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Forty Thousand Expelled by Seven

The following is the first of several articles describing the Party crisis, and the autocratic actions of the Right Wing members of the National Executive Committee at its recent historic meeting in Chicago. It is written and issued by Comrades L. E. Katterfeld and Alfred Wagenknecht, members of the National Executive Committee, and Louis C. Fraina.

VIOLETING every principle of fair play and square dealing and disregarding every constitutional provision to the contrary, the National Executive Committee, at its session in Chicago, May 24 to 30th, expelled the state organization of the Socialist Party in Michigan, constituting nearly 6,000 members, without a trial; suspended the Russian, Lithuanian, Polish, Lettish, Hungarian, Ukrainian and South Slavic Federations of the Party, constituting more than 30,000 members and—worst of all, and let it be said to their everlasting shame—are autocratically holding up the national referendums for the election of a new National Executive Committee, International Delegates, International Secretary, and upon the question of the Emergency National Convention.

Never before in the history of the Socialist Party have Party officials dared so outrageously to violate Party principles. A wilful group of seven members out of a total National Executive Committee membership of fifteen, ten of whom attended the meeting, usurped power which the constitution does not grant them, and which the Socialist Party membership never intended any servants of the Party to have. This wilful group of seven did not, however, act as servants of the Party—but as dictators and tyrants to defeat the expressed will of the membership and to perpetuate themselves in office.

This is the crisis. In these frantic efforts of the official bureaucracy of the Socialist Party to maintain itself in power, we see the final attempt of bourgeois reformism to crush revolutionary Socialism in the United States. This crisis affects the integrity and future of the Socialist Party; if our Party is wholeheartedly and unequivocally to stand for a Socialism which will not compromise, which will not fail in times of test, then every Party member must rebuke this unscrupulous action, and must take a stand in support of the nearly 40,000 comrades arbitrarily deprived of Party membership for their fidelity to the principles of true International Socialism.

The objects of the autocratic seven are as plain as daylight. Like a tidal wave, the demand for the tactics and principles of the kind of Socialism which stands true to the working class at all times, has swept the Party. The thousands of comrades who were sincerely attempting to convince Party members that a more revolutionary kind of Socialism was necessary, were known as the "Left Wing". This Left Wing in our party understood clearly that the Scheidemann brand of Socialism means the

Call for a National Conference of the Left Wing

Call for a National Conference of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party, issued by Local Boston, (Louis C. Fraina, Secretary); Local Cleveland, (C. E. Ruthenberg, Secretary); and the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party of New York City, (Maximilian Cohen, Secretary).

The international situation and the crisis in the American Socialist Party; the sabotage the party bureaucracy has practised on the emergency national convention; the N. E. C. aligning our party with the social-patriots at Berne, with the Congress of the Great Betrayal; the necessity of reconstructing our policy in accord with revolutionary events,—all this, and more, makes it necessary that the revolutionary forces in the Socialist Party get together for counsel and action.

This call is therefore issued, for the holding of a National Conference of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party, to discuss:

1.—The crisis in the party, and action thereon; the conquest of the party for the party, for revolutionary Socialism.

2.—The New International; ways and means to prevent the party aligning itself with the "International" of the social-patriots, of the Ebert-Scheidemann gangsters, and the wavering centre; affiliation with the Bolshevik-Spartan Communist International alone.

3.—The formulation of a declaration of principles and purposes of a national scope of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party.

4.—Forming some sort of a national council or bureau of the Left Wing for propaganda, securing of information and spreading information.

5.—To express and draw together the revolutionary forces in the party; to consider other means of furthering the cause of revolutionary Socialism.

This call is issued to locals of the Socialist Party, branches and Left Wing groups within the party. The test of admission, provisionally, will be acceptance of the Manifesto of the Left Wing of the Socialist Party of Greater New York.

Left Wing locals are invited to send delegates officially. Where a local officially refuses to participate, branches or minority groups in the party accepting the principles of the Left Wing should send delegates.

Representation—one delegate for every 500 members. No local or group should send more than four delegates. Locals or minority groups with less than 500 members are entitled to one delegate.

The conference will be held starting Saturday, June 21, in New York City. Each delegate will be taxed \$25 for a central fund, out of which will be paid the expenses of all delegates.

Left Wing Locals and Branches, act! Send communications to Maximilian Cohen, 43 West 29th St., New York City.

betrayal and defeat of the working class, and that only the Socialism of Liebknecht and Lenin had within it the potentialities of success and victory. It was to "rescue" the party from this Left Wing faction, to clean out of it all who stood bravely against pure and simple reformism, that the seven National Executive Committee dictators threw 40,000 members out of the Party.

Through caucuses held outside of regular sessions, the following methods of action were adopted by the autocratic Seven.

1. Not yet knowing how the referendum for the election of a new National Executive Committee would result, they decided to revoke the charter of the Socialist Party of Michigan, sensing that the members in Michigan would vote overwhelmingly against members of the Wilful Seven running for re-election in the Michigan district.

2. A few days later, having found out that despite the expulsion of Michigan the radical candidates for election to the National Executive Committee would win out, the Wilful Seven decided to hold up the entire national referendum upon the election.

3. In another caucus the Wilful Seven came to the conclusion that after all, the coming National Convention would speak its mind against these autocratic acts, and would endorse Left Wing Socialism. And therefore the suspension of 40,000 members in seven foreign federations was decided upon, these seven federations having supported radical Socialism in the Party.

4. Feeling that despite these suspensions the Left Wing might still find itself in the majority at the National Convention—in fact, confessing that it would—they then proceeded to form a corporation, the majority directors of which are Socialists of the same stamp as the Wilful Seven; and in the

hands of these directors is to be placed the entire property of the Socialist Party, including the new headquarters building upon which \$10,000 has been paid. These directors cannot be recalled by the Party members, cannot be removed by the National Executive Committee, and only cease being directors if their Locals expel them from membership in the Party.

When we remember that most of the Wilful Seven, as candidates for re-election to the National Executive Committee and to the office of International Delegates, knew themselves defeated and realized that the official machinery of the party was about to pass into the hands of the Left Wing, the revolutionary element, these efforts to retain control become doubly despicable; for then they are clearly shown to be brazen attempts to defy the will of the Party membership.

But these desperate tactics must not be construed alone as a frantic effort of defeated officials to retain their jobs. This is part and parcel of the controversy upon principles and tactics in the Socialist Party. It is the struggle between the Right Wing and the Left Wing, between moderate petty bourgeois Socialism and revolutionary proletarian Socialism.

The "moderates" on the National Executive Committee show no realization of the problems of the International Revolution. They do not see the need of reconstructing the Party policy in accord with the experience gained by our comrades in Europe, or, at any rate, do not act toward that end.

The crisis is serious. It affects the future of Socialism and the proletariat in America. We are confident that revolutionary Socialism will conquer the Party. It will prevail despite the sabotage of the Wilful Seven. Let no comrade feel disheartened. No one member should quit the Party. In fact, every member should work with might and main to get members and build, build, build. We know the game of the "moderates." They want the Left Wing to desert the Party, leaving the Party machinery and property in the hands of the autocrats. They will be disappointed in this. Every radical Socialist will stick to the end, working night and day for the reinstatement of the nearly 40,000 members the Wilful Seven have severed from the Party.

