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ACTIVE WORKERS CONFERENCE

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THE CHARACTER AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE PARTY TODAY.....M. SEACETMAN

THE PRESENT CHARACTER AND ROLE OF OUR PARTY

It is necessary to state again our conception of the role of our party. It is not a question here of the nature and role of the revolutionary Marxian party in general. That is well-enough understood and unmistakable. Rather, it is a question of the nature and role of our party, in this country, in the present period. The need for a restatement arises for three reasons: First, proposals are being formulated by some comrades which involve an important change in our conception, which necessitates bringing our conception into sharper relief. Second, some of the older party members have allowed themselves, for a variety of reasons, to be disoriented from our conception without developing any clear or consistent conception of their own. Third, and most important, an increasing percentage of our membership is composed of new comrades who, because of their recent adherence to our party, were unable to participate in the elaboration, discussion and adoption of the conception which has formed the basis of our activity and perspective, and consequently do not have a thorough and systematic grasp of it.

A conception of the role (and therefore the perspective and tasks) of a revolutionary party which is to be concrete and specific (as contrasted with the conception of the role of the party in general, historically), must be based on fundamental considerations. Any conception of the party's role based upon superficial, accidental and incidental phenomena, is worthless and downright misleading. The conception which we have developed has been the result of throughgoing thought, the long and rich experience of the revolutionary movement throughout the world, as well as in the United States, and the concrete practical experiences which have permitted us to check our conception repeatedly in the practice of party life and of the class struggle.

STAGES OF PARTY DEVELOPMENT

Save under the most exceptional circumstances every revolutionary organization develops through three stages or periods. These are represented its existence as a propaganda group, an agitational group, an action group.

The first period corresponds to the inescapable necessity of assembling and consolidating the initial cadres of the party, its central core, around the fundamental principles and program of the party. The principal task of the organization, to which everything else is rigidly subordinated, is propaganda, that is, the putting forward and the defense of a whole series of connected ideas (the basic principles and program) to a comparatively limited group of advanced elements. Organizations which seek to skip over this stage are sure to founder and disintegrate. There is no other way of establishing the distinctive character of an organization, of justifying its independent existence (that is, its existence separate from all other organizations) of welding together the forces capable of eventually taking on the flesh and blood of an effective mass organization and of setting large masses into motion as a class.

The second period corresponds to the necessity of popularizing the fundamental ideas of the organization among increasingly wide sections of the working class. The principal task of the organization is

agitation, that is, the putting forward of single ideas or slogans to the largest possible section of the working class. In agitation, the principles and program of the party are not put forward in the same manner as that which was calculated to establish, extend and consolidate the central party core. They are put forward in the simplest and most popular manner. They are directly connected with the actual problems and struggles of the working class. They are couched in terms which give them access to the actually existing state of mind (consciousness) of the masses and are aimed at most quickly bridging the gap between this consciousness and the objective needs not only of the masses but of society as a whole. They are put forward for the purpose of popularizing the program of the party among the working masses, of demonstrating to the masses that the party is capable not only of answering the fundamental problem of society but also of answering the immediate, daily problems which urgently face the people. They are aimed at raising the class consciousness of the proletariat and thereby making it more receptive to the idea of joining or supporting the revolutionary organization as its leader, first in the daily struggle and last in the final struggle for socialism.

The third period corresponds to the necessity of setting the masses into motion along class lines and under revolutionary leadership. Once the party has gained sufficient strength, and only then, does it possess the forces that allow it to take responsibility for calling upon workers to follow it in a class action. Once the party has gained sufficient prestige, and only then, does it have the power to have workers respond to its calls for class action. It is then that its principal task is action, that is, the mobilization of significant sections or groups of workers for class action under its leadership and behind its slogans.

There are no brick walls between any of these stages. There is no formal test to make, no graduation examinations to take, which establish when to pass from one stage to another. It is not possible to fix the "dates" a priori. It is not even possible to guarantee that the transition will always be forward, inasmuch as circumstances have more than once compelled the revolutionary organization to move backward. The art of politics (which includes the art of organization) consists in judging correctly the stage of development of the party, of testing the judgment in practise, and of changing the character of the party accordingly.

