
New Awakening for Socialism in Cleveland: Future is Bright for Workers' Party in Big Ohio City

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Cleveland, O., April 18 [1910].— The Socialist Party in Cleveland has for eight years been fighting a handicap in the shape of Tom Johnson. Johnson's fight against the public service corporations of Cleveland drew the radical element in the city to his banner and kept down the growth of the Socialist organization.

This handicap has been removed by the recent defeat of Tom Johnson, and the party should now move forward rapidly. The voters who have been real believers in progressive action, and who supported Johnson on the ground of his radicalism should be drawn into the Socialist movement now that their idol is gone and his party is swinging back into the hands of the professional politicians.

Opportunity Comes Now.

Local Cleveland recognizes that now is its opportunity. It must show the working people of Cleveland that it is the real party of the working class. In order to accomplish this end, it is pushing its propaganda work harder than ever before. Following are some of the recent measures adopted:

A paid organizer has been put in the field, who is to devote his time to building up the ward organizations for distribution of literature and other systemic propaganda work.

A literature agent is employed who devotes all his time to the sale of literature, gaining a livelihood through this work, without any assistance from the local.

Work in City Council.

A committee on local legislation and current issues has been elected. The duties of the committee are: To have one of its members attend each meeting of the city council to watch the proceedings of that body; to keep a record of all actions contrary to the best interests of the workers, for use in ensuing campaigns; to study current legislation and appear before council committees to present such amendments as will make the legislation more satisfactory to the working class.

A press committee is maintained to watch the local papers and write letters and articles in reply to attacks of Socialism and misrepresentations of the Socialists' position.

Thus, when a capitalist paper commented editorially on the breaking of communism in land in Russia, as a movement away from Socialism, its statements were shown to be absurd; when a member of the local school board urged that a course of ethics be added to the school curriculum in order "to combat the growing tendency toward anarchism and Socialism," his coupling of the two terms was shown to be ridiculous and incidentally the true position of the Socialists was presented.

Of course, all the letters and articles written are not published, but enough appear in print to make the work worthwhile.

Organize Lecture Bureau.

A lecture bureau has been organized which is circularizing all unions, clubs, and organizations of all kinds, making an appeal for a hearing for the party and offering to send a speaker to make an address on Socialism without any cost to the organization accepting.

The largest number of responses to these letters have come from the unions. Through this plan the local has no doubt reached more non-Socialists than attend half a dozen propaganda meetings at the regular halls with national celebrities as drawing cards.

A house meeting campaign is carried on regularly. Each member of the party is urged to invite eight or ten of his neighbors to his house and notify the lecture bureau to furnish a speaker. This is another method of reaching non-Socialists.

Cleveland Citizen Helps.

Local Cleveland is fortunate in having published in its city *The Cleveland Citizen*, an aggressive weekly paper devoted to the cause of labor, edited and managed by Socialists, the columns of which are open for Socialist propaganda articles. Reaching, as it does, 10,000 union men, this paper offers a fertile field for propaganda work.

In addition *The Citizen* serves as a means of communication for the party in announcing the actions of the City Central Committee and the activities of the various branches.

In its committee on local legislation and current issues the local has indicated its position in regard to the best propaganda method. In fact, at a recent meeting a resolution, urging a line of action such as advocated by J.G. Phelps Stokes in an article on “Campaign Methods” published in the March [1910] *International Socialist Review*, was adopted.¹

Courage from Milwaukee.

The movement in Cleveland is not yet fully alive, but the indications are for a brighter future. Milwaukee has given us all new courage — has filled our hearts with the knowledge that if we persevere, if we march on, fighting at every step to build up a better, stronger, more virile and aggressive organization of the working class, in the end we will reach our goal.

Edited by with a footnote by Tim Davenport

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¹ “Campaign Methods,” published over the byline of Graham Phelps Stokes, was the text of a report submitted by a special committee to the governing National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of America on Jan. 24, 1909. The report argued that the chief aim of future Socialist political campaigns should be educational, with a view to explaining the “wastefulness, destructiveness, and basic injustice of the capitalist system” and to building support for a rational and democratic socialist alternative. Pure “politics” was to be left “for the immediate future at least to our adversaries.” The report asserted that “most supposed opportunities for political gain are illusory rather than real” and that effective socialist education was the necessary prerequisite for the restructuring of social traditions and fundamental economic relations.

The NEC rejected this radical reimagination of the function of Socialist Party politics and refused to accept the Stokes report.