

# PROLETARIAN BULLETIN

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J U L Y 1933.

COMRADES:

The Proletarian News, July issue, has just been shipped to the Locals and the single copies are now being wrapped for mailing. Income for the paper has fully covered this issue and the balance owing the printer is down to \$105.75 (including July issue). So, we are not falling behind on the paper. The balance is about the same as at the beginning of the year, but we are not getting ahead. With present income the circulation cannot be increased or the paper gotten out more frequently. We should try wipe out the deficit and get a balance on hand toward increasing the size of the paper, or its more frequent appearance. A sub drive would help.

The Convention Fund, it will be observed, has not grown very fast and the time for its disbursement will soon be here.

We are again reminding you that pre-Convention discussion material should all be in National Office not later than August first.

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### PENNY-A-DAY FUND.

Total received to June 6th		\$49.17
June 19th	Local Jackson	1.09
" 23rd	" San Francisco	.89
" 26th	" Chicago	1.68
July 3rd	" Los Angeles	1.36
" "	" Boston	.50
Total Received		<u>\$ 54.69</u>

### NATIONAL OFFICE WEEKLY FUND.

Total received to June 6th		\$68.23
June 13th	Local Chicago	1.45
" 20th	" Elkhart	1.00
" 22nd	" Boston	1.00
" 27th	" Chicago	2.00
" 28th	" Buffalo	5.00
July 3rd	" Boston	1.00
Total Received		<u>\$ 79.68</u>

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## PROLETARIAN NEWS GUARD FUND.

	Total received to	June 8th			\$78.90
June 19th	Local Rochester	E.Korchien			1.00
"	"	E.Kowski			2.00
"	"	B.Feld			1.00
"	"	B.Tishler			1.00
July 3rd	" Chicago	S.Muzakis			.50
		Total Received			<u>\$ 84.40</u>

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CONVENTION FUND.

Boston	Quota	\$30		\$15.50
Rochester	"	40		
Buffalo	"	30		
Detroit	"	100		
Flint	"	30		30.00
Grand Rapids	"	20		
Niles	"	10		
Benton Harbor	"	10		
Mishawaka	"	10		
Elkhart	"	10		4.50
Chicago	"	60		28.90
New York	"	10		
Jackson	"	10		3.50
Hanover	"	10		
Danville	"	10		
Milwaukee	"	10		
Los Angeles	"	30		
San Francisco	"	50		20.00
Mecosta County	"	10		
		<u>\$ 500.00</u>	Total Received	<u>\$ 102.40</u>

Locals Detroit and Bullalo report money on hand for Convention Fund, but not yet received at N.O.

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BULLETIN FUND.

	Total Received to	June 8th		\$12.00
June 14th	Local Buffalo			1.00
"	" M.A.Larson			1.00
July 3rd	Local San Francisco			5.00
		Total Received		<u>\$ 19.00</u>

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DAY'S WAGE FUND

	Received to	June 2nd		\$18.00
June 13,	Local Chicago	Anna Tomasik		2.00
" 20	"	Allen Nelson		2.00
"	"	T. Anderson		1.00
"	" Rochester	M.McCollum		5.00
				<u>\$ 28.00</u>

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PARTY EXPANSION FUND

Formerly acknowledged	from Local Flint	\$20.00
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## PRE- CONVENTION DISCUSSION

Shortcomings To Be Overcome  
(by Morris Prizant, Local San Francisco)

We have never claimed to be the acme of perfection as a revolutionary organization. We are the best representatives of Marxism in America. This does not blind us to the fact that we have plenty of faults and shortcomings. Consequently, it behooves our membership as a whole to be continually alert to ferret out and eliminate our weaknesses from time to time. This will be the chief task awaiting our delegates at the coming convention.

One of the faults which we must remedy consists of stamping out individualism that still exists in our party. Coming out of America where individualism among the masses of workers has been and still is more pronounced than in most other capitalist nations, it is not surprising that we have this problem.

When members enter our party and learn something of Marxism, they can and do easily and quickly drop the false ideological concepts derived from capitalist sources. Unfortunately, many of our members have not dropped the individualistic temperament that grew up with them in their capitalist surroundings. Consequently, many of our members accept Marxian theory, but instead of behaving like communists should, cling to their narrow, petty bourgeois and individualistic outlook. The worst types of such members are those who have learned some of Marxian theory, are blessed with the "gift of the gab", and are overwhelmed by their knowledge and loquaciousness, so that they arrive at the psychological position where they think that their own judgment is infinitely superior to the opinion of the majority of the local they have inflicted themselves upon.

These individuals, with their "leader" complex, have succeeded at times to gather around themselves cliques composed of gullible and inexperienced members, for the purpose of using them to put over what they think the organization needs.

Fortunately, we are freer of these types than are the other working class organizations, and we are so organized that though such types have caused us some damage by their cheap manoeuvring our membership sees to it that these "generals" are on the outside looking in.

The most prevalent form of individualism which we suffer from is from those who give lip service to Marxism, but are too individualistic to support the party by putting in their time and energy and are unwilling to part with some of their income to aid the party.

Lenin stated many times that it was the self sacrifice and heroism of the bulk of the Bolsheviki which finally made it possible for the Bolsheviki to emerge triumphant as the standard bearers of the proletarian revolution. The members of the Bolshevik party were forced to carry on in dangerous surroundings. They risked their lives and took chances of long imprisonment in order to strengthen the revolutionary movement in Russia.

Here in America, as yet, we are not called upon to take the chances which the Bolsheviks took. It is possible we may in the future. At present however, the only sacrifices we are called upon to make is the giving of some of our energy and time and money. It is true that the latter is becoming more difficult to sacrifice due to the depression.

Our party does not expect members to work themselves to the point of exhaustion and ill health, nor are members asked to part with funds which they need to procure the vital necessities, as we realize that ill and undernourished members cannot function in the movement at their best. But all members are called on to do their bit.

Yet we are faced with individualism so deeply rooted in some of our members that the unhappy result is a glaring contrast in the party, wherein some of our members are working themselves sick and giving money they cannot afford; while others of the individualistic temperament are long on complaints, but very short on financial and other support.

