

# The Program of the Party

The Communist Party is the conscious expression of the class struggle of the workers against capitalism. Its aim is to direct this struggle to the conquest of political power, the overthrow of capitalism and the destruction of the bourgeois state.

The Communist Party prepares itself for the revolution in the measure that it develops a program of immediate action, expressing the mass struggles of the proletariat. These struggles must be inspired with revolutionary spirit and purposes.

The Communist Party is fundamentally a party of action. It brings to the workers a consciousness of their oppression, of the impossibility of improving their conditions under capitalism. The Communist Party directs the workers' struggle against capitalism, developing fuller forms and purposes in this struggle, culminating in the mass action of the revolution.

## I.

The Communist Party maintains that the class struggle is essentially a political struggle, that is, a struggle to conquer the power of the state.

(a) The Communist Party shall keep in the foreground its consistent appeal for proletarian revolution, the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat. As the opposition of the bourgeoisie is broken, as it is expropriated and gradually absorbed into the working groups, the proletarian dictatorship disappears until finally the state dies and there are no more class distinctions.

(b) Participation in parliamentary campaigns, which in the general struggle of the proletariat is of secondary importance, is for the purpose of revolutionary propaganda only.

(d) Parliamentary representatives of the Communist Party shall not introduce or support reform measures. Parliaments and political democracy shall be utilized to assist in organizing the working class against capitalism and the state. Parliamentary representatives shall consistently expose the oppressive class character of the capitalist state, using the legislative forum to interpret and emphasize the class struggle; they shall make clear how parliamentarism and parliamentary democracy deceive the workers; and they shall analyze capitalist legislative proposals and reform palliatives as evasions of the issue and as of no fundamental significance to the working class.

(d) Nominations for public office and participation in elections are limited to legislative bodies only, such as municipal councils, state legislature and national congress.

(e) The uncompromising character of the class struggle must be maintained under all circumstances. The Communist Party accordingly, in campaigns and elections, and in all its other activity, shall not co-operate with groups or parties not committed to the revolutionary class struggle, such as the Socialist Party, Labor Party, Non-Partisan League, Peoples Council, Municipal Ownership Leagues, etc.

## II.

The Communist Party shall make the great industrial struggles of the working class its major campaigns, in order to develop an understanding of the strike in relation to the overthrow of capitalism.

(a) The Communist Party shall participate in mass strikes, not only to achieve the immediate purposes of the strike, but to develop the revolutionary implications of the mass strike.

(b) Mass strikes are vital factors in the process out of which develops the workers' understanding and action for the conquest of power.

(c) In mass strikes under conditions of

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concentrated capitalism there is latent the tendency toward the general mass strike which takes on a political character and manifests the impulse toward proletarian dictatorship.

In these general mass strikes the Communist Party shall emphasize the necessity of maintaining industry and the taking over of social functions usually discharged by the capitalists and the institutions of capitalism. The strike must cease being isolated and passive; it must become positive, general and aggressive, preparing the workers for the complete assumption of industrial and social control.

(a) Every local and district organization of the Party shall establish contact with industrial units in its territory—the shops, mills and mines—and direct its agitation accordingly.

(e) Shop Committees shall be organized wherever possible for the purpose of Communist agitation in a particular shop or industry by the workers employed there. These committees shall be united with each other and with the Communist Party, so that

## The Communist Convention

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soph Stilson, the Lithuanian Secretary, Geo. Selakovich, South Slavic Federation, and Joseph Kowalsky, Polish Translator-Secretary.

One resolution of special interest was adopted by the Convention: that the propaganda attitude of the Communist Party shall be, when necessary, to explain religion as a social phenomenon and to explain the church as an institution in the light of the materialistic conception of history. It is evident from the refusal to consider religious affiliations as a bar to membership that the Convention meant to draw a sharp distinction between the "propaganda attitude of the party" and censorship of individual religious opinion.

This resolution, taken out of the Michigan minority program, puts the Communist Party on record against the evasion of the important subject of religion and the church which has heretofore been the policy of the organized socialist movement in this country. But it does not go to the other extreme of putting an affirmative burden upon the party to carry on a rationalistic campaign, as would be the case with a membership qualification against religious affiliation; it places our attitude squarely upon the social and political aspects of religion.

There are many features of the other committee reports which call for particular notice. There are many others respects in which this Convention stands out from all prior Socialist gatherings in America. For one thing, the fact that the Federation delegates were largely Slavic emphasized the close union between the organization of the Communist Party here and the parent organization which came into being at Moscow in March of this year—the Communist International. It was the Russian expression of Marxism which predominated this Convention, the Marxism of Lenin, and the party traditions of the Bolsheviks.

One delegate after another expressed amazement at the lessons thus brought before him. Many years of most valuable experience were compacted into one week; and there is no question but that the students ran the teachers a merry pace.

The Communist Convention and the Communist Party mean the beginning of a disciplined revolutionary working-class movement in America.

the party shall have actual contact with the workers and mobilize them for action against capitalism.

## III.

The Communist Party must engage actively in the struggle to revolutionize the trade unions. As against the unionism of the American Federation of Labor, the Communist Party propagandizes industrial unionism and industrial union organization, emphasizing their revolutionary implications. Industrial Unionism is not simply a means for the everyday struggle against capitalism: its ultimate purpose is revolutionary, implying the necessity of ending the capitalist parliamentary state. Industrial Unionism is a factor in the final mass action for the conquest of power, as it will constitute the basis for the industrial administration of the Communist Commonwealth.

(a) The Communist Party recognizes that the A. F. of L. is reactionary and a bulwark of capitalism.

(b) Councils of workers shall be organized in the shops as circumstances allow, for the purpose of carrying on the industrial union struggle in the old unions, uniting and mobilizing the militant elements; these councils to be unified in a Central Council wherever possible.

(c) It shall be a major task of the Communist Party to agitate for the construction of a general industrial union organization, embracing the I. W. W., W. I. I. U., independent and secession unions, militant unions of the A. F. of L., and the unorganized workers, on the basis of the revolutionary class struggle.

## IV.

The Communist Party shall encourage movements of the workers in the shop seeking to realize workers' control of industry, while indicating their limitations under capitalism; concretely, any movement analogous to the shop Stewards of England. These movements (equally directed against the union bureaucracy) should be related to the Communist Party.

## V.

The unorganized unskilled workers (including the agricultural proletariat) constitute the bulk of the working class. The Communist Party shall directly and systematically agitate among these workers, awakening them to industrial union organization and action.

## VI.

In close connection with the unskilled workers is the problem of the Negro worker. The Negro problem is a political and economic problem. The racial oppression of the Negro is simply the expression of his economic bondage and oppression, each intensifying the other. This complicates the Negro problem, but does not alter its proletarian character. The Communist Party will carry on agitation among the Negro workers to unite them with all class-conscious workers.

## VII.

The United States is developing an aggressive militarism. The Communist Party will wage the struggle against militarism as a phase of the class struggle to hasten the downfall of Capitalism.

## VIII.

The struggle against Imperialism, necessarily an international struggle, is the basis of proletarian revolutionary action in this epoch.

(a) There must be close unity with the Communist International for common action against Imperialism.

(b) The Communist Party emphasizes the common character of the struggle of the workers of all nations, making necessary the solidarity of the workers of the world.