

# THE PROGRAM OF THE

## LIBERTARIAN SOCIALIST LEAGUE

1949

1- We live in a world of insecurity, plagued by poverty, exploitation, militarism, and imperialism. Mankind is again threatened with a terrible war of even greater destruction. We see the cause of these conditions in the class system prevailing today; in both capitalism which is dominant in the United States and bureaucratic collectivism prevalent in the Soviet Union. In place of these systems it is necessary to establish a democratic socialist society in which the industry and resources of the world will be owned and controlled by the working-class for the benefit of the producers. This socialist society is not the welfare state where there is planning without liberty. Moreover, nationalization without workers control is a step in the direction of bureaucratic collectivism, rather than socialism. Socialism is not possible without industrial democracy.

2- The greatest immediate danger facing the working class is the threat of war. The developing war economy depresses living standards and leads toward the increased stratification of the economy. The war for which the imperialists of both Russia and the United States are preparing must be fought against because it will bring mass destruction of workers' lives, of industry and resources. It will divide the workers along national lines, hinder international solidarity, and destroy for a long time the remnants of the limited bourgeois democracy. For all these reasons the building of a socialist world will be rendered more difficult, in the event of war.

We recognize war as the inevitable outcome of exploitation, and therefore reiterate that the fight against war must be centered around the fight for a classless society. The struggle against armaments and militarism are struggles against the effects and not the causes of war and social chaos. While we support these struggles to impede and delay the war drive, we constantly bring forward the fundamental causes of war and direct our main blows against the economic system which makes war, and for the socialist revolution. While we support the colonial struggles for freedom and the class struggles of the exploited masses, we will give no political support to any war waged by the ruling class. In answer to the propaganda for support of one side or the other we raise the banner of international solidarity on which we inscribe the slogan: "Against Both War Camps!" We urge class action as the most effective way to battle the war system.

3- We see the principal motive power for the social revolution in the class struggle and the conditions of modern society. We try to understand social forces and adapt our tactics to them. This does not mean we believe in ever-deepening misery as an automatic road to socialism, but rather we look to the growing understanding by ever widening groups of workers of the true nature of the state and capitalism. Such understanding will grow primarily from experience plus

the work of socialist propagandists, who in turn, are an expression of the class struggle and not a force apart from it. The awakening is facilitated by the widening gap in the division of wealth between the exploiters and exploited, the hardening of class lines, the recurring wars and economic crises, etc. As a result of these developments, the political and economic organizations of the working class will grow in strength and militancy. It is the duty of the socialist organization to develop this growing class consciousness into a socialist consciousness. Socialism cannot be achieved by a putsch or utopian, ethical and intellectual appeals, but only by the conscious class action of the majority of the working class.

4- We look upon the state as the instrument for domination of the ruling class which rules by deception or coercion, or both. This is true regardless of the economic system prevailing or the political forms utilized, and whether the state is operated directly or indirectly by the ruling class. We do not look upon the state machine as the instrument for achieving socialism. Rather, our task is, by means of dual power, to eliminate and destroy it. The dual power established by the revolutionary forces will, however, in a revolutionary situation be faced with ruling class resistance from within or without. Thus, until the workers' power is secure and a classless society established, a coercive power directed against the bourgeoisie must exist. This power is composed of the dual institutions of the working class, and rests upon the organized strength of this class. It is controlled democratically from below.

5- We reject reformism, bolshevism, and sectarianism, and stand for revolutionary democratic socialism. By reformism we understand the tendency which makes piecemeal reforms, in practice if not in words, the actual ultimate end of the class struggle, and which thinks in terms of the gradual assumption of power by parliamentary majority and the institution of socialism - or a hybrid system bearing that name - by means of legislation and cooperatives. By bolshevism we mean the concept of the seizure of power by a minority, a statist conception of socialism, over-centralized party structure, the single party idea, and the absence of any working class ethical restraints in relation with other groups. By sectarianism we mean the complete rejection of immediate demands and an aversion to real mass work. By democratic revolutionary socialism we mean a system of society attained by the conscious action of the majority, in which the industries are owned and controlled democratically by the masses. Such a system of society would encourage the widest voluntary association of the masses in democratically controlled institutions.

6- While we reject parliamentarism, we encourage independent electoral action by the working class as one phase of the class struggle. Such activity, independent of all capitalist and stalinist parties, helps develop the class consciousness of the working class, strengthens the proletarian organizations, increases self-confidence, and educates the masses.

7- We look upon immediate demands as a means for carrying on the class struggle. However, there are some so-called immediate demands which retard rather than advance the class struggle and the develop-

ment of a class conscious and eventually socialist conscious proletariat. We do not, therefore, blindly support every immediate demand concocted by all varieties of utopian schemers, but rather support those immediate demands which harmonize with our tactics, principles, and ultimate objectives. This includes those economic and political demands which improve the conditions of the working class, broaden democracy, and weaken the class enemy.

8- In order to achieve socialism, disciplined and democratic revolutionary organizations must be built, which aim to raise the workers' understanding of their historic tasks, which will work in all working class movements, political, economic, and cultural, for militant and democratic policies. They bring forth the full social program and stress the need for class action to achieve it. Effective revolutionary organizations must have definite programmatic criteria for membership, must demand a certain quota of activity and responsibility from members, and must be unified in public propaganda and activity.

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I am interested in more information  
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Im interested in joining the LSL \_\_\_\_\_

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