Comrade O'Brien in his article entitled "Criticism" alludes to some of these members who were very active in real estate speculating, purchasing cars and radios, and laying away nest eggs which were broken before they could be eaten. He might have mentioned those peculiar types of party members who could afford to spend hundreds of dollars in touring and vacationing and while engaged in this pleasant past-time, spoke under the auspices of the party and then charged or took payment for their services when they damn well knew what a struggle it was to get out "The Proletarian". In many cases these types of individualists always seemed to be broke when funds for the party were needed, and also manage to renege on pledges which they glibly make but fail to live up to. Yet, strangely enough, these types who cannot find any money for the party can find some to ape the Bourgeoisie by throwing private house parties, providing liquor refreshments, etc.

We can howl from now to doomsday about our small newspaper, its irregular appearance; we can groan and moan; we can curse the National Secretary and what not, but all of this commotion will not get us very far, unless some of the members who can afford it come across better and drop their cheapness, their petty-Bourgeois concern about themselves, and give more to the party in the form of actual work and hard cash.

One of the things we should see to is that the above described types, of which, alas, we have too many, should not be placed in official positions, regardless of their speaking or other abilities.

Individualism is not the only malady that affects the Party. There is a bad tendency in our organization among some of our members, i.e., isolating themselves from workers outside the movement. In extreme instances, there are comrades who get into the Party and, after getting some enlightenment, assumed either a superficial or else patronizing attitude to workers not yet class conscious. True, all these comrades theoretically recognize that we need contact with as many workers as we can reach. Yet these particular members begin to look upon themselves as part of a charmed circle. They mingle largely with other members and make no efforts to cultivate friendships and acquaintances among the

they cant bear the scissorbills. They will address them from the soap box and the platform, yet shun association with outsiders as assiduously as a devout Mohammedan keeps away from hogs.

This "segregitis" complex must be overcome. Most of our members are fond of some recreative diversion. The Party is not opposed to this nor expects members to live like ascetics and hermits. Marx liked his beer, Lenin found his recreation in a game of chess. Trotsky was fond of hunting. Some of our members enjoy bridge games, swimming, and various other forms of recreation. They should also see to it that they do not seek solely the companionship of other comrades in these diversions, but should learn to cultivate the friendship of outsiders and thus broaden contact for possible recruits for the Party.

We should also encourage new recruits to cling to whatever social contact they may have. The writer of this article remembers when he first joined the Party. After entering, he became so impressed with Marxism and the knowledge of his new found acquaintances that he gradually drifted away from former associates and in about three months managed to drop a host of friends and acquaintances that had been built up through living in one neighborhood over twelve years, thus losing touch with potential material for the movement. Such errors can be overcome to some extent by organizers of locals impressing on all members, especially the newer ones, the importance of "standing in" with as many workers as possible.

One of our other shortcomings, in the opinion of this writer lays in the realm of theory. There is no doubt that our efforts to spread Marxian education and popularize it, has been highly successful, considering the resources at our disposal. We can safely assert that we have done more of this vital work than all other working class organizations put together, during the whole post-war period.

However, we have not applied Marxism to the specific conditions of the U.S.A, as well as we can. The general theory of Marxism will find greater acceptance among American workers if we devote more time to analyzing the historical background and present social phenomena, more or less peculiar to this country. We have fallen down on this to some extent.

For instance, there is a problem of crime. In a general fashion we have correctly explained the various causes that result in crime. But have we analyzed crime in America, and answered the question "why homicides?", and commission of other crimes are much greater here in America than in capitalist Europe? Have we ascertained the origin and causes of "Racketeering", a form of criminality which flourishes largely on American soil?

Then there is the problem of 10,000,000 native born Americans of the negro races. We have scarcely ever referred to them, let alone analyzed their social status thoroughly and the effects of their status in American society and its bearing on the class struggle here.

During the last national elections, through our press, we capably demonstrated that both Hoover and Roosevelt represented the capitalist class and were enemies of the workers. Yet we neglected to point out that though both were opposed to the workers interests, at the same time the capitalists were divided on these candidates, that a bitter struggle was raging between the

capitalist class, and that these candidates represented different factions with opposing economic, and, therefore, opposing political interests. The question of whether Hoover represented the financiers, and Roosevelt the industrialists, or if each represented opposing interests between both or either one of these mentioned groups should have been clarified.

As an American revolutionary party, it is up to us to tackle and concentrate on questions pertaining to all problems specific to this country. To fight successfully we must be familiar with our battlefield, the U.S.A., and our enemy, the American capitalist. Of course it is agreed that the enemy is the whole international capitalist class, but as Marx states: "The proletariat\*\*\* must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."

We have the best working class party in America. It is up to us to improve it vastly, by openly recognizing our faults. The Convention presents a great opportunity to do so. Let all our members see to it that the best qualified are sent, and we can hail this convention as a great step forward in improving and building up the revolutionary movement of America.

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### CRITICISM

(by Carl Babbitt, Local Flint)

In Comrade O'Brien's article in the May Bulletin he speaks of the theoretical poverty of our members and especially in Local Detroit, and the surface sores that result from this condition.

I fully agree with him and have expressed this opinion many times to the members of the N.E.C. and others, and will further state that the situation in Local Detroit has produced a running sore, spreading into other locals of the Party (sometimes by underground methods) a dangerous disease, stifling the life of the Party.

I have been waiting to see articles appear in the Bulletin from the N.E.C. members in local Detroit, giving their views why a Convention should be held, explaining the weaknesses and shortcomings of the Party and what could be done to improve our program and tactics. So far they have been strangely silent, but two members of the local have spoken, Comrades Schockinger and Wass, and their articles are certificates of the theoretical poverty prevailing there, especially the article of Comrade Wass, who is looked upon as one of the best theoreticians in the local.

