalism.

2. Marx had personal experience of such attacks even before he had become a communist himself. Under his editorship, the radical liberal newspaper *Rheinische Zeitung*, published in Cologne, had been accused of communist sympathies in 1842.

3. Marx and Engels are probably exaggerating the importance of the communist movement, which was still quite small at this time. Nevertheless, European political leaders in the 1840s were certainly terrified of the possibility of revolution. Within days of the *Manifesto's* publication, a revolutionary upsurge overthrew the government in France and swept across much of the rest of Europe. Although most of these revolutions

have assembled in London and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish, and Danish languages.

were defeated, many Communists, including Marx and Engels, played prominent roles in them.¹

4. The reference here is to a meeting of the Communist League (formerly the League of the Just)—composed largely of German émigrés living in London and Paris—that commissioned the *Manifesto* in December 1847. It was originally published in German and soon translated into English and Swedish, but it did not become available in other languages until the 1870s.