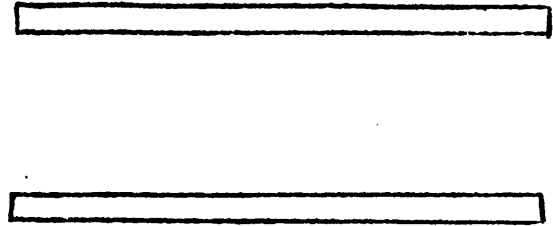


INTERNAL BULLETIN



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THE PROGRAM OF ACTION

Adopted at the Plenary Sessions---August 10th and 11th, 1940

The Program of Action for the next period of the Party's work, while it does not aim at the impossible or the spectacular, is calculated to bring the maximum of the Party's energies and spirit to bear in the achievement of modest but definite political and organizational progress.

The Program of Action should be studied from the standpoint of the coherence and sequence it establishes in the four main points that it emphasizes:

- 1) The extension of the circulation and influence of our press and literature and the guarantee of its financial maintenance;
- 2) the proletarianization of the Party by the selection of specific industrial concentration points;
- 3) the organization of the Party's propaganda and agitational work so that it may bear fruit in the form of new recruits;
- 4) the educational work among new and old members in order that the political foundations and effectiveness of the membership may be strengthened.

THE PRESS: ITS FINANCING AND ITS CIRCULATION

The maintenance of Labor Action as a weekly is the foremost task of the Party and the Y. P. S. L. Labor Action must be understood as the major expression of the organization, around which revolve all other activities of the Party, in all fields of work. The suspension of Labor Action as a weekly would cripple every other Party activity. Moreover, its suspension would drastically affect the publication of the New International, the penny pamphlets and other literature, and the Challenge of Youth. All these enterprises depend upon maintaining Labor Action as a weekly, which, in turn, rests upon a technical foundation that makes possible the publishing of all our material at its present relatively low cost of production.

If the press is to be maintained as it is, two things are imperative: 1) a sharp increase in circulation; 2) a sharp increase in income to cover our deficit, which now keeps both the press and the national staff in a state of permanent financial crisis.

CIRCULATION: Labor Action and the New International now have an absurdly low circulation. It can and must be increased. The Plenum sets itself the task of organizing the Party **TO DOUBLE THE CIRCULATION OF LABOR ACTION BY THE NEXT PLENUM**. This can easily be accomplished by an intensification of our efforts to distribute the paper.

- 1) Distribution and sale of Labor Action regularly at selected factories and over a period of months. Such and similar concentration points must be followed through over a long period even if important results are not immediately apparent. Sales will be helped by the comrades getting the workers to write special stories about the concentration point (factory, union), or by sending them in themselves. Each city is in a position to select such a concentration point carefully, if possible in connection with comrades working in the given plant (or union). Without such a method of circulating the press our concentration point work loses at least half its value.

- 2) The same applies to area concentrations. Gratifying results have already been obtained where this has been started and followed up. A concentrated workers' quarter is chosen, and a house-to-house canvass made with the paper every week. In this manner, too, free delivery routes can be worked up on the basis of short-term, low-priced subscriptions. Wherever area concentrations are made, every effort should be exerted to choose such

areas as harmonize with factory concentrations; that is, if our factory concentration is a steel plant, the area concentration should, if possible, be where the steel workers live.

3) Good results are obtainable in the still scarcely tapped Negro neighborhoods. They are least afflicted with bourgeois-patriotic illusions and are receptive to our propaganda and literature.

- 4) More systematized sale and distribution of Labor Action at
- a. mass meetings and street-corner meetings,
 - b. parks, concerts, etc.
 - c. trade union and other labor halls (Workmen's Circle, etc.)
 - d. and finally, continued efforts to obtain SUBSCRIPTIONS, which are the most substantial foundation under a labor paper.

The proposals listed above apply, with necessary variations, also to increasing the sale and circulation of the New International. As our budget is now constructed, every extra 100 copies of the New International sold means a greater profit, helping to reduce the deficit on Labor Action. The circulation of our theoretical organ can and should be greatly increased both inside and outside the Party and the Y. P. S. L. in order to provide the necessary theoretical armament for our movement.