While there are no brick walls between these stages, it does not follow that they do not exist or that a revolutionary organization can pass from one to the other at will, by arbitrarily adopting a decision to that effect. These stages exist and they are distinctive. Not only that. In addition, there are (and necessarily) intermediate stages which actually mark the transition from one main period to another, and which are usually accompanied by internal crises of one degree of intensity or another. Such crises can be averted or their effects minimized not only by scrupulous attention to the objective situation, the relationship of forces and most particularly the actual stage of the party itself, but by a clear understanding of the nature of the process by which a party develops from a propagandist sect to a mass party of action.

For example: for a propagandist group to try to operate as a mass party of action, before it has firmly established its programmatic

clarity and consolidate the cadres around its program, before it has popularized its program among substantial groups of workers, before it has sunk its roots in the places where the proletariat works and has its mass organizations -- can result in only one of two things. The propagandist group will engage in adventurism (substituting its own ineffectual "action" for the action of the masses) or in opportunism (substituting for its revolutionary program the backward or reformist "program" of the masses)

For example: for a mass party of action to refrain from operating as one, and to confine itself to mere propaganda and agitation -- can result only in the masses turning their backs to the party and in the sterilization and disintegration of the party itself. The masses have their own way of judging the character of a revolutionary leading party. If it is capable of leading them in genuine class actions but refrains from doing so, the masses look elsewhere for leadership. The party disintegrates because antipathy felt for it among the masses is communicated to those workers who belong to the party, and they too lose confidence in it.

A revolutionary party must have as its fixed objective the speediest possible evolution from the propaganda to the agitation stage, from the agitation stage to the stage of action, i.e., to the stage of a mass party. It is hardly necessary to add that the party does not cease to carry on the indispensable work of propaganda when it becomes predominantly an agitational organization. It does not cease to carry on the indispensable work of agitation and propaganda when it becomes predominantly a mass party of action. That would seem obvious. What is necessary to emphasize is that the transition from one stage to the other cannot be made at will, or simply because the "objective political situation demands it". Any attempt to do so can end only in demoralization, disorientation or worse. Arguments for such a shift from one stage to another which are based upon its "desirability" or upon impatience, are not worthy of consideration by serious revolutionists. The world history of the revolutionary movement has amply disposed of such arguments in advance.

AT WHAT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT DOES THE WORKERS PARTY
FIND ITSELF?

Is the Workers Party really a party? Unless the answer to this question is an emphatic "NO!" it is impossible to acquire a real understanding of our situation, therefore of our problems, therefore of the solution to our problems.

We have a Marxian conception of the party, not a petty-bourgeois conception ("any seven tailors of Tooley Street can constitute themselves a party") or a sectarian conception ("we, the vanguard of the vanguard, are the party of the proletariat") The Marxian conception of the revolutionary party is that of a vanguard organization which is able not only to speak for the proletariat (or significant sections of it) but also to represent it and lead it in the class struggle. In a country like the United States, we cannot speak seriously of such a party until it numbers tens of thousands of members, or several thousands at the very least, and until those thousands actually have the confidence and following of many more tens of thousands. Anything

short of this conception is tantamount to sectarianism or to the blind fanaticism and self-deception of Cannonism which passes for party confidence.

In calling ourselves the Workers Party, we did no more than proclaim our intention to become a party as rapidly as the situation and the exertion of our forces allowed us to become. The importance of this proclamation, must be viewed with special consideration of the fact that the American proletariat, alone in the international working class is not even organized politically as a class.

The Workers Party is a propagandist group. Yet, it is not merely a propagandist group. It is certainly not a propagandist group in the sense or in the way in which the old Trotskyist movement in this country could be given this name. However, it is not a mass party of action either. It does not, and it cannot, call any substantial section of the proletariat into class action under its leadership, and thereby take political responsibility for such a call or for what would result from such a call. It does not claim to be (it is not and cannot be) a mass party. Such a claim would, in the first place, only deceive workers to whom it appealed. The dubious "advantages" of such a deception would quickly be destroyed the moment these workers actually entered the party and found out for themselves that the organization is not a mass party and cannot expect to act as one in the present period.

Is our party an agitational group? No; in any case, it certainly is not simply an agitational group. The slightest knowledge of our party even by an outsider - to say nothing of a party member - shows that we have not quite passed beyond the stage of a propagandist group. The most accurate characterization that can be made of our party is that it is in the intermediate stage between a propagandist and an agitational group. For this situation, there are, on the one side, profoundly important objective reasons; and on the other side, conscious purpose. Whatever steps we have taken to advance to our present stage and to maintain this advance (i.e., not substantially further, yet certainly not back to a previous position), have been taken deliberately consciously, with purpose and understanding. What is required is a similar consciousness and understanding throughout the party, especially among our newer members and among those we shall recruit in the future.