Before dealing specifically with the article of Comrade Wass, I will deal with the situation in its entirety, giving my views of a basic weakness that causes situations like the one prevailing in local Detroit to develop. It is the inability of the members to understand the difference between the practical or every-day struggle of the workers and the task of building a revolutionary political party to direct the class struggle of the proletariat.

The class struggle and the every day struggle are two distinct things, altho the class struggle develops out of and includes the every day struggle. The every day struggle is a less conscious struggle on the part of the workers. It is aimed to improve their condition within capitalism. The class struggle

is a wider and more conscious struggle on the part of the working class against the capitalist class. The workers who recognize the irreconcilable antagonisms between these two classes, struggle for political supremacy in order to abolish Capitalism.

Due to the rapid accumulation of capital in America, the workers have been thoroughly imbued with the ideology of Capitalism. For years they have been chasing capitalist rainbows, trying to get rich on the installment plan, and have neglected all forms of working class organization. Therefore, in a crisis, they are totally unprepared, unorganized, and completely ignorant of the nature of the society in which they live, floundering about in a delirium. Having hope and confidence in the institutions of Capitalism, they make no effort to struggle against them. Thus in the first two years of the crisis, with lingering memories of the years of "good times", the workers were merely hoping, wishing and praying, that things would somehow get better. In the last two years there have been some attempts made by the workers to resist the encroachments of the capitalist class upon their standards of living. A growing discontent will manifest itself as conditions get worse and workers lose confidence and hope. It is our duty to accelerate this development by increasing our propaganda and agitation, breaking down the confidence of the workers in the institutions of Capitalism.

As the every day struggle develops and the discontent of the workers becomes more and more manifest, the workers in their helplessness due to the fact that they do not understand the social structure, are always looking for somebody to do something for them. All sorts of freaks, would-be social reformers, and social-quacks of every description, make their appearance with panaceas and cure-alls for the ills of society, pretending to do something for the unfortunate suffering masses. Catholic priests, preachers, politicians, bankrupt business men, would-be socialists, and empty headed "communists" join hands with the workers in a struggle against the bankers and big capitalists for a more equitable distribution of wealth, to improve the conditions of society, to make this a better Capitalism.

What should be our attitude toward this struggle? Should we become absorbed in it? I say NO. As workers we must participate in this struggle to a certain extent because as members of the working class we are subject to the same conditions as any other worker. But as Communists we have a higher duty, the building of a revolutionary party to direct the way out of Capitalism to a higher form of society, a Communist society. And we cannot proceed upon the basis of sentiment, feeling sorry for the workers because they are suffering and pretending, like the would-be saviors, to be doing something for the workers, but with persistent propaganda and education we must teach and inspire the workers to fight for themselves. They are suffering to a great extent because they have neglected working class education and organization. We must make them understand this and drive home to them that the only way the workers will ever get anything is by organizing and fighting for it. Of course the vast majority of the workers will only learn this through their own bitter experiences.

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The every day struggle can be developed consciously into the class struggle through the introduction of Marxism into the conflict. The theory of Communism does not develop out of the struggles of the working class under capitalism, but is applied to that struggle by the revolutionists who have some understanding of Marxism. In "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific", Engels teaches us that Communism is an extension of the principles arrived at by the French materialists, German idealists, and the three great utopian socialists, St. Simon

Fourier and Robt. Owen. Engels also states; "That Communism is a science and demands the same treatment as any other science, it must be studied." Only by studying can we acquire an understanding of Communism, and only with an understanding of Communism can we intelligently participate in the revolutionary movement and do our part to develop class consciousness among the workers and turn their unconscious every day struggles into a conscious class struggle for emancipation from wage-slavery.

The workers in their struggles to improve their conditions under Capitalism can never raise themselves above the level of bourgeois ideology and bourgeois politics. Thus when we absorb ourselves in the every day struggles of the workers we are abandoning Communist ideology for bourgeois ideology.

The Socialist Party in the past developed into an organization of reformism and opportunism of the worst type by becoming entirely absorbed in the practical struggles of the workers. The Communist Party has degenerated into the same type of organization by placing the immediate needs of the workers before everything else. An organization of belly Communists, incapable of getting their thoughts above their stomachs. And, basically, this is the cause of all the confusion in local Detroit. The desire to grow by being more practical. Belittling theory as Comrade Schockinger says: "Our paper is too theoretical." We should be more practical and not waste so much time on theory is a statement often heard there. I was telling a member of the N.E.C. in Local Detroit about the good local we had developed in Flint, mainly through study class work carried on there last winter, and he replied: "What practical work are you doing?" He then said: "The only thing they are doing in Flint is studying books." I have heard this same phrase many times from the empty headed members of the C.P., and it came to me as a surprise from a member of our N.E.C. Yes, the members of local Flint are studying books and they have developed a good local that is an asset to our Party, and if the N.E.C. members of local Detroit would read a few more books they would possibly eliminate much of the confusion prevailing there.

At this time in America when the working class is showing signs of moving to resist the capitalist class, it becomes more imperative than ever for us to study and acquire a better understanding of Marxism. Because, as Lenin states; "We should actively resume our theoretical work that we started in the Socialist Party with the formation of the Proletarian University and the publication of ~~The~~ Proletarian magazine. Because we were the most advanced section of the movement theoretically then we led the Left-wing development in the Socialist Party and then led the entire movement in America and brought the Communist Party into being. We can continue to lead and be the vanguard of the American working class if we place the importance of theory first and as Lenin says; "Actively counteract the confusion and vacillation prevailing in PRACTICAL work and expose and repudiate every conscious or unconscious attempt to degrade our program and tactics." Lenin further states; "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism is combined with absorption in the narrowest forms of PRACTICAL ACTIVITY."

This is exactly what the situation is in local Detroit. Belittling theory and stressing the importance of practical work in the every day struggle. A desire to grow by accomplishing momentary successes in the every day struggle of the workers. So strong has



this tendency developed in the local that in the recent Briggs strike there our members were satisfied to assume a position of supporting the workers by following them. To become the tail end in a workers struggle merely for momentary success is not sound Communist practice. The same member of the N.E.C, that looked on local Flint with contempt for merely studying books said: "In the Briggs strike we proved to the workers that we were with them." I can understand a capitalist politician trying to prove to the working class that he is with them, but for a class conscious member of the working class to have to prove to the workers that he is with them there must be something wrong with him. He surely is standing on his head.