Insist that the referendum votes upon the election of a new National Executive Committee be counted and made public. Insist that the expulsion of Michigan and the federations shall not prevail. Second the referendum motions to reverse the acts of the Wilful Seven, acts unconstitutional and outrageous. Rally to the Left Wing, comrades, for to the Left Wing belongs the future of Socialism.

The slogan of the "moderates" is—"Split the Party for moderate petty bourgeois Socialism." The slogan of the Left Wing is—"Conquer and unite the Party for revolutionary Socialism, for the Communist International."

N. Y. State Left Wing

New York, May 31st, 1919.

Dear Comrade:

In view of recent happenings in Local, State and National Party affairs, the details of which you have heard by this time, we believe the time is ripe for a sort of tentative state organization of the Left Wing in New York State. The State Executive Committee has begun the same tactics on a state scale which Local New York has been practising on a local scale; that is, the re-organization and expulsion of Left Wing locals. In order that we may counter this blow it would be advisable for all Local Secretaries, or organizers or representatives elected by Left Wing Locals, to participate in such a conference, to meet and draw up a plan of campaign of education and organization so that we may keep our membership intact and capture the Party organization wherever possible. Where that is impossible, due to the sabotage of officer-holders, we may have to take steps to build up Left Wing organizations within the Party.

All this of course is subject to the action taken by the National Left Wing Conference on June 21st.

But we cannot wait until then, working separately and disorganized. WE MUST ACT NOW.

Can you bring this matter up before your Local, or, if the time is too short, come yourself, or send someone in your place, to a state conference of Left Wing Locals, on Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock, June 8th, at Wellington Hotel, Albany, N. Y.

Trusting you will be present.

Yours fraternally,
MAXIMILIAN COHEN,
Executive Secretary
Local Greater New York,
Left Wing Section.

Cleveland Protests

In a desperate attempt to prevent the Left Wing of the Socialist Party from capturing the National Executive Committee of the Party the existing Executive Committee, whose term of office expires at the end of June, has arbitrarily expelled the entire Michigan state organization from the Party.

This action expelling 6000 members from the Party was taken without giving the Michigan comrades a hearing or an opportunity to defend themselves.

Local Cuyaboga County promptly initiated an amendment to rescind the action of the committee. Every local which stands for fairness and decency within the party should send their endorsement of the following resolution to the national office:

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, By the joint meeting of the branches of Local Cuyaboga County, representing an average of 1,821 members in good standing for the year 1918, that we initiate the following motion, to be submitted to referendum of the Party membership in the United States.

RESOLVED, That the action of the National Executive Committee in revoking the charter of the Socialist Party of Michigan be rescinded and annulled.

Signed: C. E. RUTHENBERG,
Chairman.

CARL HACKER,
Secretary.

The New York COMMUNIST

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Phrases and Facts

ON Friday, May 30th, after expelling some forty-thousand members from the Socialist Party because they believed in Bolshevism, the National Executive Committee wound up the proceedings with a "statement on Party policies" issued to the world, which is a mixture of lies and hypocrisy in about equal proportions. This statement condemns the Peace Treaty of Paris, declares its support of Soviet Russia and Communist Hungary, protests against intervention, "repudiates" the Berne Conference, and goes on record as being in favor of industrial unionism instead of craft unionism. From this it would appear that the National Executive Committee had adopted Left Wing principles—until one analyzes the document.

The statement begins with the declaration that "the Socialist Party at all times consistently and uncompromisingly opposed war." But we know that many of our Party "leaders," including the Socialist Congressman, were at times in favor of the war—"to save Russia," for example.

"It supports wholeheartedly the Soviet Republic of Russia and the communist government of Hungary, and vigorously protests against intervention, etc." But it opposes just as "wholeheartedly" any tendency toward Bolshevism or Communism in the United States, and expels all Bolsheviks or Communists, stigmatizing them as "anarchists."

"In Germany, Austria and countries similarly situated, its sympathies are with the more advanced Socialist groups" (in America it expels such groups from the Party).—"in their efforts to force their governments into a more radical and immediate realization of the Socialist program." This is either a verbal trick to deceive the Party rank and file, or it betrays the real incapacity of the National Executive Committee to understand the situation in Germany, and the Social Revolution in general. The Spartacides and Communists are not making efforts "to force their governments" into anything; they are attempting to get control of the governments.

"It realizes the necessity of re-organizing the Socialist International along more harmonious and radical lines. The Socialist Party of the United States is not committed to the Berne Conference, which has shown itself retrograde on many vital points, and totally devoid of creative force." But also "it is not affiliated with the Communist Congress of Moscow." Certainly not! The rank and file won't stand for the Berne Conference, to which, nevertheless, the N. E. C. made a determined attempt to "commit" us. But again, the Moscow Congress is "dangerous"—so we'd better wait for a "harmonious" International.

"In the field of domestic policies," the Socialist Party is utterly opposed to the reactionary A. F. of L. leadership. In vague terms, the N. E. C. hopes for "the industrialization of all national and international unions." Not a word for the unskilled and the unorganized. Complete silence about the I. W. W.

"Certain abuses have crept into some Locals of the Party, due to an over-valuation of the importance of practical politics"; but on the other hand, "the political activities of American Socialism must neither be abandoned or emasculated." Whatever that may mean. We presume that this is an unqualified endorsement of the Party Congressional Platform for 1918, which does not apply to "certain Locals," but to the whole Party. This is the kind of thing which has destroyed the Socialist movement in America; and so amount of statements from the N. E. C. "on the one hand, on the other hand" will blind the rank and file of the movement to the evils of political social-reformism any

longer.

The statement closes with a declaration concerning the necessity of renewed organization and propaganda, to profit by "the protest, discontent and smouldering revolt" engendered by the reactionary policies of the ruling class and its government. But this is a general statement. It leaves it to be inferred that all the discontented elements in the country must be brought into the Party; nowhere does it mention the working class as the only class with which the Socialist movement is concerned.

Six months ago the N. E. C. would not have dreamed of mouthing such revolutionary phraseology. It is now doing so only because the rank and file of the Party is determined upon winning the American Socialist movement to revolutionary Socialism. But no one can talk the language without meaning it, or at least understanding it. And by this time the Party membership knows enough to distinguish between phrases and facts.

Deporting the Aliens

THE National Executive Committee has hastened to obey Hillquit's call for a split in the Socialist Party by the arbitrary suspension of seven Language Federations, approximating some 30,000 members, or one-third the entire membership of the Party. This action is taken without any notice and no hearing has been held to decide on the facts in the case. The chief "crime" of which these federations were guilty, according to the bald story emanating from the National Office in Chicago, was "an organized systematic attempt to carry pending referendums in the interest of the Left Wing". In other words the N. E. C. punishes the Language Federations for agitating for their ideas, just as the capitalist courts punish Socialists for propagating their philosophy.

We are informed that this action was taken after nearly two days had been given to the matter, and that it followed the consideration of a "mass of documentary material accumulated in the National Office". We can imagine the howl about "democracy" which would go out from this same office if the District Attorney announced that after considering a mass of documentary material for nearly two days he had decided to indict the N. E. C.! Surely there are enough "famous" lawyers on the N. E. C. to know that this method—where the prosecutor, judge and jury are one and the same, and where the defendant is not even apprised of the fact that he is under charges, much less given a hearing—is not in accord even with the bourgeois conception of "justice". It is claimed that Stilson of the Lithuanian Federation, appeared and acted for the whole seven groups, but even the most gullible will find it hard to believe that on such an important question the seven Federations would agree to only one representative, and particularly a representative of one of the numerically smaller groups, to state their respective cases.

