

New York, N.Y.  
May 23, 1966

TO ALL LOCALS AND BRANCHES:

MEMORIAL MEETING MESSAGES

Comrades Jan and Walter sent the following messages to Detroit's May 20 memorial meeting for Comrade Leo Bernard:

From Walter Graham

"Written words can't express the tragedy of Leo's loss but we will go forward. He was a solid comrade and good friend to all of us."

From Jan Garrett

"'If it had not been for this, I might have lived out my life as a poor fish peddler...' So began Bartolomeo Vanzetti's last words a few minutes before his assassination about forty years ago by the state of Massachusetts which ended the life of a peace-loving and kind working man.

"Vanzetti's last words noted the fact that he and his friend Sacco did not choose to become martyrs for civil-rights and civil-liberties causes. Willy-nilly, they were thrust by history into this spot.

"Comrade Leo Bernard could not have expected that he would sacrifice himself last Monday -- nor could Walter or myself -- for only slight changes could have taken us too.

"Our friends and allies -- from radical, progressive, civil-rights, antiwar and other groups that seek a world of abundance and harmony -- who are here tonight realize that Leo's death has served to remind us of the ultraserious character of our job. We will have to know what steps all of us can take to reduce the chances of similar grievous losses. We will have to know how the deranged murderer was inspired and wipe out the causes of his derangement.

"As I lay Monday in the emergency room at Receiving Hospital I heard the medics say, 'Leo was DOA' -- a jumble of Green Beret comic strips, James Bond's novels, etc., streaked through my mind. But I remembered Trotsky's remark three days before he was cut down by an assassin. Our job as socialists is 'to cleanse life of all violence.'

"That was Leo's belief too. Perhaps others of us will not survive the vicissitudes of the fight for that kind of future.

"But whatever we can give unstintingly to that goal will be fully justified by the type of society our spiritual brothers, the vast majority, will build."

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You may want to use these for your own memorial meeting.

Comradely,  
*Ed Shaw*  
Ed Shaw  
Organization Secretary