In the recent disturbances of the farmers in Macomb county, two of our members, one of them a member of the N.E.C, was so desirous of being practical and achieving momentary success that they followed the farmers into the legislature at Lansing asking for a moratorium on farm mortgages. In this instance it shows not only a willingness to follow but also a desire for leadership, even stooping to playing the game of rotten bourgeois politics to achieve it.

Because the workers by themselves can never rise above the level of bourgeois ideology and politics in their struggles the Briggs strike ended in the formation of a patriotic union and the farmers movement terminated in a bourgeois legislature and our members were satisfied merely to follow along and try to prove that they were with them. We can never play the part of the vanguard by pursuing such tactics. Leadership can only come by not following but proving to the workers in their struggles that we know more than they do, and, by our understanding, pointing out to them what should be done and what should not be done. Only through our understanding the line of march can we win the confidence and respect of the working class.

We should carry our propaganda to the workers in all their struggles, to develop understanding, solidarity and loyalty among the workers to achieve their immediate objective and endeavour to develop the struggle into a conscious struggle of the workers against the capitalist class and their system of exploitation. We should strive to lead only upon the basis of our program and never willingly follow the workers in their efforts to merely improve their conditions within capitalism. The masses will have to learn many things through their own bitter experiences.

Engels severely condemns this chase after momentary success. In his criticism of the Erfurt program of the German Social-Democratic party in 1891 he said this: "The neglect of great fundamental considerations for the sake of the momentary interests of the day, this chase after momentary successes, and this race after them without account of ultimate results, this sacrifice of the future movements for the present, is perhaps the result of "honest" motives, but is and remains none the less opportunism and "honest" opportunism is perhaps more dangerous than any other." Lenin also condemns as opportunists those in the movement who ignore theory and carry on a Radical-Socialist policy of PRACTICAL POLITICS. Lenin also says; "A number of people with very little or totally lacking in theoretical training join the movement for the sake of its practical significance and its PRACTICAL SUCCESSES."

The quotations of Lenin used in this article are from "What is to be Done?", with my emphasis. I have emphasized because the

dominant tendency in local Detroit is to engage more in the every days struggle of the workers, to be more practical. To grow by achieving momentary successes in practical work, relegating theory to a position of secondary importance. This is a dangerous tendency and we should take a determined stand against it and stamp it out of the Party.

Detroit at one time was the active center of the revolutionary movement in America. Many of us got our start in the movement there. In Branch I of the old Socialist party, The Proletarian University, and then in Local Detroit of the Proletarian Party. But today because the comrades in that local have been ignoring theory and trying to grow by being practical the local has degenerated into the worst local in the Party. It is floundering in the swamp of confusion, devoid of leadership, hesitating, faltering and stumbling, trying so hard to be practical. Failing in their conduct of forums, relying almost entirely upon one comrade to conduct classes, and when that comrade leaves for another city for a month the classes dwindle down to a handful. Despite the fact that there are four N.E.C. members in Detroit none of them is capable of stepping in and conducting his classes. They have fallen down to a greater extent than any other local in supporting the Proletarian News, the National Office and other Party Funds, and still they try so hard to be practical. It is also interesting to note that altho this local more than any other in the Party wanted to put the Party to the expense of holding a Convention, they have not yet raised one penny of their quota on Convention Fund.

As the largest and one of the oldest locals in the Party, Detroit should lead and inspire all other locals by its achievements. The comrades of local Detroit can do this too if they will get back on the solid rock of Marxism, and as theory becomes the most important thing in the local, Detroit may again electrify and lead the entire movement in America as it did in the past.

The idea has prevailed in local Detroit that their troubles result from certain weaknesses in the National Office and our press, and that a Convention was necessary to correct these weaknesses. This is not true, it is just the opposite. The weaknesses in that local creates many difficult problems in the National Office, and with our paper, that prevents the Party from functioning properly and impedes its growth. The conditions prevailing in local Detroit are the result of the theoretical poverty of the members and especially the N.E.C. members there, and the blame for this situation rests mainly upon the shoulders of these N.E.C. members. A Convention cannot correct this condition, but the comrades of other locals united in a convention can stamp out the tendencies developing there that are thwarting and stifling the growth of the Party. It is the duty of the N.E.C. members in Detroit to eliminate the confusion existing there and get the local functioning properly so it can do its share to strengthen and expand the Party. If they cannot clarify the situation and develop sufficient understanding to promote team work and comradeship in their own local then they are unfit to be members of the N.E.C.

The suggestion of Comrade O'Brien to reduce the N.E.C. to seven members is not a solution of the problem but to make a step backward. He states "That the N.E.C. was increased from 7 to 15 with the hope that the responsibility of leadership would stimulate the development of a larger number of leaders," and he also states; "The nature of the class struggle requires and produces leaders not over night or by accident but by long persistent test." I

believe this was correct then and is still correct now, leadership must be developed. If some of the members of the N.E.C have failed to come through and qualify and have proved incapable of performing the tasks required of them, then they should be removed from their positions at the head of the organization and we should elevate to their place other comrades who in the last few years have shown a desire and a willingness to study and learn and have consistently shown that they have the will to act, and devote themselves to task of building the Party. I have in mind comrades of the type of David Leivi of Boston, Wm. Heinhuis of Elkhart, and John Davies of Flint.

We cannot take a step backward. We must go forward, and if some of the members of the N.E.C do not know how to learn then they must go down to make room for those who can learn and will prove more capable of coping with the problems confronting us in our task of building the organization and gaining the respect and confidence of the American working class for the Proletarian Party.

This article is longer than I expected it would be, so I will have to deal with the article of Comrade Wass separately.

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 ERRATUM:- At the top of page 5 (Comrade Prizant's article) the following words were left out; "ranks of the so-called scissor-bills. I have heard comrades openly state that"  
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 As there are several more articles on hand, part two of the July Bulletin will be sent in a day or two.