The whole matter stands revealed as a shameless piece of bureaucratic high-handedness and, in view of the way in which the vote for the new Executive Committee is swinging to the Left, an eleventh-hour attempt of the old committee to perpetuate itself in office. If the rank and file of the Socialist Party condones this action, then we can congratulate the seven Federations on being removed from the contamination of a Party which is disgracing the name of Socialism, and is attempting to drag the movement down to the level of the worst element in American machine politics.

In itself the action of the N. E. C. is enough forever, to condemn its perpetrators, and the weak chauvinism of the excuses it puts forward for that action merely adds to the offense. "It has been charged" says *The Call*, "that the Party has been helpless and defenseless in this campaign of misrepresentation owing to the inability of English-speaking members to read the various language publications and reply". Thus the Party has been helpless because the English-speaking members did not know it was being attacked and therefore could not reply. The foreign-speaking members, we suppose, are incapable of judging facts for themselves and are completely at the mercy of "corrupt foreign writers" because forsooth no English-speaking comrade stepped forward and set them right. Poor, ignorant foreigners, no wonder the National Security League despises you!

When the American Government began to deport alien agitators *The Call* put a little picture of the Statue of Liberty on the front page—much as Mr. Hearst puts little American flags in his paper—and began to sob about "democracy"; but now that the National Executive Committee decides to deport the foreigners from the Socialist Party, *The Call* reveals its true sentiments in its headline over the story. "N. E. C. Suspends Defiant Groups of Foreign Born," it shrieks, stressing the fact that these groups are aliens, and implying that foreign born groups will only be tolerated if they are not defiant. This is exactly the National Security League idea—foreigners can only remain here so long as they are submissive.

Interviews in the capitalist press given by mem-

bers of the Right Wing who apparently desire to have their names kept secret, covertly hint that there is to be an Americanization of the Socialist Party, and that the Bolshevik elements are to be eliminated.

The Tribune, tells how it learned at The People's House that "It is the demand of the Party leaders and the Right Wing as a whole, that the American Socialist movement be set free to develop in accordance with American conditions, with American reality and American psychology."

Just as when Walling, Bohn, Russell, Stokes, Spargo et al left the Party they used the prevailing psychology to incite the people against the movement, so today the Right Wing is attempting to use the rage worked up by the capitalist press against the foreigners to discredit the Left Wing. But they are misrepresenting the American section of the Party. All through the country the Socialist Party is swinging to the Left, irrespective of nationality. Just as the Socialist Party has been a composite of all the nationalities in the country, so the Left Wing is composed of all the nationalities in the Party. The Americans are not behind the others. We of the Left Wing are not concerned with the nationality of the membership, nor do we consider that nationality is one of the issues now being fought. Americans understand Socialism as well as any other nationality, and in the nature of things it is Americans who will dominate the Socialist movement in America; otherwise the future of the movement in this country would be very bleak indeed. But in the past many Americans who mistook Socialism to be a return to the ideals of Jeffersonian democracy wandered into the Socialist Party, and naturally these will remain with the Right Wing, and will ultimately swing it into a future Liberal, or if they become radical, Labor Party. For the loss of such as these we have no regrets. Their place is not in the Socialist movement and the sooner this is made clear the better for both them and the movement.

The American working class must be the backbone of the Socialist Party, and we of the Left are indifferent as to whether the members of that class are direct descendants of the Pilgrim fathers or are the latest immigrants from the outside world. Socialism is not a matter of nationality; it is these very "leaders" who encouraged the division of the Party into Federations for their own political ends, who are now endeavoring to discriminate against these very Federations. The Socialist Party in the future will be a party of the workers in America, and no divisions will be necessary, save perhaps an occasional language branch where the non-English-speaking members will be taught English and then turned over to function directly in the movement.

The Capitalist Press and the Party Crisis

ALL the capitalist papers are devoting a great deal of space to the fight in the Socialist Party. For instance, last Sunday the *New York Tribune* had a two-column story headed, drolly enough, "Socialist Party Seeks to Purge Itself of Reds".

One of the grievances of the Right Wingers against the Left Wing is that we are alleged to have "carried the Party fight outside the Party", and confided our wrongs to the general public.

During the past few weeks our editorial office and headquarters have been besieged by reporters from the great prostitute newspapers, beseeching us to "give them a story" on the Party situation. This we have repeatedly refused to do, because we consider it none of the public's business what goes on internally in the Party. However, when we refuse to comment on Party affairs, the reporters invariably say, "Well, I suppose we'll have to go up to the Rand School and get it from Gerber or Lee."

From the stories in the papers, this is evidently what the reporters have done. *The Tribune* story above referred to gives the Right Wing arguments in detail, including all the ridiculous and provocative accusations that the Left Wing is composed of "anarchists", that it is out "to use violence", and that it "expects the Revolution tomorrow." It contains, moreover, a good deal of intimate gossip which is evidently being whispered between "leaders" when they meet. For example, the statement that the "party leaders fear that the Italian Federation may have to be expelled, as it is beginning to show signs of 'Left-wingism'."

The extent to which *The Tribune* is in the confidence of the Right Wing may be judged from the following paragraph:

"The expelled foreign federations, according to such leaders as Morris Hillquit, Julius Gerber, Algernon Lee, George Goebel and Adolph Germer, have long been a sore spot on the Socialist movement in America. . .

"What may be good in Russia may be very bad in the United States," they say. 'And we resent the attempt of people who are ignorant of America and her problems to dictate to us how we shall run our party.'"

And so the National Executive Committee has expelled several foreign federations from the Party,

Strike Against the Bosses!

By Carl Brodsky

The Right Wing is continually prating about Democracy. Let us examine the recent actions of the Party officialdom in the light of its own professed principles.

Suppose a group of Comrades in the Socialist Party decided to draw up a Manifesto and Program endorsing the Non-Partisan League, and demanded a referendum upon it.

Suppose the New York State Executive Committee decided that these Comrades were violating the constitution of the Socialist Party in offering this Manifesto and Program; and this Committee decided to revoke the charters of all Locals which had permitted Branches in their territory to endorse the Manifesto, and also to expel any member aligning himself with the group responsible for the document.

Suppose the Committee then decided to submit its action to a referendum of the ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP. You would then vote as you believed, for the best interests of the Party; and when the result had been announced you would agree, whatever your opinion on the question, that it had been treated honestly.

Or suppose one or two Locals had endorsed this Manifesto, and, feeling that they would like to interest the entire membership, had mailed copies of it all over the country, and aroused enough sentiment to have the question discussed at a Party Convention. Would you not agree that the proper thing for Party members to do would be to elect and instruct their delegates to this Convention? Would you not feel that high-handed methods had been used if the Party officials expelled some Comrades before they had a chance to send their delegates to the Convention?

The world has been through five years of the most terrible bloodshed. The International Socialist movement in all parts of the world has been effected by the war. In some countries the Socialist parties went over completely to the imperialistic groups, leaders betrayed the masses; in other countries revolutions took place, leaders stood true to the principles of revolutionary Socialism.

Finally the war came to an end.