It was stated above that it is impossible to shift from one stage to another simply because the objective political situation demands it. This statement requires two supplementations. The first is that the demands of the objective political situation cannot simply be ignored, either. The second is that the shift from a propagandist existence to an agitational existence is far more easily and "arbitrarily" made than the shift from a propaganda or agitational group to a mass party. If the second requires a one hundred horse power motor, so to speak, the first requires only a ten horse power motor or even less.

On what basis did we permit ourselves the shift into this "intermediate" stage we now occupy, the stage of a propagandist-agitational party? To say that the objective political situation made it possible or necessary, is true. Contrary to the Cannonite analysis, ours proved correct, namely, that in spite of the war situation the workers would maintain a high degree of militancy and would be receptive to the popular presentation of militant working class and revolutionary ideas.

But his explanation is not sufficient; by itself, it would be deceptive

We moved away from the purely or predominantly propagandist existence of the old Trotskyist movement (with the type of party branches, branch activities, press, public action, etc., etc., that characterized it) only and precisely because enough of us had participated in this existence. That is, our party did not start from scratch. It did not have to begin at exactly the point where, let us say, the original Communist Party began, or even (and this is a much better example), where the old Communist League of America began. We did not have to start all over again with fundamentals, even though a handful among us, who soon left us, thought so. We already had a propagandistic background. We already had a propagandistic training. We had already gone through the stage of a propaganda party. More accurately, again enough of us had gone through this stage to permit taking a big step forward toward the "second stage". In other words, we had already assembled a party core standing upon fundamental principles, upon the basic program of the Fourth International, and which was united ideologically by them. We had a trained and educated group of Trotskyists.

We did not have to begin where the original Trotskyist group, the C.L.A. did. Even before it was able to "establish" the principles of Trotskyism in this country, it first had to acquire an understanding of these very principles (that's how ignorant we were in those days) It first had to establish Trotskyism as a distinctive tendency to the working class and the labor movement. It first had to go through a long series of highly educational factional struggles against opportunism and sectarianism, which clarified its fundamental position, strengthened it, and solidified a party core within it. In the split, we not only took over all its programmatic, ideological and political acquisitions, but a sufficiently substantial party core. To put it differently the propagandist stage of the Workers Party was to a large extent already experienced, lived through, in the Socialist Workers Party and its other Trotskyist predecessors. That fact, primarily that fact, enabled us to move so speedily, almost from the first day of our existence, into broad agitational work among non-party and even non-political proletarian masses.

Because we made this move not on impulse, or merely because it was "desirable to move", but consciously and understandingly, we worked out and carried out our systematic policy of colonization and industrialization. (Such a policy, as we conceived and executed it, could not have been adopted in the old C.L.A., for example, and, if the term is properly understood, should not have been adopted.)

Because we made this move, we did not publish our own replica of the old Socialist Appeal or the old Militant, i.e., a purely propagandist paper, but a radically different paper, Labor Action, i.e., a popular agitational paper.

Because we made this move, we sought to change the character of the branches, of the branch activities, of the approach to workers by our party members, of the emphasis in our work, of the "language" used by the movement, of the emphasis on theoretical and academic discussion, so that all of these would be more in keeping with the changing character and therefore the changed role of the party.

Why, then, are we still in a propagandist stage, that is, in the "intermediate" stage between it and that of an agitational group? For two interrelated reasons.

First, when we founded the Workers Party, we had, as indicated, a propagandist past to base ourselves on. But we did not base ourselves on this past alone - the SWP did, but not we. We did not merely form another Trotskyist organization, just like the S.W.P. with only the difference that we wanted a "better regime". No, the difference extended to the question of program. Our party was distinguished from the "other Trotskyist party" not only in "organizational" but also in political questions. In the course of the past five years, the number of these political differences between the S.W.P. and the W.P. has increased, and they range all the way from theoretical to tactical-practical questions.

Now, whatever any one of us may think about the "gulf" separating our party from the Cannonite party, the fact remains that to the average worker and even the average radical worker, the two parties look and sound and feel pretty much alike, at least at first blush. In the reaction of these workers to the two parties there is a sound kernel of truth.