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ERRATUM:- On page 8 in Comrade Babbitts article, following the words "Because as Lenin states" the following words should appear "The role of the vanguard can only be fulfilled by a party that is guided by advanced theory."  
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# PROLETARIAN BULLETIN

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J U L Y , 1933  
(Second Section)

Reply to Comrade Wass' article in April Bulletin  
( by Carl Babbitt, Local Flint)

Comrade Wass evidently believes in the bureaucratic methods of capitalist politicians in conducting a Convention, for he states: "That we should have our manifesto and program all prepared, written, ready to act upon when the convention convenes." If this can be done before the convention convenes then there is no need for a convention. The N.E.C could submit the already prepared manifesto and program to the organization for approval by referendum vote and save the unnecessary expense of holding a convention merely for the purpose of dummy delegates giving their approval to an already prepared manifesto and program. However, revolutionary organizations of the working class are opposed to such methods and Comrade Wass should know this simple fact. I will not take up space in this Bulletin to explain how a Communist convention should be conducted because I believe most everyone in our organization understands these principles of Communist methods and procedure even though one of the best theoreticians of local Detroit apparently does not.

Then he states: "At the last convention the delegates arrived with nothing in their hands and very little in their heads." Then proceeds to state: "That our present manifesto and program is in the main theoretically sound." Now Comrade Wass, how could a convention of delegates with very little in their heads produce a manifesto and program "in the main theoretically sound?" I will agree that there were some delegates that came to the convention with very little in their heads, but soon found out that the majority of the delegates there did have something in their heads and would not stand for a move to degrade our program and tactics. And some of those who will be delegates to the coming convention will find out that the majority of our members are still determined to fight against social-democratic tendencies and opportunism in our ranks.

He states "That our program in the main is theoretically sound.", and then sounds an alarm; "That if we don't make some changes we will not continue to exist, grow and develop as the real revolutionary party of Marxism." I agree that our program can be improved in content and wording, but merely doing this will not make us grow and develop. If our program in the main is theoretically sound we will grow and develop to the extent that our membership learns how to carry out the program and build the party and extend its influence among greater numbers of the working class. Merely improving the program will not bring results unless the members learn how to act.

Learning how to act seems to be a very difficult task for some members as Comrade Wass admits he does not know how, and wants the next convention to tell him how to act in strikes, unions and unemployed councils.

In the paragraph in his article dealing with the strike in Detroit we have an example of a Marxian being caught between the cross fires of different developments in a strike and reveals the fact that he was bewildered and confused and didn't know what to do. I wonder what this Marxian will do when he is caught between the cross-fires in a revolution? An understanding of Marxism enables us to know what to do in all situations that arise in our march toward a classless society. But the spontaneous movements of the masses there are many in our ranks that show their theoretical short-comings when they are suddenly placed in a situation that demands quick and decisive action.

Then they shout; "I was confused and didn't know what to do. This should not happen again, the party should issue instructions and directions so the next time I am caught in an unexpected situation I can reach into my pocket and get my copy of the rules and regulations and they will inform me exactly what to do. How childish!

Manifestos and programs are for the purpose of giving a general outline of developments and charting the course of the Party. The best way an individual will ever know how to act in the class conflict is by studying Marx. Unless he does this he will always be confused and standing on his head.

He speaks of the unemployed councils and says: "That the work in these councils is the order of the day." I understand this to mean the most important work of the day. I think this is stupid and absurd, but it is in line with the dominant tendency in local Detroit to place the practical struggle of the workers for thicker soup as the most important task before us.

I believe that to a Communist the most important thing at all times is Communism. The building of the Communist movement and to a member of the Proletarian Party that means the building of locals of the Party to expand the organization to embrace larger numbers of workers.

In a hot-bed of confusion all sorts of weird tendencies develop. In local Detroit a tendency that has been developing very rapidly lately is the one that we should take a more critical attitude toward the Third International. It has become so strong that some of the speakers there openly violate party discipline and express their own views from the platform. At the forum of local Flint recently a speaker from local Detroit on the subject of "Science or Tradition" said that "If there had been a real Communist Party in Germany instead of one that was only interested in reforms, Hitler would have never come into power." A ridiculous statement from one who through sheer egoism thinks he is qualified to speak on the international problems of the Communist movement when he has not yet proven that he has grasped some of the elementary principles of Communist theory. This wise-guy type with a smattering of Marxian knowledge like to show their egoism by being "critical". Their ideas are usually more "criminal" than critical. Some of the ##### propaganda of the political adventurers, the Lovestonites and the Trotskyists is readily accepted in this hot-bed of confusion because it sounds "critical". And we hear these marvellous theoreticians in local Detroit asserting; "That we must take a more critical attitude toward the Third International." Then they immediately start to publicly criticize the mistakes of the movement in other countries for the purpose of clarifying the international situation, apparently forgetting that only yesterday

they proved incapable of clarifying the situation in a local strike in the auto industry. But perhaps I shouldn't mention this, because after all a local strike is only a small affair and theoreticians, especially the real critical type, devote their time solving big problems.

Comrade Wass gives expression to this tendency in his article saying: "That we should condemn the errors of the Third International in the Chinese fiasco, the Mexican order for proletarian insurrection and the loss of Communist votes in the recent German elections. We should take a more critical attitude toward the Third International for the benefit of the revolutionary movement as a whole. We should study the international movement ~~#####~~ to the end that we may be of some help to the revolutionary proletariat the world over."

Here is a group of theoreticians so devoid of theory and ability that they cannot contribute a single article to their own paper, dealing with capitalism or the revolutionary movement in America to assist in the Marxian education of the working class in this country, so devoid of ability that they fall far behind many of the smaller locals in giving the necessary support to bring the paper out once a month, so devoid of understanding and ability that in one of the largest industrial cities in America they cannot develop a local to function properly within the party and now they want to set themselves upon a pedestal and posing as theoretical giants criticize the Third International for the benefit of the revolutionary movement as a whole, to be of some help to the revolutionary proletariat the world over. What egoism.

