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# **Workers! Organize the Party of Labor!**

## **Manifesto of the Workers Party of America,**

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The working people of this country stand before an important decision. They must decide whether they will continue to support the political parties of their enemies and exploiters, the Republican and Democratic parties, or whether they will create a labor party which will carry on the political struggles of the workers against these parties.

For many years the working people of this country have divided their strength between the Republican and Democratic parties. Through their votes they have placed first one and then the other of these parties into power.

The result has always been the same for the workers. Whether one or the other of the old parties have been in office the machinery of the government has been used against the workers and to help the railroad kings, the coal barons and trust magnates.

This has been particularly true since the war. During the war there was built up in this country a powerful centralized government at Washington. It is this centralized government power which is now being used against the workers when they try to secure better wages and working conditions from their employers.

In the coal strike and the steel strike of 1919 the Washington government mobilized all its power, from injunctions to soldiers, against the strikers in order to beat them into submission to the terms of the employers. In the great industrial struggles of the past two years the federal government has thrown its strength behind the open shoppers in their effort to destroy the unions. The government has been the chief instrument of the bosses in enforcing wage cuts. This use of the governmental power to reduce the wages and standard of living of the workers has gone so far

that a government board — the Railroad Labor Board — has declared that “a living wage” cannot be paid to the workers by the railroads! In the coal strike the Washington government participated actively in the struggle against the workers. In a half a dozen states soldiers were called out by the governors in order to help the coal barons enforce the scab shop and starvation wages in the mining industry.

The fight of the railway workers for a living wage and to maintain their unions is the most striking example of how completely the government of the United States is an instrument of the capitalists to keep down wages and to smash the unions. Since its existence the Railroad Labor Board created by the government has been fighting the workers on the railroads. Twice it has forced wage-cuts upon the railroad workers. Its rulings have been such as to weaken the unions. In the shopmen’s strike it did all within its power to destroy the workers’ organization. The Coronado case decision of the Supreme Court of the United States is another instance showing how openly the capitalists use the governmental power against the workers. The Daugherty injunction issued during the shopmen’s strike is conclusive proof that in time of need the government is ready to take from the workers every right in order to help the bosses enforce their wage-cuts and to destroy the workers’ organization.

The Daugherty injunction denied the shopmen the right of free speech. It denied them the right of a free press. It denied them the right of free assemblage. It denied them the right to organize. It denied them the right to use funds which they had paid into the treasury of their unions in the fight against the wage-cut and the effort to destroy their unions. Every page of the history of the past few years shows that the gov-

ernment of the United States is an instrument of the railroad kings, coal barons, and trust magnates which they use to fight and rob the workers. The government is not only used in the interest of the capitalists in the direct struggles against the workers, but to put through such capitalist grabs as the new tariff and the ship subsidy bill. It is used to safeguard the investments of the international bankers as in the case of the rape of Haiti and Santo Domingo.

Are the workers of the United States to continue to use their political power to support the capitalist exploiters? Are the workers going to permit the use of the government against them to go on unchecked? Do they want more Railroad Labor Boards to say that American industry cannot afford to pay a living wage and to enforce their decision? Do they want more Daugherty injunctions, more Coronado decisions? Do they want to find injunctions and soldiers lined up against them every time they try to secure better wages and working conditions?

Nearly two million organized American workers have declared that they want a party of labor to fight the political battles of labor. The United Mine Workers of America, the sixteen railroad unions, the Typographical union, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have declared for independent political action by labor.

The representatives of these organizations will meet in Cleveland on December 11th together with representatives of the former organizations and the existing political parties of labor.

Workers of the United States! Demand that this Conference for Progressive Political Action create a labor party. Some of the leaders of this conference are opposed to the organization of a labor party. They desire that labor shall continue to be the tail of the political parties of their enemies and exploiters. They

wish to continue to "reward their friends and punish their enemies" in the Republican and Democratic parties, only to find in time of struggle between the workers and the bosses that they have only enemies in the government. Some of these leaders wish to make labor the tail of a party of small business men led by LaFollette and Borah and other middle class leaders.

Workers of the United States! The road of progress for the workers is through a labor party. Only a party founded by the labor unions and dominated by labor can succeed. The future belongs to labor. The struggle of the future in the United States will be between a Labor Party and a party of big business. In England the Labour Party has become the second party in the country, standing in opposition to the party of the English capitalists. That is the road American workers must travel.

Workers of the United States! You must use your political strength! Refuse to support the parties of your enemies! Refuse to permit your political power to be wasted in another "progressive" party! Demand the organization of a Labor Party!

You can compel the Conference for Progressive Political Action to act. Hold mass meetings for the labor party. Adopt resolutions in your union. Demand the Labor Party to be organized by the labor unions and to include all the existing labor political organizations. The Workers Party has declared its readiness to become a part of the Labor Party as an autonomous body. It is ready to cooperate with the organized workers to create a mass political organization to fight the battles of labor.

**FORWARD TO THE LABOR PARTY!  
FORWARD TO THE RULE OF LABOR!**

Workers Party of America,  
C.E. Ruthenberg, Executive Secretary.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*  
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