FINANCES: In order to systematize the support of the press and the national office, and to eliminate the chronic financial crisis in the organization, the Plenum proposes the establishment of a national, all-inclusive sustaining fund for all members, based on their income and ability to pay. The Plenum expects a minimum average weekly contribution of 10% of every member's income, exclusive of the payment of dues, regular or unemployed, and international stamps. Exceptions may be granted in those cases where the ability to pay does not permit a 10% contribution. But the Plenum is confident that these exceptions will be very few and will be more than made up for by those comrades whose income will enable them to contribute more than 10% weekly. The tax is all-inclusive in that it includes funds for the national office and the press, for the locals and for the branches. All funds collected in this manner shall be divided between the national, local and branch organizations as follows: 75% for the national office; 15% for the locals in cities where there are more than one branch; 10% to the branches in cities where there are more than one branch; and 25% to the branches in cities where there is only one branch. These adjustments in these proportions may be required in any given locality or for any given period of time, the local or branch may take the matter up directly with the national office.

The objective of the National Sustaining Fund outlined above is to eliminate the multiplicity of financial appeals now being made to the members; to eliminate the unwise competition between the various sections of the Party for finances from the membership; to eliminate the permanent financial crisis of the organization as a whole; and above all, to put a sound financial basis under Labor Action in order to assure its regular weekly publication.

The Plenum is confident that the financial resources or capacity to sacrifice of the membership have not been exhausted. The difficult period ahead demands the greatest devotion and sacrifice from all of us. It is not too much to ask every party member to give up, at least in part, certain ways of life to which he or she has become accustomed. (1) Let every member give up at least one movie a week and turn in the money to the organization; (2) Let every member give up one or more packages of cigarettes for the same purpose; (3) Let every member give up some of his expenditures on ice-

cream sodas, candies, etc. If these simple sacrifices cannot be made now, it is doubtful if the greater sacrifices necessary in the future will be forthcoming.

Finally, our sympathizers must be drawn into closer collaboration in solving our financial problems. They too should be asked for regular contributions, or where that is not feasible, for substantial contributions at specific intervals or for special purposes.

Our financial problem must be solved and solved speedily. Otherwise our organizational and therefore our political work will be hamstrung.

LITERATURE: We have made a good beginning with the publication of truly popular literature, the penny pamphlets on the important issues of the day. After a preliminary period devoted to laying the Party's foundations, the national office proceeded with the publication of three penny pamphlets, to which should be added two issued by the Y. P. S. I. The Plenum proposes that the national office continue this work, and plan the publication of a new penny pamphlet on the average of every two weeks.

In order to continue the publication of these pamphlets, however, it is necessary for the branches throughout the country to demonstrate their capacity to sell and distribute them. So far, even the modest editions of 10,000 copies in which the pamphlets have been published, have not been fully disposed of. This is a handicap that can and must be overcome. We are in a position to reach thousands of workers with these pamphlets, and it can be done by the means outlined for increasing the circulation of Labor Action. Those branches that have made systematic efforts to dispose of the pamphlets, have shown that similar efforts nationally would mean the swift distribution and sale of the pamphlets in twice as large an edition. In conformity with the tasks indicated for the next period, the literature publication schedule must include, among others, the following pamphlets:

1. The Party and the Workers.....1¢
2. A popular pamphlet on the national elections..1¢
3. Labor and National Defense.....1¢
4. A more elaborate pamphlet dealing with the fundamental position of our party on the question of the war.....5¢

FACTORY CONCENTRATION: Especially for a small party, with weak forces, like ours, it is important to select a few favorable industrial and factory concentration points and attempt systematically to root the influence of the party in them. The Program of Action adopted at our national conference called for factory concentration on a systematic basis. In a few cities, this has been attempted, but on a far from satisfactory basis. Distinct advances have been made in the food and X industries. It is now more than ever imperative that these advances be made more general throughout the country and be better organized and centralized. The Plenum proposes to concentrate on the following two industries in the coming period: 1. Maritime, where there is already a strong and radical union movement; 2. the X industry, where there is good reason to believe that a wave of unionization will soon develop. Both these

industries are key, basic industries. We have the goal of doubling the size of the party fraction in each of these industries before the next Plenum. In addition, if present contacts materialize, the Plenum proposes a special concentration in the X industry.

Apart from these special national concentration points, it is necessary that each local organization of the Party select a concentration point locally, or more than one where Party forces permit. The hit-or-miss method of expending our energies, of going into industry, of distributing literature, must be brought to an end. The selection of a local concentration point means the deliberate assignment of comrades, unemployed or part-employed in particular, to get jobs in the given industry or plant; the assignment of other comrades to distribute literature in front of the factory, in the union to which those workers belong, and in the residential district where many or most of them live. Without this all-around organization of the work, "concentration" is no different from diffusion. War expenditures mean that the already declining unemployment will decrease further. The objective of our now unemployed comrades must not be merely "to get a job" but to get a job where party work is most necessary and effective. In this connection, special emphasis should be placed on entry into trade schools, which is now comparatively easy, and acquiring skills which facilitate employment in the key, basic, mass-production industries. Furthermore, the skilled worker has an advantage over the unskilled worker also in the trade unions.