Comrades, unless we by our understanding and actions can prove to the workers in other countries that we can build a revolutionary movement in this country of sufficient strength and power to successfully cope with the situation existing here and the American capitalist class, such statements as; "Being of some help to the revolutionary proletariat the world over." will remain a silly, senseless, meaningless phrase. Lenin says in "Left Wing Communism" "The principle problem of the historical moment in which all advanced (and not only the advanced) countries find themselves lies here, that specific national peculiarities must be studied, ascertained and grasped before concrete attempts are made in any country to solve the aspects of the single international problem." As it states in the Communist Manifesto; "Though not in substance yet in form the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must of course first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie." We have not yet proven that we are qualified to do what either Lenin or Marx or Engels says. I agree with Comrade Wass that we should study the International movement but not for the egotistical purpose that he asserts but we should study the movement and try to understand its entire historical development for the purpose of being qualified to perform our task of building the Proletarian Party.

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 Our Tasks On Unemployment  
 (by Anthony Bielskas, Local Grand Rapids)

Unemployment today is so widespread and is constantly increasing. That the unemployed are suffering more each day as it increases is an indisputable fact. The capitalist relief organizations have become inadequate to meet this situation. Relief

such as it is, is mostly doled out by municipalities. These municipalities which are giving relief are gradually decreasing the amount of food the unemployed and their families depend on so that they may keep alive.

This condition has been the basic cause for unemployment organizations to spring up in many cities throughout the country. Their size are increasing with growing discontent. This discontent in these organizations of the unemployed is making them receptive for revolutionary propaganda and organization.

These facts cannot be ignored. They must be recognized. In these unemployed organizations very little educational work has been done along revolutionary lines. Whatever work was done has had very little effect toward acquainting these workers with the class nature of capitalist society, and that they could expect nothing else under capitalism but unemployment. And if capitalism got over the depression there would still be millions without jobs. And these would have to depend on a dole or "unemployment insurance" which would be very little, that it would barely keep them alive. And that the unemployed would have to seek a solution for the problem themselves, the revolutionary way out.

The task that lies before the Proletarian Party in these unemployed organizations is this, to fight with the unemployed for relief measures that come from the unemployed themselves. But not to foist upon these organizations ready made formulas, "hatched out of the head" such as other scheming groups have done. We must explain to the workers the causes of unemployment. We must use as simple terms as possible so that they may understand what we are talking about, and our talks should be convincing, so that we leave something constructive behind. If we are able to do these things we can win the workers over to our views. It depends upon our ability more than upon all the programs we may write or resolutions we may pass.

The Party if it can show the unemployed that it is a party of the working class and that it is honest and sincere and that it struggles with them and not against them, then the unemployed will have confidence in us.

To do this we must have an understanding of revolutionary theory and be able to put that theory into practice. Also a correct judgement of the conditions and the ideological concepts of the workers. If our theory is wrong or our judgement is poor our attempts to win over the workers will fail.

Some Comrades think that a "blue print" of action is needed so that they could function according to it in these unemployed organizations. The fail to understand that it is conditions that determine our line of action, and not "blue prints" which are drawn up by idealists.

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Party Discipline  
(by F. Miller, Local San Francisco)

The membership must adhere to the enforced party discipline. From this, however, we should not assume that there is a qualitative difference between the party and the membership. The Party--its program and course of action or tactics--is the expression of the majority. What we recognize as Party views, opinions and attitude

is identical with the majority in these respects. Disciplinary action, when transmitted through an appointed group; they are merely instrumental in voicing the judgement of the majority.

Discipline must be observed if there is to be efficient organization, effective party activity, a party spirit, a responsible membership, a party position.

A sincere revolutionist will discipline himself, perhaps even more critically than will the party. Discipline within a revolutionary organization has to him a significance that the dictionary cannot define. Such discipline gives him a closer connection to the party. It teaches, among other things, that he should train himself to accept responsibility, and to discharge it to the best of his ability. Studying his errors so that he will not commit them again. Entering into party activity and study so that he will fit and justify himself as part of the vanguard. Remembering that his statements, whether public or informal, have a direct bearing and reflection on the party. It is quite possible to damage the party through ill timed or incorrect statements. Being observant of what has been the party attitude on situations occurring wherein written words cannot guide him, and adhering to the general tone of that attitude as though it were a part of the party constitution. In being critical of himself, he should have an honest opinion of his ability. If he is invited to speak at some other affair or private forum of which the party knows nothing, unless thoroughly capable of acquitting the party, he should decline. For if he responds to the invitation, he does not do so as an individual, but as a member of the party. It is regrettable that there are some abortive Marxists, inflated with the egoism of an insufficient Marxian grasp, and this often self distorted, have spoken in the name of the party, to the detriment of the party.

He must, primarily, bind himself to the decisions of the majority. As a member, he possesses the democratic right to enter into the making of a decision. But once a particular matter received the majority action and until rescinded, he is bound to that majority will despite whatever opinions he holds to the contrary. Failure to adhere to this essential of organization, whether nationally or locally or individually, disrupts party organization and promotes party anarchy, if allowed to exist, it denotes a lack of disciplinary understanding and disciplinary action. A party that is at loggerheads with itself, incapable of controlling its membership, is absolutely unfit to serve as the vanguard.

The party position must color every member's party expression and activity. Until such a time arises that this position is completely incompatible or incorrect, under no circumstances can we desert this position. The revolutionist will curb any individual tendencies that serve to create any discord between him and the party declarations.

Particularly in Left Wing Communism does Lenin stress the part that "stringent...iron discipline" played in the Bolshevik victory.

Members within the party that are qualified to enter into some activity, but do not through laxness, or some such similar trait, do not attempt to cooperate or render support, not necessarily financially, should be weeded out. They have no



place in the vanguard, the vanguard has no place for them.

