

# A LETTER FROM PRISON ON APPROACHING ELECTIONS

May 21 1930.

To the State Nominating Convention,  
Communist Party of U. S. A.

Dear Comrades:

This nominating convention is significantly taking place at Schenectady, the home of General Electric, one of the big international robber industrial institutions and a savage exploiter of the workers, male and female, and especially of young workers. It is occurring at a time when urgent and important problems face the workers of the state, of the country and of the entire world.

The problems of unemployment, speed-up and worsening of the conditions of the working class, with power concentrating ever more in the hands of the capitalist class, with trustification proceeding to gigantic heights and profits being wrenched out of the lives of the workers—these problems have not been and cannot be solved under capitalism and are leading fast to a new world war.

For this world war the leading imperialist governments are preparing with tremendous energy and speed, spending billions of dollars each year to perfect their murderous war apparatus. The League of Nations, the Kellogg Peace Pact, the disarmament and naval reduction parleys, Briand's United States of Europe, all show how fast we are being driven into war.

## Unemployment Grows.

The imperialist governments which can find unity on no front, do find and construct it on the front of war against the workers and poor farmers at home, war against the colonial peoples, war against the Soviet Union, the Fatherland of the Working Class!

Seven million workers are tramping the streets of America—more than one million in the state of New York alone. The workers still having jobs are working long hours at low wages and terrific speed-up. The end of the crisis is always "a few months away" and "conditions are improving," say the capitalist and social-fascist politicians—but Governor Roosevelt is forced to admit that instead of unemployment decreasing it is on the increase.

The government, national and state, can raise no funds for the relief of the unemployed, and yet these governments are spending billions for war preparations and together with the city governments are cesspools of capitalist graft and corruption.

## Workers Fight Back.

The workers, aroused and mobilized by the Communist International and the Communist Parties in the many countries, are beginning to fight against these shameful, unbearable conditions. In answer, the capitalist government and the capitalist class give us Whalen and Fish. These two flunkies of the capitalist class represent the methods of the capitalist class to scramble out of the crisis. Whalen with his cossack attacks on the unemployed workers and their demonstrations, Whalen with his shameless, brazen forgeries against the Soviet government and the Communist Party; Fish with his attempt to smother the discontent that is growing, by inaugurating a nationwide hunt against the Communists, the revolutionary and foreign-born workers—this is the method of American capitalism to solve problems which cannot be solved under capitalism.

The fascist leadership of the American Federation of Labor with Matthew Woll and William Green at its head; the social-fascist socialist party and Muste group, led by Thomas, Hillquit, O'Neal, Howatt and Hapgood, and aided by the yellow renegades from the Communist Party, Gitlow, Cannon, Lovestone & Co., not only lend a helping hand in these attacks on the working class, but, like their brothers in Europe, are in many instances taking the lead in the attacks against the working class. They, too, are looking forward to, and organizing their black forces for the day when they may be the MacDonaldis, J. W. Thomases, Zoergiebls, Pilsudskis, Blums, Mussolinis of America, murdering the workers in the streets.

## The Struggle Will Continue.

Comrade Delegates of the Convention! Workers of the State of New York! Workers of the United States, colored and white, men and women, young and old!

The crisis is not lifting—on the contrary, with ups and downs it is bound to crash upon the workers and poor farmers with increased violence in the autumn of 1930.

Our task is clear! Despite government and extra-legal violence (World War Veterans and American Legion, A. F. of L. and S. P. gangsterism, the organized underworld, etc.), despite sharper attacks on the living standards

of the workers, despite threats against the even now shamefully low standards of the poor farmers crushed by burdens of taxes and mortgages, despite capitalist governmental fury against the rising working class and threats to take away more of their so-called rights and to persecute the Communists—the struggle will go on!

## Class Against Class.

The election campaign must be the vehicle for mobilizing the militant workers of New York State for struggle. With the program of struggle and under the leadership of the fighting Communist Party, we must put up our slogan against all the enemies of the working class—the capitalist class and its government, the A. F. of L. officialdom, the socialist party, Muste and Communist renegade groups—the slogan of **class against class!**

In this struggle we must pay particular attention to the masses of exploited Negro workers, women and men. The treachery of their bourgeois race leaders, their continued betrayal by the A. F. of L. and S. P., the unending exploitation of these masses, discrimination, jim-crowing, etc., have awakened these workers. Through the struggles conducted by the Communists throughout the country in behalf of the Negro masses, uniting them in struggle with the white workers, the Communist Party has demonstrated in action that it is the sole champion of the Negro race.

Keenly remembering the demonstrations of March 6th and May 1st, with their issues and slogans, with their police terror and cossackism and capitalist persecution of the masses, we must go into the election campaign with the following issues coming from the struggle of the workers against capitalism:

1. For unemployment insurance.
2. For the 7-hour day, 5-day week.
3. For the unrestricted right of free speech, free press and free assemblage.
4. For the unrestricted right of the workers to use the streets and squares of the cities.
5. For the unrestricted right of all workers to organize, strike and picket; complete and immediate abrogation of the use of injunctions; abolition of the yellow dog contract.
6. Full economic and social equality for the Negroes.
7. Against the persecution of the foreign-born workers.
8. Immediate abolition of the criminal anarchy law.

The workers suffering from the oppression of capitalism must be mobilized for the struggle for these issues and for their immediate enactment into law.

## Against Imperialist War.

We must recognize, however, that the struggle against this oppression is also the struggle against the preparations of the imperialist governments for a new world war, particularly against the Soviet Union. Therefore our struggle against the capitalist class and its lackeys in the fight of class against class, in the struggle against imperialist war and war preparations and for defense of the Soviet Union.

Our aim must be the overthrow of the destructive, life-crushing capitalist system and the establishment of a **Workers' and Farmers' government in the United States.**

Comrade Delegates and Workers of New York State. All forces must be mobilized in the election campaign. Every nook of the state must be reached with our propaganda and organization. Our Party literature for workers and poor farmers, the Daily Worker, leaflets and pamphlets must reach every city and village. We must build up the revolutionary industrial unions and leagues of the Trade Union Unity League. And above all we must build up the Communist Party and Young Communist League, drawing in young, militant white and colored workers, men and women, of city and land. Election campaign committees—united front organizations—must be formed in every shop, factory, store, farm, etc., in every union (also of the A. F. of L.), club, fraternal organization, etc. The whole revolutionary working class must be mobilized and activated for and in the campaign.

Forward, Comrades, to work, with the consciousness that only the Communist Party and the Communist International under the banner of Marxism-Leninism can free the working class from the oppressive power of capitalism.

Fraternally,

NEW YORK UNEMPLOYED DELEGATION

Wm. Z. Foster,  
Israel Amter,  
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