Where a truly unbridgeable gulf exists between two working-class organizations - let us say, between the post-war Social Democracy and the Third International - the cleavage is so clear that there is no great need on the part of either of them to write, speak and work to justify its independent existence. At most, the worker, even the militant asks for a united front of the two parties, but not for organic unity. But, where the "gulf" looks like a "fissure", only one of two things is indicated: either the early unification of the two organizations, on the grounds of a sufficiently common body of principles; or if such unification is politically impossible, it becomes the task (and no minor one) of each of the two organizations to defeat the other politically and to do it thoroughly. It is only in the process of doing this, that the organization is able to justify its independent (i.e., separate) existence.

How is this to be done? In the concrete case (that is, given the rivalry of two tiny organizations, neither one of which has great influence or roots in the labor movement), it can be done primarily by intensive propagandist activity, that is, by the systematic presentation and defense of the theoretical and political positions of our party as against those of the rival party, by polemic and criticism. In other words, it requires an emphasis on the particular position of our own party, on those points where it differs with (and is, in our view, superior to, or correct as against) the S.W.P. This is demanded for two connected reasons. First, to justify the independent existence of our party in the eyes of the radical workers and thereby to facilitate their recruitment by us instead of by our rival. Second, to educate and train our party members, especially new recruits, not only in what we have in common with other radical organizations but in what we counterpose to the others.

To think that we can ignore this question, or "subordinate" it, is ridiculous. Such a notion is A.W.P. ism, and a crude, primitive variety of it.* Moreover, it flies in the face of experience.

We can afford to "ignore" or "subordinate" our theoretical differences with the Social Democratic Federation or even the Stalinist party in recruiting and keeping workers, by confining ourselves exclusively or mainly to our practical work among the masses. Why? Because our practical program, our daily program in the class struggle, our practical activities, show clearly enough our differences with the Social Democrats or Stalinists. The same is not true in the case of our other rival, the Cannonites, and it is not true precisely because of the similarity (not identity, to be sure, but similarity, more or less) in our practical program, our practical daily activities. To win and Keep a recruit as against the Cannonites, we should and must demonstrate the superiority of our more fundamental political positions, of our theoretical positions. To think we can "ignore" the Cannonites is as absurd as for them to think they can ignore us. We have not allowed them to ignore us! They do not allow us to ignore them. Experience shows that in nine out of ten cases of contacting and recruiting workers we come into direct conflict with the Cannonites -- almost everywhere in the country. If we do not face this problem in recruiting a contact, we face it after we have him, when he is either approached by the Cannonites or acquires a perfectly legitimate and healthy curiosity and interest in them and their views.

Naturally, this does not mean for a minute that we approach a worker or recruit a contact merely or even primarily on the basis of differences between us and the Cannonites. Nothing could be more preposterous! Not at all! We must continue as heretofore to win worker-recruits on the basis of our practical activities in the class struggle on the basis of their sympathy and agreement with the fighting program of the party and Labor Action. We must under no circumstances voluntarily return to the "old days" when we concentrated our attention upon the politically advanced workers (and students, intellectuals and other petty-bourgeois elements) whom we sought to win on the basis of the fact that the theory of the permanent revolution is correct and the theory of socialism in one country is wrong. All that is being emphasized here is that we not only cannot escape from or ignore our propagandist and polemical work, but that we must still continue to give it a place of the highest importance in our party life.

There is a second reason why we did not, and cannot yet, shift away fully from our propagandist character. It lies in the emphasis

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The American Workers Party, as the older comrades know, was formed in 1933-34 by radical activists led by A.J. Muste. Politically confused, it was nevertheless moving to the left, and it had many excellent, though unsystematized and one-sided ideas on the "Americanization" of Marxism, on the popularization of socialism, and on mass agitation and action in general. It believed however, that the mass revolutionary party could be built in this country by "ignoring" its labor political rivals (SP, CP, CLA) by refraining from polemics and debates with them, and by simply agitating and organizing "raw militants". It could not, of course, do any such thing, nor did it. It soon fused with the Trotskyist Communist League of America. In the United Workers Party of the US, it speedily lost all identity as a distinctive political current.

given above to the fact that "enough of us" had already gone through the propagandist stage to warrant an advance toward the stage of agitation. By that is meant to convey the idea that the permissibility of this advance, the assurance that it would not drown us in opportunism, lay primarily and above all in the party's leading cadre.