The revolutionary overturn of capitalism is a historic task that will try the vanguard to the last fibre. It is necessary that we strengthen ourselves qualitatively first for the final revolutionary conflict, rather than attempt it by eliminating weak members in the revolutionary crisis. To a Marxist, the class struggle in capitalism is a struggle that will be the most gruelling and destructive in history. Its terrific affects will test whether the vanguard has built lastingly, whether the party will endure. If, we as the vanguard, shall lead victoriously as did the Bolsheviks, it will be primarily because the membership have been sincere revolutionists, to whom the party has been paramount to all individual issues.

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### Partial Demands and the Proletarian Party (by Stanley Novak, Local Detroit)

The Proletarian Party has never taken an anti-partial-demand stand. On some occasions we have outlined briefly the basis upon which a Marxian party can advocate partial demands. The chief weakness of our position has been its vagueness and our failure to apply it. We even failed to make our position clear and definite to the membership of the party. Some of our comrades misunderstood the Party position and took an absolute anti-partial-demand stand. As a result of this vagueness a considerable amount of confusion arose in the party which must be clarified. The coming Convention must correct this weakness and state the party position in a very definite and clear manner. I am submitting this draft hoping that it will be of some value in working out the Party position on this vital question.

For a better understanding of the subject we will divide the class struggle between the workers and capitalists into two principle stages, -- elementary and advanced. In the first stage the struggle is over such issues as higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions, unemployed insurance, and against wage-cuts. The struggle for securing these aims belongs mainly in the field of trade union activity. There are also questions of semi-economic and semi-political character, such as the elimination of injunctions from labor disputes and the prevention of the employment of children.

Members of the Proletarian Party must also be members of trade unions and unemployment councils, and must penetrate every working class organization of any importance. In the ranks of these organizations the Marxists form the most militant section and assume leadership in the struggle for these elementary and immediate needs of the workers. Having a better understanding of the capitalist system we must guide the workers in the struggle for their economic needs. The Proletarian Party must be wholeheartedly with the workers in their struggles for the present immediate needs under capitalism. However we must point out to the workers that there is very little that they can obtain under capitalism. Even if the aims mentioned above were fully materialized, which is very doubtful, it would not fundamentally change the capitalist system. To the marxist the root of the main economic and political evils of today is the system based on exploitation, the capitalist system. To do away with these evils we must do away with the cause, capitalism.

In the field of political activity the Proletarian Party must fight for such partial demands as freedom of the press and speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of political prisoners and in opposition to war. While struggling for these partial aims, the Proletarian Party does not make a main aim out of these issues but always propounds to the workers the need for the complete overthrow of capitalism. Also the Proletarian Party must very emphatically and energetically fight all kinds of utopian ideas of reforming capitalism, pointing out that capitalism cannot be reformed from its evils or gradually and peacefully changed into a new socialist society.

The second and higher stage of the class struggle is the revolutionary struggle for complete overthrow of the capitalist system, for the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship and the socialist economy. In the first stage, great masses of workers participate on different occasions; but in the higher stage, only the most class conscious, the most advanced section of the workers, take part at first. When the masses reach this higher stage of the struggle, the particular country is facing a revolutionary crisis. Capitalism cannot be abolished until the masses of the workers in their political development reach the higher stage.

We cannot approach the question of partial demands exactly as we did the question of reforms in the past. The question of reforming capitalism is definitely settled. The writer recognizes the danger that the struggle for partial demands may easily be, and often is, turned into a struggle for pure reforms, extremely undesirable from a revolutionary standpoint. But it does not necessarily follow that all partial demands and partial struggles must be just reforms.

For years the revolutionary vanguard has been confronted with a problem,-- how to assist the masses of workers in grasping the higher aspects of the class struggle? Under certain conditions certain partial demands help greatly to rally large masses of workers to fight against the capitalist class. In the course of the struggle the workers learn to fight in an organized manner for their needs; they increase in class consciousness and come closer to the revolutionary position. In the revolutionary crisis, certain partial demands may become revolutionary demands. The one put forth by the Bolshevik party in 1917,-- "Bread, peace and land"-- is an excellent example. We must bear in mind that the masses have extreme difficulty in comprehending slogans and demands that are general and abstract. We must formulate our demands in the most concrete manner.

The every day struggle of the workers cannot be sharpened artificially by slogans put forth by the Marxist, which have no basis in working class conditions. If slogans are to be effective they must have a sound objective and subjective basis. The objective conditions,--the state of the economic development of capitalism,-- must lay the basis for such slogans. Second, the subjective conditions, --the degree of the political consciousness of the working masses and their readiness to accept the slogans and fight for them,-- must be present also. Under such conditions, the Marxist, with proper demands and slogans, can stimulate and sharpen the every-day struggle.

Under certain conditions, when large masses of non-revolutionary workers manifest a desire to struggle for a certain demand, it is the duty of the Proletarian Party to advance proper

slogans and assume leadership in the fight for such demands. Great care must be exercised in formulating these partial demands.

First, the demands and slogans should not be created artificially by the Party and put upon the workers from the top before they are ready to fight for them. They must spring out of the extreme need of the workers, themselves. The demands should be formulated by the Party, which should then proceed to marshal the workers to fight for them.

Second, demands should be of such a nature, and worded in such a way as not to create the impression in the minds of the masses that the evils from which the workers suffer can be removed without abolishing capitalism. Also, the impression should not be given that capitalism can be peacefully reformed into socialism. Here lies a great danger to revolutionary tactics.

The struggle for the imperative needs is bound in time, to lead the workers into the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. When capitalism cannot supply the workers with the absolute necessities, the masses of workers will then grasp the ultimate aim of their struggle and fight for the new society. The masses of workers will learn the intricate angles of the class struggle in the fight for their needs.

This position was put forward by the Third World Congress of the Communist International which was endorsed by Lenin as follows: "On the contrary, it is essential to make use of all the economic needs of the masses, as issues in the revolutionary struggles, which, when united, form the flood of the social revolution. . . . But in order to achieve this task, the Communist Parties must put forward demands, and they must fight with the masses for their fulfilment, regardless of whether they are in keeping with the profit system of the capitalist class or not."

