

Anton Pannekoek to J.A. Dawson  
(Letter - October 12, 1947)

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Holland

October 12, 1947

Dear Comrade Dawson:

I thank you very much for your letter of Sept. 16th, wherein you consent to my proposal to publish *The Workers' Councils*, eventually; in parts as part of your monthly. So I send to-morrow the first part of the MSS. by sea-mail. It will take probably some months to reach you. . . .

When you publish it I must make one very strict condition: That proof-reading is made with utmost care. Because of the distance I, of course, cannot make the proofreading myself; so I cannot take care that everything is correct. So I have carefully scrutinised the manuscript, that every letter and every comma is correct; you know that in English the omission or displacement of one comma can entirely change or revert the meaning of a sentence. So I must be sure that when the book is printed it is carefully corrected, so that no error remains. I know how difficult it is with a review, where time is pressing; in the Five Thesis you printed there is found in Thesis 5 such an error of printing: "The fight of the working class" has been changed into "the right of the working class"; but I assume that every reader will have understood what is meant. . . .

. . .

I understand that you do not have a large adherence among the workers of Australia; everywhere the majority follows the easy way of having themselves redeemed by leaders and politicians, and have to learn by experience the fallaciousness of these hopes. You rightly consider yourself as a herald of uncompromising fight and clear opposition to capitalism, enabled to do that by clear understanding of capitalism and Marxian science. So your work has a broader significance than only Australian; in the English-speaking world - since Mattick's *Living Marxism* ceased - there is no other organ that in criticising all the Labor and socialist "reformers" (really defenders of capitalism) at the same time could show the *positive* aims of pure class fight. For in England the most radical socialism is the S.P.G.B., that believes in "pure" parliamentarism, and *Left*, that thinks a United Socialist Europe should be the slogan (rightly criticised in your October issue); then at once come the anarchists who often rightly criticise all that reformism, but have only an ideological slogan of freedom to oppose against it. Thus if you can publish in a good way *The Worker's Councils* you fulfill an international function for the English-speaking working class, for which there is no other organ available at the moment. Hence, if you could succeed in providing more funds and more paper to accelerate the publication by appealing to friends and readers, it will be highly important for our cause. . . . especially when again there should break out wild strikes, this book should be propagated among [workers] in order that they see and understand the wider aspects of their actions. . . .

I received your address on The Dollar Crisis; it is excellent, and I learned from it many details that were not so entirely clear to me. I have not yet received your Sept. issue, nor Nos. 35 and 36, for July and August. No. 38, however, I have in hand, , with the very clear articles on Nationalization, and on the Ideological Justification. Yes, indeed, every new number of your monthly, and most articles in it are full of good interesting stuff. Even the articles on special Australian matters are instructive for such as are not acquainted with these subjects by their mode of treatment.

You ask my opinion on your abstract of an address on Nationalisation etc. I find it highly instructive and convincing; with the [matter] somewhat more systematically arranged, some points worked out in more detail, it would give a [..?..] pamphlet for mass-propaganda in all English-speaking countries, and also be widely known among British, as well as American workers. Of course, none of our speeches or pamphlets or books will be able to create class movements [..?..] revolution. Such

arise only out of practical social conditions. But the more clear understanding there is in the masses, the better will they direct their movements and see their aims - how often power positions of the workers in rev. times were inefficient broke down by lack of insight, by massal ignorance and illusions. So it is our task to spread such knowledge as much as possible.

Yours fraternally

Ant. Pannekoek