Lastly, our national concentration work will be impossible unless the Party has at its disposal a number of comrades available for this special work. Among "professional revolutionists" should be counted precisely those comrades who put themselves at the Party's disposal for such activity. The national office will inquire, in due course, of all the branches as to the availability of such comrades.

PARTY ORGANIZATION AND RECRUITMENT: Getting new members into a revolutionary party is difficult today, from a certain standpoint. On the other hand, the hostility to imperialist war on the part of hundreds of thousands of workers facilitates our approach to wide circles. There are elements in the workingclass today who are ready to join our party if the issues are made clear to them and they can be shown that there is a place to function. Faint hearts will show themselves more frequently now, particularly among the intellectual and petty-bourgeois strata, and less reliance than ever can be placed on such elements today. Rather, we must concentrate on recruiting our membership from the genuine factory proletariat. Although it is an important task to hold our organization tightly together no matter what vicissitudes befall the movement, this does not at all exclude steady recruitment of new forces to the Party.

Our Party as a whole does not yet have the habit of recruitment. The average discussion of the average comrade with the average worker rarely leads up to the question of "joining." We must be more persistent and deliberate in our propaganda. Every

member must be an alert recruiting agent for the Party. Every contact must be followed up systematically, with literature, with personal visits, with invitations to larger discussion circles, with an invitation finally to join. Every meeting, large or small, must have an appeal for membership as part of the proceedings.

The Plenum sets the Party the modest goal of recruiting 100 new members into the ranks before the next Plenum. Since this period includes the entire period of the national elections, our campaign must not only be an agitational and propaganda campaign but above all a recruiting drive. Also, special attention must be given to recruitment among the Negro workers close to the Party. Excellent propaganda work has already been started by virtually every branch in the country and the response has been gratifying, especially in a field which is new to us and in which the utmost patience is required. We must now begin the work of directing this favorable response into organizational channels.

In order that the organization and its work be tightened up and a leap ahead taken in fulfilling the Program of Action, the Plenum has decided to organize two more national tours. The first national tour of the Party, undertaken by National Secretary, Max Shachtman, proved highly successful. In addition, we have already had regional tours and organizational concentrations by Organization Secretary, Harry Allen, and by Comrades Temple and Lund.

The Party must now prepare (1) for a national organizational tour by Harry Allen for the purpose of taking up in detail with each of the party branches a variety of organizational problems pertaining to the better functioning of the Party, functioning under war conditions, recruitment, press distribution, finances, etc., and (2) for a national tour by a leading member of the Committee to be devoted particularly, though not exclusively, to Negro work. This tour will provide for the comrade in question stopping in each city for a considerable period of time—from two or three days to two or three weeks where necessary—in order to help develop on a more intensive scale, the local Negro work. In addition, he will address membership meetings, meetings of sympathizers, etc.

Finally, the Party must endeavor to shift certain comrades from their present branches in order to effect specific party-building concentrations. There are now at least three important localities where a functioning party branch can be set up and maintained with a little experienced outside help. They are Pittsburgh, Seattle and Louisville. The national office shall select qualified comrades for this purpose with the aim of establishing these three branches before the next Plenum.

EDUCATIONAL WORK: The greatest shortcoming of our work in the past period has been our neglect of the educational work. The national office has not rendered the necessary assistance, in any organized form, in the theoretical and political education of the membership. Some locals and branches have taken the initiative in forming regular classes and discussion groups, but their work has not been centralized and directed.

RESOLUTION ON PARTY POLICY IN THE 1940 ELECTIONS

Adopted at the Plenary Sessions of August 10th and 11th, 1940.
(WORKERS PARTY)

The National Convention and the presidential nominations of the Republican and Democratic parties clearly show that the overwhelming bulk of American bourgeois political opinion and organization is basically united on the most imperative and vital issue before the country: the preparations for American participation in the second world war. This unity on "foreign policy" is so decisive that it reduces the differences between the two bourgeois parties, their platforms and their candidates, to comparative trifles, that is to the questions of practical application of the main pro-war policy. Previous conflicts over the "New Deal" and its industrial control-social legislation-taxation policies are rapidly receding into the background, or rather, being replaced by agreement on the policies making for the establishment of the totalitarian regime necessitated by the war preparations. This growing unity is reflected in the unprecedented inclusion of prominent statesmen of the Republican Party in a Democratic cabinet and is symbolized, perhaps more than in any other way, by the fact that the main war-cry of the opposition to Roosevelt is the factional triviality of "no third term".