We in America, as a part of the International movement, also decided that our Party had been effected by the war; that certain leaders and officials had not stood the test in accordance with our principles. EVERYONE agreed that a change in policies and tactics was necessary.

with a membership of more than 30,000—and this, says *The Tribune*, is part of a plan for "Americanization"!

"The Right Wing," says *The Tribune*, with the same tone of authority, "charges that the Left Wingers really believe in violence, but do not have the courage to come out and say so in the open."

In the *New York Times* of Saturday last there is another story headed, "Socialists Here Aim to Purge Party," which contains an interesting little interview with Alderman Lee, and another with an unnamed "prominent Socialist leader". Alderman Lee gravely informs the bourgeois journalists that "the questions involved are not questions of Socialist principle, but questions of whether the party organization shall be maintained along democratic lines, with the majority ruling and the minority abiding by the majority rule." The Alderman is evidently afraid that it will be.

As for the anonymous "leader", he intimates that the Left Wing is "indulging in loose talk about things they do not understand." He ends as follows: "But in my opinion no one who amounts to anything in our Party councils is in favor of 'direct action', involving the immediate seizure and nationalization of industries and other forcible measures of a revolutionary character."

The latest example is an interview with Julius Gerber in *The Tribune* of Tuesday, June 3d, in which he says that the Left Wing can "join the Salvation Army." He continues, in a truly provocative vein, "We don't want them in our Party. As far as we are concerned, they are out of the Party, and they will stay out. The Left Wingers are now calling Martens, the Bolshevik representative here, a 'counter-revolutionist', because he refuses to ally himself with them, which shows that they are not Bolsheviks but simply trouble-makers."

The repeated hints that the Left Wing is outside the law, given by Lee and Gerber to the capitalist press; the exploitation of Comrade Martens, in the columns of *The Tribune*, against the Left Wing—are on a par with the employment of the police by these Right Wingers against Socialist Party members. Scheidemann tactics, pure and simple.

And the capitalist press, which only a few weeks ago was calling these same Right Wingers "German spies" and "Bolsheviks", is now praising them warmly, and condemning the Left Wing.

Socialists are known by the company they keep.

A group of Comrades issued a Manifesto and Program, endorsing the Russian Bolsheviks, the German Spartacists, and other Left Wing elements of the International movement, and furthermore stating that in their opinion the tactics of these elements showed the way for the final emancipation of the proletariat of all countries. They unequivocally repudiated the other elements of the International Socialist movement, and demanded that the American Socialist Party adopt the policies and tactics of the revolutionary European groups.

After a few weeks of agitation within the Party they succeeded in interesting a few hundred Comrades in their Manifesto; and these Comrades, believing it for the best interests of the Party that the entire membership all over the country should be informed of their beliefs, decided to organize in order to co-ordinate the work and systematize the propaganda, and to that end elected committees and a corresponding secretary.

The New York State Committee decided to revoke the charter of any Local endorsing this Manifesto and Program, or permitting its Branches and members to endorse it. The Committee, on its own responsibility, decided that this Manifesto was "anarchistic". The Committee decided to submit the question to a referendum of the entire membership—but before the ballots were distributed hundreds of Comrades were deprived of their membership—whole Locals being expelled bodily from the Party and denied any redress. These are the facts. Has the State Committee acted according to "democratic" principles?

For the sake of argument, let us suppose that the Left Wing Manifesto—in the words of a Right Winger—is "reactionary, anarchistic and Utopian". Don't you think that with a free, open discussion and a FAIR VOTE, you are capable of deciding the question?

Do you want your thinking done for you by the Party officials? Don't you want to vote for delegates to the Emergency National Convention? Wouldn't you feel it your right to be able to discuss this matter in your Branch? And wouldn't you brand as COWARDLY any suppression of opinion in the Party by the Party officials?

This is all that the Left Wing has demanded. And the answer of the Party officials is:

BEFORE the ballots on the referendum expelling Left Wing Branches had been distributed, hundreds of Comrades were expelled or refused ballots.

For the moment the issue has shifted from a simple question of opposing principles, to the question of Party control and bossism. Whether you agree with the Left Wing Manifesto or not, you will certainly resent these wholesale expulsions, the Boss Dictatorship of the Party. It is up to YOU, COMRADES, to make clear to the Party bosses and officials that no such action will be tolerated. All Comrades should vote on this question, and should cast their ballots for delegates to the National Emergency Convention, at which the Left Wing Manifesto will be discussed and the question settled one way or another—but not before the rank and file has been heard.

COMRADES! A scab is the most contemptible creature on earth. Consciously or unconsciously, he is used against the workers who are trying to better his lot.

Forty thousand Comrades have been locked out of the Socialist Party, because they championed the revolutionary working class. The National Executive Committee has expelled the Michigan State organization, the Russian Federations, and many English Branches. All Comrades who support the action of the Party officialdom are SCABBING ON THE RANK AND FILE.

Demand from your Branch resolutions condemning this action. Don't scab on us! Demand that the vote on all referendums and delegates be made public! Demand a reinstatement of all expelled Party members at once, or go out on strike against the Party officialdom until this action is rescinded!

If you do not stand with us now, you pave the way for your own expulsion at some future time, when you differ with the Party leaders.

You are either for a Party under the dictatorship of the rank and file, or a Party under the dictatorship of the Party bosses.

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

The Party and the Berne Conference

By Eadmonn MacAlpine

IN the last issue of *The Socialist* Comrade James Oneal contributes an article under the above heading, in which he attempts to justify the N. E. C.'s actions with regard to the Berne Conference. In the course of his defense he cites a conversation with me in *The Call* office some few days before he sailed. I was at that time Associate Editor of *The Revolutionary Age*, which had continuously attacked the N. E. C.'s attitude and actions from the moment that body appointed three men to attend the Lausanne Conference (as it was then called).

As far as I am aware the N. E. C. has never publicly repudiated its initial action, and it is common knowledge that Lee made vigorous efforts to obtain a passport, and that only the action of the American Government prevented the Party's being represented at Berne. In *The Revolutionary Age* it was suggested that at least the Party could send delegates for information, in the same way that the Italian Socialist Party sent representatives to the Interallied Socialist Conference in London during the war; as at that time we had no information about the Conference whatever, except that it was officially called by a group which had betrayed Socialism.

The statement by Comrade Oneal is the first intimation we have had that the National Executive Committee voted to repudiate any international in which the Bolsheviks and Spartacists were not included; and as far as we can ascertain it is the first time the Party membership has heard of any such decision.

With regard to Comrade Oneal's visit to Europe, he is entirely mistaken about our conversation. I did express my belief in Comrade Oneal's personal integrity, and stated that I considered that he personally would be a satisfactory delegate if he were properly elected. I further stated that I believed he would probably be elected on a referendum, but that I was morally certain that Lee would not stand the ghost of a chance; and that the only delegates the membership would choose would be instructed to have nothing to do with the Berne Gang of Social-traitors. In addition I told him that no matter what his instructions were, the rank and file of the Party would believe he was going to the Second International, and that the N. E. C. had absolutely no right to send a delegate to Europe without the sanction of the membership.

If Comrade Oneal left a statement with Ramsay MacDonald, why does not the Party membership know what is in that statement? Even now we are in ignorance of what position the Party has been committed to with regard to the European movement. *The Call* and the National Office both have the channels of publicity at their command. Comrade Oneal is one of *The Call's* editorial writers, yet *The Call* has never repudiated Berne so far as we are aware. Comrade Oneal's stories about his European trip are merely the stories any radical newspaper correspondent would write; they give no hint of his official mission. No official report has been received from Comrade Oneal, either through the press or through the regular branch meetings of the Party.

