
Confidential Circular Letter of the CPA's "Proletarian Club" Minority to its Supporters [circa Oct. 15, 1919]

Document quoted in full in the Report of BoI Special Agent M.F. Blackmon, July 17, 1920,
document in DoJ/BoI Investigative Files, NARA M-1085, reel 929, file335432.

COMMUNICATION.

Dear Comrade:

In response to the request from the Marxian Club of San Francisco (addressed to the Minority Group of the Communist Convention) for a statement concerning the formation of a party based upon Marxian principles, a joint meeting of the Board of Control of the Proletarian University and the Board of Directors of *The Proletarian* was held, Sunday, October 5th [1919], for the purpose of deciding upon the course to be pursued.

At this meeting, a tentative program was drafted, a copy of which is attached, and request that you give it careful consideration and return with suggestions and comment. Copies have been sent to all who are in accord with our position. After receiving the opinions of the various groups, the program will be put in final form.

It was the consensus of opinion at our meeting that the time is not ripe for the launching of a new party embodying our views; it appears to be advisable to defer action until such time as the issues was forced upon us, or until we had developed sufficiently in strength to make the venture a success. In the meantime, the intention is to proceed with the work of strengthening and unifying the groups now in existence, and organizing and as-

sisting groups. We are confident that within the ranks of the several parties now in existence there are elements who will join with us; but these are for the most part unknown to us at this time.

The question then arises: When will be the most fitting time to launch a party such as we favor? Should it happen that the issues is not forced upon us prematurely, it appears that the ideal moment would be immediately preceding the national convention of the present parties. This would mean that we should be prepared to act in May 1920. This allows ample time for preliminary organization; so that we may have the framework of the new organization prepared, and have on hand funds necessary for carrying on propaganda and organization work on a national scale.

The object of section 8 is to make possible the success of such plans. For some time the burden of extending study class work and the publishing of *The Proletarian* has fallen upon comparatively few shoulders. If this work is to continue successfully on a national scale, it is essential that a central organization be formed, and funds provided, by those in accord with the program outlined. With this in view the meeting authorized the issuance of Pledge Cards, to be used for the collection of an Extension Fund.

There is much work that can be done at the present time, and, pending the working out of a

definite line of action, it is our intention to wage a vigorous campaign of agitation and education within the ranks of the existing parties, providing funds are available.

In conclusion, we ask that the contents of this letter and the attached program be considered strictly confidential. Should our intentions be made public at this time, it could only result in giving the opposition a weapon with which to crush groups and classes now in the process of formation. While there is no occasion to hasty action, we ask that you give these matters your immediate attention, so that the work may be launched at the earliest moment.

Program of Action

(Submitted as a basis for discussion.)

1. The strengthening of existing Marxian groups which are in accord with the position of the Minority Group of the Communist Party Convention, and which favor the formation of a party based upon the principles of scientific socialism.

2. The formation of new groups in favorable localities.

3. These groups to be affiliated with the Proletarian University, with Detroit as a central point and clearing hours for activities.

4. *The Proletarian* to be the official paper of said organization.

5. Whenever possible, Proletarian Clubs shall be organized. These Clubs shall adopt a common basis of action, and uniform rules and regulations. An initiation fee of \$1.00 shall be charged, 50 cents of which shall go to the Extension Fund of The Proletarian University. Each club shall have a secretary whose duty it shall be to maintain regular communication with the central office. Secretary shall also furnish central office with name and address of each member. The central office shall issue monthly news bulletins reporting the progress and activities of classes and clubs.

6. Membership in other organization shall not constitute a qualification for membership in Proletarian Clubs.

7. The attitude of the Proletarian University, *The Proletarian*, and the Proletarian Clubs toward existing working class organizations shall be to criticize any reactionary tendencies of the officials or leaders, endeavoring at all times to reach the membership directly.

8. Funds for the extension of study class work, the establishing of new clubs, maintaining of central office, routing of speakers and organizers, and so forth, shall be raised through donations from individuals, classes, clubs, and other means as may be devised. Such moneys shall be dispensed from a general Extension Fund.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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