
The Proletarian Party and Its Work.

by John Keracher

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The Proletarian Party came into existence in June 1920. It was the year in which the American government, through its "Department of Justice," engaged in what Louis F. Post, then Assistant Secretary of Labor, described as "The Deportations Delirium of Nineteen-Twenty."

It was the time when the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party had gone "underground." The Proletarian Party was then the only open and avowed Communist Party in America. It was not easy to operate, but despite the difficulties encountered, the party engaged actively in communist propaganda and educational work.

Since 1920 the Proletarian Party has expanded and has become firmly established. The principles upon which it was founded, and has consistently adhered to, have won it the recognition of being the only genuine Communist Party in America.

The Socialist Party and the Workers Party are both parties of social reformism. Their election platforms are made up of capitalistic reforms, calculated to catch the votes of the petty bourgeoisie and the capitalistic-minded workers. Although they both claim to have for their object the *ultimate* establishment of a new social order, their *immediate* aim is the reforming of the present social system. Their appeals are mainly made to the small property owners and to those workers who desire to improve their lot within the confines of the capitalist system.

The Proletarian Party is not a reform party. Its avowed purpose is the abolition of the present social order, the ending of the exploitation of labor by an idle parasitic class. It makes its direct appeal for the support of the workers as propertyless wage-slaves, not as "tax-paying" citizens, nor as charity chasers, seeking

a handout, or dole, from the capitalist state. The efforts of the Proletarian Party are continually bent toward organizing the workers as a revolutionary class. It points to the necessity for the conquest of political power from the capitalists and the setting up of a proletarian form of government that will dictate and enforce its terms of capitulation upon their former exploiters, the American capitalists. The reorganizing of society upon a classless basis is the goal of the Proletarian Party.

Since the objective of the revolutionary party is the breaking of the power of the exploiters of labor, then our immediate task is the organizing of the necessary forces for that purpose.

First — The all important thing is the building of powerful political party of the American proletariat, both urban and rural. To accomplish their revolution the workers should secure the aid of the impoverished farmer, if possible, but despite him and over his social carcass, if necessary.

To succeed in winning the masses the organization that approaches them must be composed of a homogeneous membership — native born workers, plus immigrants — organized into a solid phalanx, self-disciplined and free from schism; free from racial and language subdivisions. It must be a party whose members are really communists, not semi-syndicalists or petty bourgeois parliamentarians. It must not be a party of wings and winglets, but a united force with a common understanding and a common will to action, moving along a definite course, not pulling in different directions.

A revolutionary party can not live upon tricky maneuvering or excitable rushing hither and thither, committing blunder after blunder, with a rank and file

in continual turmoil and confusion. The revolutionary party of communism is the outcome of painstaking efforts, working day in and day out to build up an intelligent, disciplined, militant force.

Second — The work of the party must be carefully coordinated so as to harmonize with the prevailing stage of working class development, and to establish practical and permanent contact with the movement of the American masses and to press forward to a stronger position of political and social influence. Our present task is to ripen the proletariat as a political class.

This immediate work of winning the working class in general includes the specific efforts to win over organized labor for the social revolution. The Proletarian Party works from the bottom, reaching out to the broad ranks of labor to influence and change their social outlook. It does not confine itself to cursing labor leaders, rotten enough as many of them are. Its contention is that the elimination of the labor betrayer and the professional “labor-racketeer” can only be brought about by an enlightened membership. Therefore, the way out is through enlightenment. We do not mean that in any narrow sense, but through a broad development. However, we must not expect this to come about in a mechanical way, but by guiding the workers reaction to the intense exploitation of capitalism and preventing their militancy from being shattered and demoralized by ill-considered actions.

What the Proletarian Party Has Done.

During the eight years of the party’s existence, certain policies have been followed and certain results obtained. A correct understanding of actual conditions of the class struggle in America, and the political and economic trend of affairs, have helped much to prevent the Proletarian Party from the wild goose chasing policies that have marked the career of certain other parties.

This correct gauging of the conditions has enabled the Proletarian Party to expend its energies where results were obtainable. The party has expanded, its influence is greater than ever, and its membership has ripened its understanding of Communism.

