
**Letter to J. Stitt Wilson, member of
the National Executive Committee of
the Socialist Party of America
from Frans Bostrom in Tacoma, WA,
February 15, 1915**

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Tacoma, Wash.,
Feb. 15, 1915.

J. Stitt Wilson,
Sub-Committee of
the National Executive Committee.

Dear Comrade:

Replying to your circular letter of January 1 [1915], in which you request criticism and suggestions for the good of our organization, I wish to say:

That while there are many very grave errors and blunders in the management of the party affairs and the position the organization has taken toward organized labor is untenable, conditions which must be fundamentally changed before we can hope to amount to much, there is one cause for the failure of the party to advance, which so utterly overshadows all other causes that nothing else is worth mentioning before that cause is eliminated.

That cause is the incongruous, confused, inconsistent platform declarations in favor of every populistic reform ever conceived.

Were the party the political expression, exclusively, of the working class, i.e., were all the party members working men and working women, then there could be no other fault to find with "immediate demands" than their uselessness. The same, of course, holds good with any other class homogeneous party. But since the peculiar conditions existing in this country render it impossible to organize a politi-

cal party exclusively working class, it follows that the platform must contain nothing else than what every individual of its heterogeneous membership can readily subscribe to, if harmony is to prevail.

That single demand is the conquest of the powers of government for the purpose of introduction of the cooperative commonwealth, i.e., the revolution. Universal suffrage and a shorter working day would probably be considered a matter of course, almost unnecessary to mention, and would cause no disruption. but it is certainly useless to expect taxpayers to vote to tax themselves out of middle class existence, and unreasonable to expect any intelligent worker to vote for lower taxes, municipal ownership, etc, ad nauseam. The attempt to perform such unnatural feats is what has made many sensible men cautiously watch the party from a safe distance, instead of actively participating in its work. It looks too much as if our offer to serve every class except the millionaires were merely a vote-catching device. The citizenship of America is not too intelligent, but it is just barely possible that while it expects to be fooled by old party politicians, it considers it unnecessary to take the trouble to change parties for the purpose of getting the same service from people who glibly promise unobtainable things.

At any rate, there can be no peace in the party, and should be none, until the party becomes single minded and consistent in its purpose and glittering generalities, bombast, reform fakes, and all other opportunist buncombe is relegated into innocuous desuetude.

Frans Bostrom.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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