Even after Comrade Oneal's article in *The Socialist*, we are still in the dark. As far as the rank and file is aware the National Executive Committee has not repudiated its first action, which was to accept Huysmanns' invitation and illegally appoint delegates to the Berne Conference; nor have I any private information on the subject. At the time I spoke to Comrade Oneal the Berne Conference was a thing of the past, and neither he nor anyone else could attend its meetings. It is quite true one could have gone to Holland, but at that time the Second International was thoroughly discredited.

The whole question of which International the Party should join has agitated the movement for some months. The Left Wing has kept up a continuous criticism of the National Executive Committee's attitude on this matter, and until this last statement—which states nothing—nothing has been known of its decision to do what the Left Wing agitated for. The National Executive Secretary replied to an article I wrote in *The Revolutionary Age* entitled, "We must have a National Emergency Convention." His reply was printed there some two months ago, and says nothing about any resolution repudiating the Second International.

If Comrade Oneal is correctly informed about the N. E. C.'s action, why was it necessary for the Central Branch of Local Boston to initiate Referendum "D," which reads as follows: "That the Socialist Party shall participate only in an International Congress or Conference called by or in which participate the Communist Party of Russia (Bolsheviks) and the Communist Labor Party of Germany (Spartacists)?"

Why Political Democracy Must Go

By John Reed

VI.

THE foundation of the Socialist Party of America proved that Socialism had become acclimatized. Born of Populism, Greenbackism, and Trade Unionism, it was grafted on to a Socialist tradition whose most important ancestor had been the teachings of Ferdinand Lasalle, imported into this country shortly after the Civil War. It was dominated by the prevailing American belief that the ballot controlled the State, and that the State could be conquered for the working class by the ballot. At the beginning it was still revolutionary—that is to say, it aimed at the capture of political power. At hand it had a native economic organization of the workers—the American Federation of Labor—already grown powerful. Instead of trying to create a rival labor organization, it realized that this was impossible, and set out to capture for Socialism the organization already existing.

In all respects, therefore, the Socialist Party was apparently equipped to enter the political struggle with the capitalist class for power. And this it proceeded to do at once, with results which justified its belief that at last the combination had been discovered by which Socialism could be made attractive to American workmen.

The first national campaign—that of 1900—tabulated 87,814 votes for the Socialist Party. Debs, who was very popular with the workers because of his activities in the American Railway Union, made a series of spectacular campaigns for the Presidency, culminating in 1912 with the country-wide tour of the "Red Special," when the Party rolled up almost a million votes. And this last campaign was carried on in the face of Roosevelt's dramatic crusade for "social justice," wherein the Progressive Party had incorporated many of the planks from the Socialist platform.

At the same time the Socialists in various parts of the country elected several members of State Legislatures, city aldermen and administrative officials. The most striking example of Socialist political success was in the City of Milwaukee, where Berger was elected Alderman-at-Large, and finally Emil Seidel was elected Mayor, with a large proportion of the City Council composed of Socialists. For a time, indeed, Milwaukee was looked up to by American Socialists as a shining example of what Socialist political action could do—just as, before the war, Germany dominated the International because of its powerful party organization and its millions of votes.

The real emergence of Socialism upon the arena of the political fight, however, did not occur until 1910, when Victor Berger was elected Member of the House of Representatives for the Fifth Wisconsin District, and for the first time a representative of the Party of the working-class took his seat in the Congress of the United States, the highest law-making body. He sat for two terms; and then, after a lapse of two years, Meyer London of New York succeeded him as Representative, to be followed again in 1918 by the re-election of Berger.

It is not necessary here to go into the record of Victor Berger as first Congressional Representative of the working class Party. His first act was to cast his vote for a substitute to the direct election of Senators. His maiden speech contained not one single reference either to the Socialist International or to the interest of the working-class as such; it was a purely reformist criticism of the capitalist state. The most salient feature of his tenure of office was the introduction of mild social reform legislation, of which his Old Age Pension bill is characteristic. For example, the pension was to accrue only after the worker's sixtieth year—and it is a well-known fact that the average life of an American industrial worker is forty years. It was to be denied to anyone convicted of a "felony"—even such a "felony" as that of which Victor Berger now stands convicted by the capitalist courts. It was to be denied to anyone, no matter how old, who had an income of six dollars per week. And finally, all "unnaturalized aliens", which compose the vast majority of the most exploited section of the American working class, were barred.

Add to this Berger's opposition to Woman Suffrage, on the ground that women were largely dominated by religion, and would therefore strengthen the reactionary political forces; and later, his advocacy of Intervention in Mexico; and we have a picture of a man in some respects less revolutionary than the bourgeois Jeffersonian Liberals.

In full consciousness of the desperate situation in which Victor Berger now finds himself, and in full respect to his courage, I do not wish to misquote Berger or misstate his position. I shall therefore quote extracts from his recent pamphlet, "Open Letter Addressed to His Colleagues in Congress", in order that he may speak for himself:

"I am one of the founders of the Socialist Party of

America. . . . I have always prided myself on strict obedience to laws, even when I do not like them. . . .

"The American Socialists were opposed to our entry into the war, but so were many Republicans and Democrats in and out of Congress. . . .

"The American Socialists held to the wise counsel of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe and Abraham Lincoln—to keep out of European troubles. . . .

"That is the reason why we demanded legislation depriving any citizen or corporation of all profits from the sale of war supplies for the American government. . . .

"Many Republicans and Democrats believed and said the same. . . .

"Now Socialism is not Bolshevism. . . .

"Socialism is the collective ownership of the means of social production and distribution—while Bolshevism, as far as I understand it, is Communism combined with syndicalism. . . .

"The Communists want to produce and consume in common. . . .

"Socialism, however, wants to control only productive capital—not all property. A Socialist commonwealth will not do away with the individual ownership of property, but only with the individual ownership of socially necessary capital. . . .

"Communism denies individual ownership of all property. . . .

"The Bolsheviks discourage parliamentary action. They prefer direct action and the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . .

"The Bolsheviks want to break entirely with the past and start anew. The Socialists do not believe that a complete break is either possible or desirable. . . .

"If we are to remain a politically free people the inevitable outcome must be that the people must take possession collectively of the social means of production and distribution—and use them for the nation as a whole—and that is called Socialism. . . .

"The measures that the Socialists will take—must closely connect with the present system and evolve from it. . . .

"The Socialists believe that everything that is necessary for the life of the nation—for the enjoyment of everybody within the nation—the nation is to own and manage. . . .

"Everything that is necessary for the life and development of the state—the state is to own and manage. . . .

"Everything that is necessary for the life and development of the city—the city is to own and manage. . . .

"Everything that the individual can own and manage best—the individual is to own and manage. There will be plenty of enterprises left for the initiative of the individual." . . .

This is nothing but State Capitalism in its most complete form. Mr. Hearst will cheerfully endorse it. In it there is not a word to indicate that the proletariat must control the State, and that it must, as Marx points out, break down the capitalist State apparatus and re-build anew the entire machinery of government and of production. There is very little difference between this ideal and the industrial organization of Imperial Germany before the war.