"What the Communist Parties have to consider is not whether capitalist industry is able to continue to exist and compete, but rather whether the proletariat has reached the limit of its endurance. If these communist demands are in accord with the immediate needs of the wide proletarian masses, if these masses are convinced that they cannot exist without the realization of these demands, the struggle for these demands will become an issue in the struggle for power. The alternative offered by the Communist International in place of the minimum program of the reformists and centrists is: the struggle for the concrete needs of the proletariat and demands, which, in their application, undermine the power of the bourgeoisie, organize the proletariat, form the transition to proletarian dictatorship, even if the latter have not yet grasped the meaning of such proletarian dictatorship. (THIRD WORLD CONGRESS? COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, P. 51)

A classical example of how not to formulate demands can be found in the C.P. program of 1928. In the midst of the greatest capitalist prosperity and comparatively high standard of living of the American worker, the C.P. put forth 102 demands and expected to rally large masses to fight for them. In that program we find the following demands:

"Abolition of the Senate, of the Supreme Court, and of the veto power of the President."

9 "Judges should not be appointed. They should be elected by the working people, and should be removed at any time. Legal aid should be gratis for all wage workers."

"Abolition of the present mercenary army and navy and state militia, and struggle for a toilers militia. Election of officers by the soldiers and sailors. Full ~~right~~ vote and hold office for the members of the military forces."

This invariably leads the politically untrained masses to the conclusion that the capitalist state machinery can be reformed, can be made more democratic and subject to a greater influence by the masses. In this epoch of growing Fascism, when the capitalist state machinery is being concentrated into the hands of a smaller number of people, when the state assumes a dictatorial position openly, it is very stupid and dangerous to imply in any way that the capitalist state machinery can be reformed.

Another point that must be remembered in relation to those demands is that the workers are indifferent to them and cannot be rallied to fight for their achievement. The party that puts out such demands shows a lack of understanding of Lenin's teaching on this subject.

The following is another demand included in the C.P. program of 1928:

"Public works. The federal, state and city governments should devise schemes for improving the roads and bridges of the country, improving the rivers, canals, docks and harbors, setting up electric power stations, reforestation, land drainage and land reclamation, extension and electrification of railways. On all public works trade union wages and conditions must be guaranteed by law."

This is a typical solution for unemployment, advanced many times before by practically all the capitalist politicians. For years revolutionary workers fought against these ideas, pointing out the inability to solve unemployment with these measures. Now we have an organization, claiming to be a revolutionary party, yet putting forth these very same reform measures as demands.

In the following demands, also included in the C.P. program of 1928, we have an essentially foreign issue brought into the working class movement-- the tax question.

"Abolition of all indirect taxes."

"Exemption from all kinds of taxation for all wage earners."

"Tax exemption for all workers and exploited farmers."

"Graduated income tax, starting with incomes above \$5,000 per year and increasing gradually, so that all incomes over \$25,000 per year are confiscated."

"All tax exemptions on bonds, stocks, and securities must be abolished."

The problem of high taxation has very little to do with the struggle of the workers. It is a petty-bourgeois problem. To expect the capitalist class, through the instrumentality of their government, to tax themselves out of a profit over and above the \$25,000 is the height of stupidity.

At the coming Convention our Party must carefully examine the various problems of an immediate nature, the pressing needs of the workers and their readiness to struggle for their needs. If conditions are found to be favorable we must formulate demands and slogans.

Altho the present conditions may not indicate with certainty immediate demands which would surely be effective still such conditions could develop rapidly if they do not already exist. It is certainly necessary that the position of the Party on immediate demands be put into concrete form and that the controlling body of the Party between conventions, the N.E.C., have the power and authorization to formulate and put forward immediate demands if and when conditions will make them effective.

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A Review Of Some Of The Pre-Convention Discussion.

( by C. Finch of Local San Francisco and A. Bielskas, Grand Rapids)

We have watched the pre-convention discussion with much interest, and in our perusal of the various articles we find many valuable suggestions. While on the other hand we find much that we must take issue with. Time and space will not permit of taking up all in detail, but we will attempt to touch on some of what we consider the most outstanding errors.

In one article we find a manifestation of revolutionary impatience and a belief that the road to revolution is too long and therefore we must seek some short-cut VIA REFORMS. We refer to our self-appointed dentist, Comrade Bergstrom, who is going to fill our teeth with immediate demands or crown them with reforms. He would have us concentrate our major efforts on a campaign for unemployed insurance. He points out that our influence will be greatly added to in this manner. He fails to see that a revolutionary party does not merely seek influence by influence on a revolutionary basis. A following attracted by reforms is a reformist following and can be easily led away by liberal capitalist politicians who take up these reforms and use them to catch the voting fish." A slight study in history should reveal this fact to Comrade Bergstrom. Also a party whose membership is attracted by reforms soon becomes swamped in the mire of reforms, losing sight of its revolutionary aims to a large extent, if not entirely.

He says: "If and when these demands are granted to whom should the credit fall? (I hope the P.P. can justly make this claim)" Would it not be far better from a revolutionary viewpoint if we could make the claim that we have been instrumental in building up sufficiently revolutionary strength that the capitalist class grants these reforms in hopes of offsetting the revolution. As long as capitalism can grant these reforms they are a means of pacifying the workers and prolonging the capitalist system. It is only when it becomes impossible for capitalism to grant them that they may become revolutionary demands.

Comrade Schockinger calls our attention to the party press and its shortcomings. We are well aware that the Party press is one of the most important phases of our work and that there is plenty of room for improvement in our present publication. But as has already been pointed out by Comrade Tishler, Comrade Schockinger places all the blame for the shortcomings on the National Secretary. All the financial difficulties are the fault of the National Secretary and we suppose this includes the constant delinquency of Local Detroit in meeting its obligations for the "Pro News". The National Secretary does not pick money off trees, he has to get it from the locals. Comrade Schackinger has been in the Party long enough to know this. And what is true of getting money is also true of getting material for the paper. The comrades who give their time to the paper cannot publish news from other localities.