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# Our Party and the New Dues System

by **Beatrice Suskind**

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Comrades who have labored against the devastating procedure of endless collections which have hampered the political development of the units and have reduced them to dues and money collecting agencies, greet the New Dues System that the Political Committee of the Party has proposed, with enthusiasm. Our task and perpetual question always was, "How can we Activize the Unite?" This question has been asked and answered by section committees, by Unit Executives, by the leading comrades in the district, through letters, speeches, bulletins, but the unit remains the same mechanical money raising unit. We are swamped in collections. Our functionaries, instead of giving reports and drawing the political significance of the work they are conducting, and drawing every comrade of the unit into this work, are so emerged in bookkeeping that they forget the purpose of their job. And so I could relate obstacles upon obstacles, but it all reduces itself to the single trouble and that is mechanical collections.

It is necessary to note here the effect that these collections have on the various groups of comrades. Comrades who are ideologically weak cannot find anything in the Party unit to keep them. Hence they drift away and come to meetings only seldom. The unit eventually loses these comrades. New comrades, who come in from the struggle full of enthusiasm are soon disillusioned and become cynical. The old guard stays on and looks for a solution to make the unit the real political expression and training ground for the Party work among the masses. It is these few comrades that bear the double burden of contributing to the limit to these endless collections, and doing 3 or 4 jobs that the increasing struggles of the workers demand.

Every Party member must do Party work. The unit must discuss every problem of the working class and arm itself with a thorough Leninist understanding of the tasks facing us in this present period of

intensified class struggle and the menace of the war which has already started on the Manchurian border, in order to work in the factories and shop among the masses of workers. Our unit must be the training ground of the vanguard of the working class. This can only be accomplished by removing the mechanical procedure that exists in the unit. Each comrade will then feel that the unit is the foundation of the Party and as such he must strengthen it.

Let us see concretely how the dues system will remove the obstacles standing in the way of our unit development. Let us review one unit meeting and approximate the collections taken. There are always two or three different tickets to dances for auxiliary organizations, some for the YCL, the Party, etc., which means the minimum of \$1 for each comrade. *Daily Worker* collection for the southern campaign — 25 cents weekly; *Daily Worker* sustaining fund — 25 to 50 cents weekly; auxiliary organizations (3 or 4 collections) at least \$1 apiece; rent of the section headquarters, about 10 cents weekly; section affairs about 25 cents weekly, and miscellaneous emergencies about 25 cents per week — total \$2.50 weekly. Under the new dues system figuring on a wage of \$40 a week the member would pay 75 cents weekly dues only. The average comrade does not earn \$40 per week regularly. Those comrades who do earn more than \$40 certainly ought to contribute towards liquidating the financial difficulty of the Party and to enable the Party to better conduct the work. Now if we compare the collection of the maximum of 75 cents weekly in an orderly and systematic manner to the collection of over \$2 in a chaotic and disorganized manner we can easily see which would benefit the unit and which would be harmful to its life.

Under the New Dues System, the unit relieved from the pressure of ticket selling, of numerous collections, and constant interruptions will be able to devote more time to activizing each and every comrade, to check up on their activities in the shops and factories, to discuss their problems, to study their tasks, and thus develop and clarify the weaker comrades and strengthen our ranks. Generally the unit will be given breathing space and will become a live force with its face and hand in the work among the masses.

Comrades must popularize this decision of the Party.

*Edited by Tim Davenport*

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