Meyer London's career in Congress began little better. In a speech supporting the Jones bill giving citizenship to the Porto Ricans, London threatened that if Congress denied the ballot to these people it would be placing in their hands "the bomb of the revolutionist and the assassin's knife." Immediately the House was in an uproar; the members sternly threatened that they would discipline the Socialist Congressman unless he withdrew his remarks, so Socialist Congressman Meyer London apologized and ate his words.

From that time on, outside of a few speeches concerning the housing situation in the District of Columbia and other minor matters of that sort, Congressman London remained silent. On the resolution declaring war on Germany, he voted "nay". On the military appropriation, however, he *did not vote*. Finally, the fearful pressure engendered by the war, and the savage patriotic persecution in the Congress beat down his half-hearted resistance; so that in 1918 he was the Congressman selected to deliver an address of eulogy commemorating the third anniversary of Italy's entrance into the war!

Taken to task by his comrades in New York for his chauvinistic utterances, Comrade London declared that although born a foreigner, he had been made in America, and he would be true to his country; furthermore, he added that he was responsible to all his constituents—and that these constituents were not only Socialists (working men) but *all the people of his district*. The disastrous records of Socialists elected to office are endless. Mayor Seidel of Milwaukee appointed many non-Socialists to posts in the city administration, and when criticized, declared that he represented all the people—not merely the Socialist Party. Mayor Lunn of Schenectady did the same thing; when taken to task for his un-Socialistic behavior, the Mayor proudly resigned from the Socialist Party—but remained Mayor, and afterward became one of the chief pro-War Democratic Congressmen. Mayor Van Lear of Minneapolis, after election to office of an anti-War program, joined Samuel Gompers' Alliance for Labor and Democracy, which was formed by the reactionaries of the American Federation of Labor to support the War; and when the Non-Partisan League put up a candidate in a local election, Mayor Van Lear made a public speech in favor of this candidate, although a candidate of his own Party was running. His last act in office was to refuse to veto a Red Flag law passed

by the City Council of Minneapolis against the Socialists.

But after all it is not these examples of the failure of Socialist official office which forms the most damning demonstration of the failure of old-style Socialist political action. The War intensified and brought out the real nature of political power and control. For example, in cases where the Socialists in office actually tried to follow Socialist principles, capitalist action was swift and merciless. In Minneapolis, for instance, Mayor Van Lear having manifested a mild hospitality toward free speech, the State government promptly took away his police power and governed the city through the State Council of National Defense, which was composed of the representatives of big business. Mayor Hoan, Socialist Mayor of Milwaukee, was completely divested of his power as a city executive by the business interests of Wisconsin acting through the Governor and Council of National Defense. In Cleveland two Socialists were elected to the City Council; one was disbarred, because a woman reported that twelve months before he had been heard to say that he did not believe in the Red Cross—and the other Councilman was expelled because he belonged to the same political Party as his colleague. Victor Berger ran for United States Senate in Wisconsin in the Spring of 1918. In order to prevent him from taking his seat, the business interests of his State and of the country at large secured his indictment in the Federal Courts, on charges much less grave than those upon which many Socialists had already been acquitted. Berger then ran for the House of Representatives. This was the signal for still further indictments. He was elected by an overwhelming vote—and another indictment was clapped upon him; and after the armistice had been signed, Berger was tried and convicted, and sentenced to twenty years in jail.

At the height of the Socialist Party's career, in 1912, more than nine hundred votes were cast for its Presidential candidate—about one-fifteenth of the entire vote cast for President, and one-sixth of the ballots cast for Woodrow Wilson, the winning candidate. Roughly, the Democratic and Republican electorate was represented in Congress proportionally to their Presidential vote; but the Progressives—the Party of the rebel small property owners—was not represented in proportion to its vote; and the Socialists, with one-fifteenth of all the ballots, got one Congressman, although on the face of it they were entitled to about thirty. True, many Congressional Districts had no elections in 1912; but this does not alter the essential truth of this statement. In Europe the development of such political strength by any party would have immediately showed in the legislative body; this is true even in Germany, in spite of restrictions to the franchise. But in America it can be readily seen that, although political democracy more or less accurately reflects the comparative strength of the bourgeois parties, it operates to block the adequate representation of all classes contending with the great capitalists for State control.

Why is this so? Why is it that in Europe the political Socialist movement was able to develop great strength in the legislative bodies, and exercise an important influence on the Governments?

This results from the fact that nowhere in the world is the capitalist class so strongly organized and so firmly entrenched as in America. In America, from the first, the capitalist class controlled the State, and there was no other class in society except the working class. In Europe the capitalist class had to fight against the remnants of the feudal class. Almost up to the Great War, in some parts of Europe there was a dual revolution going on: the capitalists were striving with the dying feudal system to gain control of the State, and the rising proletariat was also beginning to battle for power. Both feudal class and capitalists used the working class against each other, and thus the Socialists became an important factor between the two contending class-factions. And thus, above all, the capitalists were compelled to fight in two directions at once, and in the meanwhile, to give concessions to the working class in return for its aid against the feudal system.

In America, however, there was no feudal class to divert the capitalists from their war against the working class. More than that, the ballot enabled the American capitalist class to blind the workers with illusions of "democracy" until they had perfected their hold upon the throat of the republic.

For the last decade the history of the American Socialist Party has shown a continuous tendency to draw away from the proletariat. The policy of "boring from within" in the American Federation of Labor resulted in the virtual capture of the Party, for a period, by the Federation—which by that time had become a definitely wage-conscious,

Left Wing Notes

THE Left Wing organization has decided to support the following nominee and asks all revolutionary Socialists to do likewise:

For Executive Secretary of Local New York: Maximilian Cohen.

Notice to All Branches of Locals New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Astoria and Bronx.

At a meeting of the City Committee held on the 5th day of May, it was decided to call a City Convention, and that the basis of representation shall be:

"One delegate for every 50 members in good standing or major fraction thereof; that branches shall elect delegates directly."

You are therefore requested to send out a call to the branches instructing them to elect delegates to the convention on the basis decided by the City Committee.

The Convention will be held on June 14th and 15th, at Queens County Labor Lyceum, Cypress Avenue, Ridgewood, L. I. The order of business will be as follows:

- Consolidation of Locals into a Greater City Local.
- Taking action on Party Ownership of Press.
- Taking action on the Left Wing.
- Taking up the question of reorganization of branches of Local New York.

Send the names of the delegates elected and the branches they represent to the secretary at the Queens Labor Lyceum, Myrtle and Cypress Avenues, Ridgewood, L. I.

At the last meeting of the Left Wing caucus of the Central Committee, Local Bronx, Benj. Gitlow, H. Bourgin, A. Winick, Dr. Glouberman and Roman Bluegrass were endorsed as the candidates for the City Committee from Local Bronx.

The Convention of the German Federation, held at Rochester, N. Y., on May 30-31, endorsed the Left Wing Manifesto and Program with the proviso that if the National Emergency Convention does not adopt this program the German Federation will join the Left Wing.

A motion was introduced that the Federation should contribute 5c per capita per month for the support of the Party press. A substitute motion to the effect that the Federation demand that the Party press be Party owned and controlled, and that until such time as this is complied with it withholds its support. The substitute motion was carried.