However, the war gravely weakened this cadre, not only in the central leadership but in the branches. If the repeated emphasis placed on this fact is not met by some comrades with impatience or with a gesture indicating that they regard it as an "apology" (for what is not clear!) this is a bad sign. It only indicates that these comrades have not yet assimilated the key, central, fundamental significance of the trained party cadre as the indispensable spinal column, heart and mind of a revolutionary party; it only indicates that the emphasis must become more emphatic. But whether the cadre is weak or not, numerous or small, the fact remains that many, of not most of the members of the party - even at its foundation, to say nothing of the majority of the members of the party today & did not pass through the propagandist stage experienced by the older party members.

Naturally, there is no arithmetical formula for the percentage that a party cadre must reach before it can "carry along" the rest of the party to a second or third stage. It is a matter of judgment, based on experience and subject to test. But it should be clear to the thoughtful members of the party that the past three, four, five years of the party's propagandistic work have not been unimportant or unnecessary. This is putting it negatively! Actually, this work has been the indispensable supplement, more accurately, the indispensable basis and preliminary condition for the excellent agitational work that has been carried on. Even now, five years after the founding of the party, this work must be carried on and even intensified.

In the first place we have scores of new workers in the party, without previous experience. They must be saturated with the general fundamental principles of Marxism and also with those Marxian principles and policies which are the unique contribution and characteristic of our Party. (It goes without saying: they cannot be saturated over night, and attempts that have been made to do this were doomed to the defeat they richly deserved!) In the second place, many of our older members for one reason or another -- preoccupation with practical work, trade union activities, assumption of a multiplicity of tasks due to the shortage of qualified militants, etc. -- have neglected their duty of self-education and of educating others. These comrades need a "re-saturation". We aim to be a party of activists, whose members are primarily occupied with agitation and activity in the broad highways of the class struggle. But our activists must be educated and trained activists, revolutionary leaders of other workers. Without this training and education, their best efforts will not raise them above the level of mere militant trade-unionists.

Because of the sense in which we are still a propagandist group, the New International, for example, is primarily what it has been in the past few years. The weaknesses and defects of the NI are only too familiar to all of us. But, just or unjust though this or that criticism of the NI may be - and it is not the province of this document to deal with these criticisms - it can be considered only within the

the framework of a correct conception of its role, as a function of the rôle of the party. Some comrades object to the polemical concentration against the Cannonites (i.e., because of the systematic presentation and defense of our party's theoretical and political views, and the critical annihilation of the views of our only serious theoretical and political rival). They reveal either that they do not grasp the task of the N.I. in the present period, or else that they would prefer a systematic presentation and defense of their own theoretical and political views instead of those of the party. However, the party cannot bow to this "preference" as the price of the good will of these comrades.

CAN WE BECOME A MASS PARTY?

It would be a first-class mistake for us to contemplate a return to the existence of a propaganda group. The reasons for this have already been set forth. It would be a step backward which is warranted neither by the objective situation nor by the position and state of development of the party. We must, on the contrary, strive consciously and deliberately to advance further and further away from the purely or essentially propagandist stage. The very type of worker upon whom we are now concentrating; the very basis upon which we seek to recruit him; the very activities in which we engage - all these drive us (in a sense whether we wish to be driven or not) to become more and more a party of mass agitation, moving along the road to a party of action. We cannot and should not, say to the worker whom we have won to the party on the basis of our superior agitation and activity in the trade unions, "Now that you have joined on this basis and with these ideas, we present you with a propagandist group and nothing more." That would be absurd; more than that, there is no necessity for it whatsoever.

If there are comrades who consciously aim to return us to a propaganda group existence and nothing more, they are composed largely of those who disagree fundamentally with the "propagandist position" i.e., the theoretical and political, position of our party. They want a propagandist group precisely because they want to start at the very beginning, as if we had not aquired and firmly established the theoretical and political views which distinguish our party as a clear-cut tendency in the radical and labor movements. However anxious they may be, there is no reason whatsoever for agreeing with them. Back to a propaganda group -- that is a reactionary slogan in our party.

Should we "convert ourselves" into a "mass party"? Yes, we shall do so. But not by arbitrary decision. Not by any mechanical devices. Not by putting on a label which calls us that. Not by self-deception which deceives nobody else because it cannot (and should not!). We will never recruit a worker on that basis, of, if we do, we will never keep him in the party. We intend to become and act like a mass party. That is our firm aim. But that requires work; that is a struggle, and a long and complex one; that is an aim realized at the end of a road of fusions and splits and regroupments into a big movement in which, we expect, the elements of our present party will constitute the decisive political force (provided we continue to prove worthy of such a position). Nothing can substitute for this work, this struggle and the endurance and patience and self-confidence it presupposes.