Propaganda.

The Proletarian Party has pursued the policy of reaching as large numbers as possible with a sound elementary propaganda of communist principles. This work has been carried out through street meetings, mass-meetings, lectures, and personal contact “on the job” and elsewhere. In fact, everywhere that workers gather it has been our aim to keep class issues before them.

Training.

Within the ranks of the party, a thorough, systematic training is consistently carried on. This has brought worthwhile results. The output of capable speakers, teachers, and writers has attained a high average. The extent to which our members can function in working class ranks in general, and the influence they wield, are constantly on the increase.

Economic and Historical Knowledge.

In capitalist society, that which the worker sells — labor power — his physical and mental skill, takes on the character of a commodity. Certain economic laws govern the capitalist system, which is a commodity producing one. A knowledge of those laws is imperative, if the workers are going to participate intelligently in the daily struggles against their exploiters.

The economic principles, or laws, as laid bare by Karl Marx, furnish the workers with the requisite knowledge to fight effectively. It is not enough to know how to strike, but it is necessary to know when. That is only one of the advantages that flow from a sound understanding of economics.

But these economic laws have developed within the development of capitalism. They have no existence separate and apart from existing social relations. This involves an understanding of the general historic nature, the makeup, of capitalism. The worker who can not distinguish between, for instance, the social and economic relations of feudalism and those of capitalism, is stumbling along in the dark. He will be quite incapable of visualizing the social relations which would naturally sprint from the collective ownership of the tools of production in a classless society.

A knowledge of history in general is useful to the worker, but he is often encumbered with it, not enlightened. The mode of interpreting history, as taught by the Proletarian Party, the materialistic conception, the Marxian mode, is an illuminating method that clarifies and gives system to historical research.

“See America First.”

American history, often but a jumble of dates and data in the mind of the worker, from this materialistic standpoint becomes clear and comprehensible. The “Great Men” suddenly shrink to their proper proportions. They appear no longer as the mighty makers of history, but on the contrary as the products of history. When these giant figures, the creation of the myth-mongers, have been brought “back to normalcy,” the true nature of the events which gave rise to them begins to stand forth in its real aspect and often in its real nakedness. The significance of the historical events begins to come home to the minds of the workers.

The outstanding events in American history, like that of all other countries, are associated with class interests. Great conflicts, the Civil War for instance, are class conflicts. That famous struggle is often referred to as the “Slave-holders’ Rebellion.” And rightly, too. The slave-holders rebelled against the new ruling class, the industrial capitalists of the North. It was in reality a counterrevolution. The capitalists had, apparently, won a peaceful revolution with the election of Lincoln. But it took a long and bitter war to solidify that revolution and suppress the counterrevolutionary forces of the South.

It is only through studying history from an economic and class viewpoint that the real facts reveal themselves. Of course, the recognized institutions of learning deny this, and repudiate this interpretation of American history. The capitalist class and their ser-

vants cannot admit these facts. They dare not divulge American history as a history of class struggles. Yet upon close examination that is all that we find it to be.

The State.

That which makes the class struggle a political struggle is the organized “public power of coercion,” the State. It upholds the power of the owning class, the capitalists, and represses (when necessary) the producing class, the workers, when they resist the rule and robbery of their masters. The State, or government, is the real organized force that confronts the masses of the people, the exploited proletarians. They can not meet this organized force of their class enemy as a disorganized and helpless mass. Organization must be met with organization, and ultimately the workers must triumph. Without this course being pursued, the workers and their children, and their children’s children, will remain the wage-slaves of the capitalists forever.

It is the existence of class society with the State power in the hands of the exploiters of labor that determines the need for a political party to combat the ruling class and organize the working class for its final act as a class, namely, the political overthrow of capitalism.

The Proletarian Party is the most advanced section of the American working class. The purpose of this short article is to touch upon its history and mission, and to tell something of its functioning, its practical methods. If the reader is not yet a member of the Proletarian Party, and is convinced of the need for organization such as we have attempted to describe here, then the logical course to pursue is to link up with those who are organized for the abolition of all exploitation, through the ushering in of a new classless social order. Join the Proletarian Party.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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