

AFTER 5 DAYS RETURN TO

RICHARD DANIELOUSKY

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DETROIT 14, MICHIGAN

U.S.A.



BY AIR MAIL

DR. A. PANNEKOEK
REGENTESSE LAAN 8
ZEIST, HOLLAND

19/1

DANIELOUSKY

re oak

P. SPEED

15/2

Dear Dr. Pannekoek,

Through a friend of mine, Mr. Garret, I received Mr. J. Dawson's Australian publication. In it I have read your ideas about workers councils.

As it is generally speaking the conditions that make people think a certain way, it sometimes happens that people of different parts of the globe arrive at similar solutions of their common problem.

After having had quite a bit of sad experience with left-trotskyite groupings I was forced to start thinking independently. I arrived at the conclusion that the social revolution is not the task of a small intellectual elite, but that it ~~can~~ is a social task rather, a job that can only be handled by the working class itself. Digging into the subject more deeply I began to analyse opportunism in both its subjective and objective aspects. Furthermore I came to the conclusion that the will of the workingclass has to find expression through workers councils, that by employing such class struggle organisation the working class will become conscious of its interest. Next I felt that the objective conditions of capitalism by themselves will not bring about socialism, and that the subjective factor, the ~~moving~~ struggling working class, has to proceed in a planned rather than a spontaneous manner.

At this time I am about to put this theory into practice, namely to commence with the organisation of workers councils

in some of the factories here. For this task I am asking you for your advise.

I can see from your ~~Five~~ "Five Theses" reprinted in the "Southern Advocate for Workers Councils" than on many points your views conflict with mine. Firstly I would like to study your views and see whether in the light of these my views would still hold water. Secondly I would like to benefit from the practical experience you had so far in organising such workers councils.

For this reason I am asking you to send me your books dealing with workers councils, also a few issues of the German publication "Spartacus", and any advise on organisational aspects you may deem feasible to offer to me. I am enclosing \$1.- for costs, and if this amount should not cover the expenses, I will send you the balance due.

Comradely yours,

Richard Danielooddy

P.S. For your convenience I am translating this letter into the German language, as I do not know with which of the two languages you are more familiar.

Lieber Herr Dr. Baumkoek!

Durch meinen Freund, Herrn Garet, erhielt ich die Australische Zeitschrift des Herren J. Dawson. Darin fand ich Ihre Gedanken über Arbeiterräte.

Im Allgemeinen sind es die Umstände die für die

nämlich, die Arbeiterklasse muss Schritt für Schritt ihre ^{eigenen} Erzeugnisse in Besitz nehmen.

Zur Zeit sind ich und Andere damit beschäftigt diese Gedanken in hiesigen Fabriken in Tat umzusetzen. Wir stehen im Begriffe Arbeiterräte zu organisieren. Für dieses Unternehmen erbitte ich Ihren Rat.

Ich kann mit Ihren "Fünf Thesen", die in der Australischen Zeitschrift "Southern Advocate for Workers Councils" gedruckt wurden, nicht vollkommen übereinstimmen. Doch muss ich zuerst Ihre Ansichten gründlich studieren bevor ich mir ein Urteil über diese leisten kann. Es ist durchaus möglich und sogar wahrscheinlich das so manche meiner Ansichten falsch sind, wie dies des Öfteren zuvor der Fall war. Fernerhin würde ich Sie bitten ~~mir~~ mit Rat in unserem ^{hiesigen} ~~bisherigen~~ Unternehmen zur Seite zu stehen und mich über Ihre ^{bisherigen} Erfahrungen bezüglich Organisation der Arbeiterräte aufzuklären.

Aus diesem Grunde ersuche ich Sie mir einige Ihrer diesbezüglichen Bücher einzusenden, vor Allem solche die in denen Sie Arbeiterräte behandeln. Bitte senden Sie mir auch einige Erscheinungen der deutschen Zeitschrift "Spartacus". Ich hoffe von Ihnen soweit wie möglich über die Organisation der Arbeiterräte unterrichtet zu werden. Eingeschlossen in diesem Briefe finden Sie einen Amerikanischen Dollar ~~für~~ für Ihre Spesen, doch falls dies nicht genügen sollte, so werde ich Ihnen selbstverständlich sofort die eventuelle Bilanz einsenden.

Mit besten kameradschaftlichen Grüßen
verbleibe ich Ihr,

Richard Danielovsky

Denkungsart der Menschen verantwortlich sind. Daher kommt es öfters vor daß Menschen, die ~~so~~ weit voneinander entfernt leben und einander überhaupt nicht kennen, ähnliche Gedanken haben und ähnliche Probleme auf gleiche Weise lösen.

Ich selbst ~~habe~~ erlebte recht unangenehme Enttäuschungen mit ^{der} hiesigen links-Trotkistischen Bewegung. Meine Erfahrungen zwangen mich selbstständig denken und handeln zu lernen. Auf diese Weise kam ich auf den Gedanken daß gesellschaftliche Umwälzungen nicht von kleinen Gruppen Intellektueller bewerkstelligt werden können, sondern daß diese die Aufgabe der selbsthandelnden Arbeiterklasse ist. Nachdem ich diese Angelegenheit weiterhin betrachtete versuchte ich den Opportunismus zu analysieren. Ich tat dies unter Berücksichtigung sowohl subjektiver als auch objektiver Faktoren. Fernerhin konnte ich das Verständnis erringen daß Wunsch und Wille der Arbeiterklasse Ausdruck finden müssen, anstatt den Arbeitern ihr objectives Interesse von oben herab aufzuzubringen; daß ^{man} durch organisierung der Arbeiterräte die Klasse den Klassenkampf durchführen kann und auf diese Weise die Lektionen bezüglich ihres Interesses erlernen kann. Weiterhin konnte ich verstehen daß die objective Lage des Kapitalismus nicht eo ipso den Sozialismus hervorbringen wird, sondern daß die subjektiven Faktoren, nämlich die kämpfende Arbeiterklasse auch eine Rolle spielen müssen. Die einem Wildbach gleichende Kraft der Arbeiterklasse muß zuerst durch Arbeiterräte kanalisiert werden. Sodann muß die ~~manche~~ ~~ge~~ brauchbar gemachte Kraft planmäßig angewendet werden,

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15/4

DR. ANTON PANNEKOEK
REGENTESSELAAN 8
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EUROPE

April 18, 1948.