We cannot lay down a blueprint of the future development. But we can put forward a tentative, a practically-desirable perspective.

We are handicapped primarily by the fact that we do not operate within a politically-organized working-class. That is point A, B, C, and all the other letters down to z.

The history of the labor movement shows that no revolutionary organization in any country ever became a genuine mass party overnight - that is, within a period of two-three-five-ten years. It can, of course, be said that the tempo of development is much more rapid nowadays than it was at the time of the birth of the organized socialist movement. Nevertheless, the basic truth remains. In our time, mass parties generally speaking came out of mass parties. That is, the revolutionary mass movements (Communist Parties) came out of already-existing mass working-class political movements (old Social Democratic Parties). Those that moved toward the stage of mass parties by means of individual recruitment, required years, if not decades, to reach their goal (The Communist Party in this country or in England, for example, as contrasted with the Communist Parties in Germany, Czechoslovakia, France, Norway, Italy)

In the United States (not fifty years ago and not fifty years hence, but today) the tiny revolutionary vanguard movement has an elementary need of a proletariat organized politically as a class. In the U.S. (again, today, in the present concrete situation) this means that our main political concentration, our main political slogan, the struggle to break the proletariat from bourgeois politics and to set it on the road of class politics - revolves around the fight for an independent labor party. Whether or not it will be formed, we cannot of course guarantee. Whether or not we will succeed, inside it, once it is formed, in winning large sections to the revolutionary program and leadership, and therefore to the mass revolutionary party - and when we will succeed in doing this, if we do it at all - we cannot of course guarantee or foretell. What is decisive for us, however, is the struggle. We must continue and intensify our fight for the formation of a labor party, a long with our fight for the working class to adopt our program. The formation of such a party would offer our party an exceptional and highly fruitful proletarian arena in which to advance and fight for our program, and in the course of this fight to build the genuine revolutionary party of the

It is only under the circumstances where we have won to our banner and our party thousands and tens of thousands of politically conscious workers that we will be able to speak and act as the revolutionary party of the American proletariat, as a mass party of action, capable of calling real masses into action and capable, also of taking responsibility for the call and for leading the response to the call.

Under what we must consider less favorable circumstances, that is, circumstances in which the American workers do not soon form a party of their own, we must continue to concentrate, as now, upon individual recruitment, no matter how slow the process may be at first. When we have recruited a sufficiently sizable group, or fused with other groups to increase our present size by many times - it will not require a formal party decision to notify us that "we are now a mass party". That will be sufficiently and clearly indicated by the size, activities, prestige, following, support, sympathy, etc. of the party.

Right now, and for the immediate period ahead we are still a distance from that quantitative change that will produce a qualitative change. It is utterly ridiculous to be taken aback by such a calm, sober, cool self-judgment, to wail and lament, to sink into despair or fly off in desperation in all directions of the compass. We start with what is. We say what is. We say what we really are, without embellishment, self-praise, or self-deception. We must also say what we want to become, and must become ultimately. But more important than that is to say what we can become and strive to become in the next period.

The next period, we repeat, is one of further development of the party as an agitational group. (It goes without saying that this does not exclude actions, but only where they are realistically possible, and only where they do not override our conception of the essential role and perspective of our party at the present time. Examples: isolated election campaigns, strike leadership under special conditions; street demonstrations under special conditions. But decidedly not a general course of actions.) An agitational group is one whose main public activity consists in presenting a program, more accurately, a platform, for the adoption by the labor movement. To put it very crudely: our main (not our only, but our main) public activity consists in urging upon the labor movement a program of action, in telling the labor movement what it must do. Our achievement of the position of a mass party will be revealed when we are in a position to tell the working class what we are doing and to call upon them to follow suit under our banner.

Elsewhere, the question of the party cadre has been dealt with. It is conceived not as a dead machine, but as a living instrument for the building and advancement of the party. An immediate task of the party cadre, which will be built up and clarified and consolidated, is the clear understanding of the conception of the role and nature of the party in the present period, (which alone makes possible an intelligent solution of our party problems), and the dissemination of this understanding throughout the ranks of the entire party.

Max Shachtman