
Open Letter to the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party from the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party of America.

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To the National Executive Committee,
Socialist Party:

There exists in the working class movement in the United States today an opportunity to crystallize in an organized form the movement for independent political action which has sprung out of the intensification of the class struggle in this country which followed the end of the war.

Through their experience with the government since the end of the war, millions of workers and farmers have begun to realize that the government of the Republican and Democratic administration is an instrument of the exploiters used to assist these exploiters in robbing the industrial workers and farmers and to maintain the system of exploitation as a whole.

The Railway Labor Board, the Daugherty Injunction, Coronado decision of the Supreme Court, the use of police and troops in strikes as never before, the wider use of injunctions against strikers, have all had their part in convincing the industrial workers that the existing government is their enemy. Similarly, the farmers, millions of whom have been bankrupted through the deflation policy of the government, and who pay the high railroad freight rates under the Esch-Cummins law, and are discriminated against by the character of the loan and banking legislation passed by congress, realize that the government is always on the side of their exploiters, and there is

no hope that its actions will benefit them.

These conditions have developed the widespread movement for independent political action by the farmers and industrial workers through a Farmer-Labor Party. This movement has expressed itself in the formation of many state Farmer-Labor Parties, which have combined to call the June 17th National Farmer-Labor Party Convention. The call for the June 17th Farmer-Labor Party Convention specifically and decisively pledges those who will participate to independent political action, separate and distinct from the old parties through a political organization representing the farmers and workers.

The movement which is represented in the June 17th Convention was the result of and gained its greatest impetus through the failure of the Conference for Progressive Political Action to realize the hopes of the farmers and workers for a Party which would fight their political battles. It was not until the Conference for Progressive Political action had shown at its first convention in February 1922, and its second convention in Cleveland, [December] 1922, that there was no hope of this group creating a political party or a party which would represent the exploited farmers and workers of this country, that the movement for a national convention of those groups who were in earnest in their desire to bring into existence a mass political party of farmers and workers took form. The movement had its first expression in the July

3rd Convention of last year, at which the Federated Farmer-Labor Party was formed. Through the efforts of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party in cooperation with the State Labor Party, the June 17th Convention, which will bring about a greater crystallization of this movement and develop a mass party with the support of one or two million workers, has been called.

In spite of the fact that the Conference for Progressive Political Action has repeatedly demonstrated that its leaders will not permit the formation of a political party, and its entering into the political fields as an independent political organization of this group, the Socialist Party still is part of the Conference for Progressive Political Action. The excuse of the Socialist Party for remaining in that organization, of which the express policy is to vote for Republican or Democratic candidates because they are "good men" or favorable to labor, is that they still hope that the Conference for Progressive Political Action will form a Labor Party.

This hope, if it exists, is an illusion. The Conference for Progressive Political Action has shown by all of its actions that it will never form a Labor Party. Only a few days ago the latest manifestation of the policy of the Conference for Progressive Political Action came to light in the state of California, where all of the progressive trade unionists, farmers, and labor political groups have combined to call a convention for the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party and the Conference for Progressive Political Action has issued a manifesto denouncing this move and calling attention to the fact that the American Federation of Labor Convention at Portland voted against independent political action. In other words, the Conference for Progressive Political Action lined up with Samuel Gompers for "rewarding the friends and punishing the enemies of labor," and the Socialist Party, by its affiliation, endorses this policy.

It has already become apparent, too, that the hope that the July 4th Convention of the Confer-

ence for Progressive Political Action will follow a different course, is due to disappointment. It is quite apparent from the statements of the leaders of the Conference for Progressive Political Action that their purpose at the Cleveland Convention, even though they may endorse the candidacy of Robert LaFollette on a national scale, is to enter into the state elections on the basis of the old policy of the CPPA; that is, while on a national scale they propose to support LaFollette as an independent candidate, on a state scale they will again call upon the workers and farmers to vote for "good" Republicans and Democrats.

By its continued affiliation and endorsement of the Conference for Progressive Political Action, the Socialist Party endorses this policy. In supporting the CPPA against the June 17th Convention, it takes its stand against independent political action.

Even [if] the CPPA through some miracle were to enter into the political arena as a political party standing for independent political action, what kind of party would come out of the CPPA? Certainly, the members of the Socialist Party will not deny that political parties stand for definite economic interests. Does the CPPA stand for the economic interests of the exploited farmers and industrial workers? Everyone knows that it does not. Its leadership belongs to the aristocracy of labor. The LaFollette group in Congress which it supports is not the representative of workers and farmers but of small business men, professional groups — the petty bourgeoisie. Out of the CPPA there could only come a petty bourgeois Third Party, never a Farmer-Labor Party standing for the class interests of the exploited workers and farmers.

The Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party calls these facts to the attention of the Socialist Party and demands in the name of hundreds of thousands of workers and farmers who are supporting the June 17th Convention that the Socialist Party immediately withdraw from the

Conference for Progressive Political Action and support the mass movement of workers and farmers for independent political action through a class Farmer-Labor Party.

If the Socialist Party wishes to retain any vestige of a right to call itself a workers' political organization, it will give heed to this demand. Today it is an enemy of the movement for growing class action of farmers and workers through its support of the CPPA, which denies and opposes such class action and by its policy stands as an obstacle to the development of a great mass movement of workers and farmers which, for the first time in the history of this country, will develop a class party on a mass scale.

The Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party joins with the hundreds of thousands of workers and farmers who support the June 17th Convention in demanding that the Socialist Party immediately sever its connection with and repudiate the CPPA and the July 4th Convention

and that it accept the invitation of the great movement of farmers and workers who are taking their first stride toward class consciousness, and send delegates to the June 17th Farmer-Labor Convention.

The Workers (Communist) Party is giving all its strength to building the Farmer-Labor United Front to attain this end. It urges the Socialist Party to sever its reactionary connections and to join in building the mass class party which will fight the battles of the exploited farmers and industrial workers.

Fraternally yours,

Central Executive Committee,
Workers Party of America.

William Z. Foster, Chairman.
C.E. Ruthenberg, Executive Secretary.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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