A resolution protesting against the expulsion of the Michigan State organization was carried, as was a resolution condemning the suspension of the seven Federations and the suspension or expulsion of other Party Branches or Locals. The Federation declaring itself in solidarity with those expelled or suspended. Details next week.

We suppose the German Federation will shortly be suspended from the Party on the ground that it is composed of "Huns."

At the National Convention of the Jewish Federation, held in Boston, Sunday, June 1st, sixty Left Wing delegates bolted the convention and formed a convention of their own. Details next week.

anti-Socialist, counter-revolutionary, reformistic body. The split with the I. W. W. in 1912, by the adoption of Article Two, Section Six, in the Party constitution, finally completely separated the Party from the revolutionary American proletariat, and forced out of the Party some of its best elements.

The Party platforms became so filled with reformist demands calculated to appeal to professionals and small property owners, that the Progressive Party adopted several of them in 1912. For the moment this did not effectually modify the Socialist vote; but when, four years later, under the threat of war, the Wilson Democrats adopted the same tactics, it proved fatal to the Party—the Presidential vote fell almost one-half.

The St. Louis War Resolution, forced upon the Party officialdom by the rank and file, gave promise of a new spirit in the Socialist movement, born of the shock of war. But how the Party officials and office-holders violated or apologized for the St. Louis Resolution, and what happened to the members of the rank and file who attempted to live up to it, reminds one of the leaders of the Second International, and the millions of trusting workers betrayed by them.

The War revealed the power of capitalist political control. Before it the political workingmen's parties disappeared, were overwhelmed by the parliaments in which they participated, by the machinery of political democracy which they helped to maintain.

(To be concluded)

The New York COMMUNIST depends upon volunteer workers for its distribution throughout the city.

Each week's issue is ready for distribution on Thursday afternoon.

Come to the headquarters, 43 West 29th Street, Thursday, and get your bundle.

Now is the time to get the truth across. Make the Left Wing campaign among the rank and file a huge success by putting a COMMUNIST each week, in the hands of every party member.

Our motto is:—10,000 COMMUNISTS in Greater New York!

SOCIALIST PARTY OF KENTUCKY—LOCAL HIGHLAND PARK

To THE NEW YORK COMMUNIST:

RESOLUTION.
Whereas, the State Committee of the Socialist Party of New York has put a referendum to vote in the state, which if carried, will expel the Left Wing Socialists of that state from the Socialist Party, and

Whereas, the Executive Committee of Local New York, unwilling to await the outcome of the aforesaid referendum, is now preparing to "re-organize" all branches of that Local, said reorganization meaning the expelling of all members of said branches who adhere to the Left Wing, and

Whereas, we regard the above actions as a mean and cowardly attempt on the part of the Right Wing and the Centrists to prevent the defeat of the afore-mentioned New York State Referendum.

Therefore be it Resolved:

That we, Local Highland Park, in special session, May 24th, 1919, do hereby express our condemnation of the aforementioned mean and cowardly action of the Executive Committee of Local New York, and do hereby notify the State Committee of the Socialist Party of New York and all others who may be connected with this dastardly plot to disrupt the Party; that in case National Referendum B carries, we will do all in our power to have the Kentucky Delegate instructed to vote and use his influence at the National Convention for the seating of any delegates which shall represent the Left Wing Socialists of New York, even if said Socialists have been expelled by the New York Party.

And be it further resolved that we send a copy of these resolutions to the National Executive Secretary, to the State Secretary of the Socialist Party of New York and also to the NEW YORK COMMUNIST, the Ohio Socialist and the Revolutionary Age, for publication.

Respectfully submitted
R. E. LEVELY,
Sec'y of Local Highland Park.

Following is the regular recorded vote of the State of Pennsylvania on the National Referendum for National Executive Committee, International Delegates, International Secretary and Referendum "B"—question of the National Emergency Convention:

| | |
|---|-------|
| <i>For National Executive Committee:</i> (high men) | |
| C. E. Ruthenberg..... | 2,075 |
| Margaret Prevey..... | 1,810 |
| Fred Harwood..... | 700 |
| Birch Wilson..... | 603 |
| C. William Thompson..... | 517 |
| <i>For International Delegates:</i> | |
| John Reed..... | 2,169 |
| Louis C. Fraina..... | 1,575 |
| C. E. Ruthenberg..... | 1,419 |
| A. Wagenknecht..... | 1,032 |
| I. E. Ferguson..... | 910 |
| <i>For International Secretary:</i> | |
| Morris Hillquit..... | 581 |
| Kate Richards O'Hare..... | 1,801 |
| <i>National Referendum "B", 1919:</i> | |
| Yes..... | 2,252 |
| No..... | 165 |

The 4th A. D., English Branch, formerly owned and controlled by ex-Assemblyman Karlin, much to the astonishment of the late Assemblyman, went Left at its regular meeting, Friday, May 30. Dismayed at the course of events, Karlin became very excited, calling the chairman "a piece of cheese" and threatening to beat him up. Finding that this line of action made no impression on the membership, he launched into an impassioned plea, citing his long years of membership in the Party and

winding up by asking whether the Branch wanted to ruin his career. But the Left Wing is hard-hearted and proceeded to carry the day.

Ruined careers strew the paths where the Lefts have trod.

Central Branch of Local Paterson, N. J., the largest branch in the city, has joined the Left Wing. Local Paterson was not given any ballots for the referendum vote for National Executive Committee members.

The Telescope

WE understand that Morris Hillquit says that it is not the Foreign Federations who are to blame, but the economic organizations of the foreign workers.

Our Left Wing Secret Service informs us that at the last meeting of the Local New York Executive Committee a motion to suspend the publication of *The Socialist* was only lost by a small margin. Apparently there are some Right Wingers who are occasionally visited with gleams of sanity.

The first editorial in the last issue of *The Socialist* begins: "*The Socialist* has justified its existence." Is this a reply to the motion to suspend publication?

We notice that Hillquit's *billet doux* to the Left Wing has undergone a change in title since it appeared in *The Call*. *The Socialist* is now offering it for sale under the somewhat less ambitious title "The Immediate Issue." Will someone tell us what immediate issue Hillquit discovered?

Bill Feigenbaum writes in *The Socialist* on "Nationalism—A Great Danger." He says: "Speaking as a Russian sympathizer." Nationalism is a great danger, but sympathizing with nationalism is of course quite alright! Now we would say, "Speaking as a sympathizer with the *Russian Revolution*"; but then saying what is meant is a mere detail.

Bill has discovered that what is wrong with the Socialist movement is "inverted patriotism," whatever that means. However, in future we would advise all Right Wingers to see that their patriotism is right side up.

We are much obliged to Robert Spector for his approval of our "fine literary style." This quite relieves our mind, as we were afraid he might not like our little efforts. But now that we are O. K., why does not he give Bill Feigenbaum a few lessons in how to say what he means if he means anything.

According to *The Socialist*, Lenin is of the opinion that Samuel Gompers is a Socialist. If this is true, then Lenin must have got his impressions from reading *The Call*, or perhaps from perusing one of Hillquit's speeches.

To the Editor of THE COMMUNIST,
Dear Sir:
The Seventeenth Assembly District, according to Local New York, is supposed to be reorganized. It seems to us to be a kind of family affair.

The following constitute the membership of the reorganized branch: Mr. and Mrs. Claessens, Mr. and Mrs. Calman, Mr. and Mrs. Granditer, Mr. and Mrs. Polstein, Mr. and Mrs. Tuvim and mother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Gottfried and junior.