Despite the existence of large social and semi-political groups which have broken or half-broken with the two bourgeois parties, the 1940 presidential elections will not see in the field a Labor or "third" party. All the talk and threats of the Lewises, Townsends and Wheelers have proved to be blistering phrasemongering and ineffectual political blackmail. Many, if not most, of the leading labor officials of both A.F.L. and C.I.O. have already been incorporated into the Roosevelt war-preparations machine; the others merely await their call. Although the objective conditions and the need of the working class for an independent labor party are over-ripe in this country, the trade union officialdom from top to bottom has systematically sabotaged its formation. Corrupt labor lieutenants of capitalism, they are keenly aware of the fact that the initiation of a national labor party, especially at this time, would mean a sharp break with the bourgeois political parties and politicians who now dominate the working class and would give a strong impulsion to the class struggle on the political field. This would seriously impair "national unity", that is, the complete subjugation of the working class to the bourgeoisie and its imperialist war aims and preparations. Much as some sections of the trade union officialdom would like to play an independent or rather autonomous political role in the country, their fear of the class implications of a Labor Party and its revolutionary potentialities has caused them to subordinate this desire to the interests of the bourgeoisie.

In view of the practical impossibility of an independent Labor party presidential candidate and campaign in the 1940 elections, our own slogan for a national labor party can be given only a propagandistic character. As a slogan of agitation and action, it must necessarily be confined to local situations, where conditions and working class sentiment are especially favorable to its presentation.

The Workers Party must participate in the 1940 elections to the fullest extent of its forces, utilizing the opportunity afforded it by the campaign and the widespread interests of the masses in it, to present the revolutionary working class program to the greatest possible number of people.

The forces of the Workers Party are too few and too scattered to enable it to present presidential candidates of its own. Our party of course rejects in principle any support whatsoever to the candidates or programs of the two bourgeois parties, the Republican and Democratic. Our party denounces and rejects any support whatsoever to the candidates and program of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist Party, or to the candidates and program of the reformist Socialist Party. While critical support of a Labor party is both permissible and necessary under conditions where it represents a federation of mass labor organizations, this is not the case either with the Communist or Socialist parties. Both of these are clearly-defined political parties; or rather, sects-- one large and the other small. In addition, both parties acknowledge the principle of national defense under capitalism, one in the interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy and the other in the interests of bourgeois democracy. While carrying on a vigorous campaign against these parties, it is, however, permissible, in exceptional circumstances, to give critical support to members of these parties running locally on independent tickets provided they represent and have the support of mass labor organizations and provided that the exceptional case is approved by the Political Com. of the party.

While unable to present national or state candidates of its own, our party must strive with all its strength and enthusiasm to present local candidates of its own - Congressional or municipal -- in several cities. Past experiences in New York and Minneapolis show that even with a comparatively small organization the party is not only capable of running its own electoral campaign but also of profiting greatly by it. In New York, if possible elsewhere, it is imperative that the party organization exert every effort to place at least one candidate on the ballot, running openly as a representative of the Workers Party and advocating its full revolutionary program. Such campaigns must be considered as over and above, for our Party far more important than the local campaigns in the trade unions for the formation of a local Labor party or a local United Labor ticket. Even where local election laws prove to offer a now insuperable barrier to getting the number of signatures required to place a candidate on the ballot, the campaign should be started and carried to the end. The results obtained in canvassing for signatures and in other forms of establishing contact with workers (street meetings, indoor meetings, literature sales and press subscriptions), will more than repay our efforts even if we do not succeed everywhere in getting our candidates on the ballot.

The propaganda and agitational slogans of our election campaigns are already contained in the Fourteen points published regularly in our weekly paper. However, these must be made to revolve around the one central and overwhelming issue of opposition to the imperialist war. All our literature, all our speeches, all our

agitation must have this as their main, constantly recurring theme. All our other demands and slogans must be connected with it, must flow from it. "Down with the war and war-mongers!" "Down with conscription!" "For a people's army and a workers' government!" "Record your vote against the war, against conscription and for a government of, for and by the workers!" And, since party recruiting is the main objective of the election campaign for us at the present time, our agitation must be capped with the call, "Join the Workers Party!"

The party press, especially its weekly agitational organ, must devote a great amount of space to the election campaign. The party membership must make an exceptional effort to disseminate and popularize the press to thousands of new readers. The National Office must publish special literature during the campaign for the widest possible distribution of the Party's opinions and program.