15/4

Dear Dr. Pannekoek,

I received your letter of March 24 and I was very glad to hear from you.

I believe the best for me would be to wait until your writings appear in Dawson's paper, since I would have considerable difficulty in translating the Dutch version. As far as the Dollar is concerned I am sure you will be able to use it for something that helps the cause.

I hope that you will excuse if I take issue with especially one point of your political position. From what I could learn so far it seems to me that with the exception of this point we have both come fundamentally to similar conclusions. You wrote in your letter: "So they (councils) spring up only in times of fight and action. What can be done before is propagating the idea, clearing up the minds of the fellow workers".... Then again you write: "So I think this is the most important work to do: acting as a propaganda group".....

Throughout the labor movement I have often observed a separation between thinking and acting. To me this seems to be an incorrect approach to the subject of thinking in specific and to the subject of the class struggle in general.

According to the various idealistic philosophies thinking can be entirely divorced from acting. On the basis of this assumption it follows that education can be a matter of solely transmitting ideas by the printed word or by the word of mouth. Any propaganda group therefore accepts this idealistic conception, as propagating in the accepted term means disseminating ideas by the spoken or written word.

The division of leaders and ~~the~~ led within the working class is primarily neither caused by economic or psychological factors. This division must not be blamed on the leaders themselves being selfseeking individuals. Were we to do this then we would have to advocate the exchange of the bad leaders for good ones. On the contrary, this division has its roots in bourgeois culture itself by accepting two concepts: ^{of} ^{division of labor} The idea that human beings are "born" dumb or smart; and the therefrom resulting concept that any social act can only be the result of the "thinkers" and "actors" joining hands.

Dialectical materialism on the other hand claims that neither thinking nor acting can stand on its own feet but that the two must be synthesised at all times within either a social group or an individual.

A propaganda group is basically one which is supposed to do ^{the} thinking only. Its purpose is to propagate the ready made thoughts, so that the then propagandised workers will take the correct actions. This creates anew the division between "thinkers" and actors, and will in due course again cause a split ~~between~~ ^{into} leaders and led. ^{through} Verbally ~~also~~ negating the concept of leadership, a propaganda group cannot therefore but establish again the leaderships of the "thinkers".

On the other hand, the very purpose of ^a council, as I see it, is to eliminate the concept of leadership, break on this vital point with bourgeois culture, and have each individual or body of individuals become a "thinker" and "actor" at the same time. ~~Only~~ This synthesis is absolutely essential. To propagate for councils therefore seems to me to be a selfcontradiction.

I have not set out to propagate councilism among

the fellow workers in the factory (as you put it in your letter), but I have entered the factory in order to build the council || right then and there.

Of course, in a way they cannot be built, because they are already there. In every factory throughout the world workmen during lunch time and working hours talk to each other and act in accordance with the ~~new~~ conclusions reached. These are the councils, organized by the bourgeoisie again digging it's own grave. It is these millions of already existing councils that are directly and only responsible for every progressive step that has ever been taken since the advent of capitalism. It is before this organization that the bourgeoisie trembles with fear and dares not to openly show it's hand. *call them councils will give confusion*

Each of these councils is now in the last analysis thoroughly revolutionary. But none of these councils dares to take any action alone. Each little group of workmen does in general have a thoroughly anti-capitalist position at heart (even though it may not always say so), but cannot act because "what can we fellows do all by ourselves?"

Our job is therefore not ~~for~~ the propagation for the formal establishment of the already informally existing councils, but it lies rather in the coordination of all of those councils. The coordination will lead to class struggle action. The action will pose new problems and call for renewed thinking and greater coordination. As a council or group of councils reach and act upon a false conclusion the results of the actions will teach the working men the ABC of Marxism. Understanding the ABC new actions and coordinations between councils will take place, and through the new experiences the DEF and finally XYZ

will be learned.

I hope that you will accept my criticism as a sincere one, and of course it is quite possibly ^{rendered} only a result of my lack of knowledge of your full position.

I would like very much to ~~be~~ ^{fully} acquaint you with the results of my studies and lessons learned by my experiences. It would be important to me to have your criticism in this matter, but unfortunately I cannot think of any way of how to acquaint you with my position. I wrote a 160 page article on the necessity of councils, suggestions ~~at~~ about the organisational setup, on how to fight union and party-bureaucracy, how to fight the bourgeoisie, and a step by step program on seizing the world's material values, distribution of commodities under the era immediately following the overthrow of the bourgeoisie e.t.c.

As it always seems to be the case in these matters I naturally have neither money ^{nor} ~~or~~ facilities to print this article, and it is way too ~~to~~ bulky an article to send it in it's typewritten form. Some of my friends here are very anxious to have this article printed, mainly because to a certain degree they still believe in the leaderships idea of propagandising. But they have no money or printing facilities either.

Hoping to hear from you again I remain,
with best regards

Paul Speed

P.S. The name "Richard Danielovsky" is an assumed name and only used for the Post Office box. Please do therefore not use the name "Danielovsky" in referring to me, as I do not want it to appear in any political paper. PAUL SPEED is the name under which I am known here in

political circles.