We wish to offer an apology for Gottfried junior for we feel sure that had she been of the Yipsel Jrs., she would undoubtedly be a Left Winger now.

Fraternal yours,
TWO COMRADES OF THE 17TH A. D.
Left Wing Branch.

Appeal for Funds for The N. Y. Communist

COMRADES: The Left Wing is in need of funds for the issuance of its paper; we have no dues paying membership and are solely dependent upon the voluntary contributions of comrades for our support. If you think our movement is necessary, if you feel that we must have public expression, you must come to our support. In the present crisis, more than ever before, we must keep in the field, our paper must be published. WE NEED FUNDS.

Tear off and mail to MAXIMILIAN COHEN, 43 WEST 29th STREET, N. Y. C.

I hereby subscribed the sum of _____ each week for the support of THE N. Y. COMMUNIST.

Name _____ Address _____

Branch _____ Local _____

Chicago Turns to the Left

By L. E. Ferguson, in "The Revolutionary Age"

THE Cook County Convention of May 17-18 resulted in a clean sweep for the Left Wing. It was more than a test of strength of the local opposing elements, yet even in this limited sense this convention would be of high national significance, because the Left Wing conquest of Chicago is the best possible proof of the Left Wing conquest of the whole American Party—wanting only another half year of conventions and elections to record itself in terms of a new Party officialdom and a new orientation in the Party policies and tactics.

(1) This Convention was a Left Wing victory on the basis of what is perhaps the most carefully and completely elaborated statement, in terms of platform and resolutions, of the Left Wing movement in this country. (2) This Convention meant a decisive conquest of a local Party unit of over 6500 members; a victory so conscious of its own purposes and so definitely organized that it can make rapid gains from day to day. (3) Finally, this convention victory will at once be translated into a new control of Local Cook County on the firm basis of revolutionary Socialism.

These are confident claims, but need no argument beyond the textual and mathematical facts which they generalize. At this time the secretarial work has not been completed which will provide the details of the platform and resolutions adopted, but those who recall the program published by the Chicago Communist Propaganda League four or five months ago, to which has been added all available circumstances in the interim, will realize that there was through preparation for this Convention so far as the questions of Party principles and tactics are concerned.

Postponing this part of the report to a future article, it need only be said now that an American Socialist Party on the basis of the new Cook County program would find itself in complete unity with the Communist International and with the revolutionary proletariat of the United States. A Chicago Left Wing victory takes special significance not only from the importance of the local itself, and the industrial territory tributary to Chicago, but also from the fact that this is the headquarters of the old Party régime. The Chicago movement has never had distinctive local character, because its leadership has been tinged with the Party officialdom coming from all over the country.

But the point to be emphasized is the organized character of this Left Wing victory. To the Right Wingers and Centrists this was the mystifying and annoying circumstance. They could understand lots of more or less aimless talking and more or less confused voting, but the sight of a solid Left phalanx of about 400 votes out of some 650—a solid, fairly uniform vote, going with a definite, clear-cut program, carefully discussed and criticized for weeks ahead,—that was not their idea of a "Socialist convention."

The first and perhaps the clearest test vote came with the election of the Resolutions Committee, after Comrade William Bross Lloyd had easily been

seated as Chairman as the Left Wing candidate. The highest vote for one of the official family as candidate for the Resolutions Committee was 177; one of the most popular Socialists in Chicago, who has failed to make clear his understanding of and alignment on the issues before the Party and may therefore be characterized at the moment as Centrist, received 236 votes; while the five Left Wing candidates averaged close to 400 votes, the high vote going to 442.

The representative character of this Convention is evident from the large number of delegates and the high attendance, the basis of representation being 1 delegate to 10 members. The general issues to come before the Convention had been discussed more or less thoroughly in something like 50 branches, so there was nothing here in the nature of surprise or hasty judgment. The main portions of the resolutions had been published in the Chicago Socialist two weeks before the Convention, and a series of debates had been staged between representatives of the opposing camps.

The Left Wing movement in Chicago, taking its theoretical initiative in the work of the Communist Propaganda League, had assumed definite organization character in about two dozen of the most important branch units of the city. Under the able and aggressive leadership of Comrade Alexander Stokliitsky, now acting as Translator-Secretary for the Russian Federation, the Russian-speaking branches have received intensive education in the principles of revolutionary Socialism. The Lithuanian Translator-Secretary, Comrade Stilson, the Lettish Secretary, Comrade Purin, the Hungarian Secretary, Comrade Frankel, and many others in the "language" groups have co-operated ably in a dual educational-organization campaign, which showed its results at the Cook County Convention, and is bound within a few months to compel a clear alignment of the American Party with the Communist International.

Some of the fundamental snobbery and narrow nationalism of the Right Wingers displayed itself in clumsily indirect insinuations about the "alien" character of the Left Wing—while over-protesting their own adherence to Socialist internationalism!

This much detail is given to emphasize the organized character of the Chicago Left Wing strength. There is not a branch in the city or country without Left Wing adherents, but the assured control lies in the two dozen or more branches which stand as units on a well-defined program of revolutionary Socialism. This control has already reflected itself sufficiently in the county organization to assure the Left Wing of the fruits of its victory in relation to the local Party press and other official activities.

On the other hand the demoralization of the "politician" element displayed itself in an almost ludicrous bolting of the Convention during its second session. The Napoleon of the exodus, which took about 5% of the Convention, certainly less than 10%, was our quite amiable Comrade Seymour Stedman, who momentarily forgot his responsibility as one of the National Executive Committee and forgot to use his own better judgment. This hand-

ful of delegates, who had been insistent for a half a year that somebody was trying to split the Party, when faced with the realization that the Party was re-organized right under their eyes, without a murmur about a secession, decided to prove that there was a desire to split the Party by trying a little splitting on their own account.

The Convention went through its three sessions of May 18th without a word of curiosity about the bolters, and with relief from their silly tactics of time-killing and obstruction. The opposition to the Left Wing expressed itself in debate and questioning; and the opportunity for real discussion was never cut off by the Left Wing. About all the writer heard of the bolters was that they started a meeting in a nearby hall, but soon came to the conclusion that no one knew what they wanted to do. It was quite apparent that all except the most conspicuous figures finally found their way back to the Convention.

Only Stedman is named from among the little band of bolters because the writer is confident that Stedman regretted his excited action within an hour after the secession; and this typifies the Convention split as not at all a forecast of any rupture in the local organization. Stedman absolutely realized at the opening of the Convention that the Left Wing had a solid two-thirds vote, which would have easily increased at once if the fight had been made on principles, instead of through sharpening lines by dilatory jockeying which compelled a seemingly harsh offensive on the part of the Left Wing. If anything further is heard of Party-splitting in Chicago, Stedman and his dozen or so of official lieutenants will stand convicted of a pre-calculated design toward that end; at least, the deliberate raising of the vanity of personal opinion, or lack of basis for intelligent opinion, above the level of devotion to the Socialist movement.

So much concerning the mechanics and history of this important Convention. Its contributions toward the working out of the new character of the American Socialist movement, in terms of program, tactics, and questions of party organization will tactics and questions of Party organization will

One comment is made now to counter the impression of an organized vote as indicating a follow-the-leader Convention, all rehearsed in advance. As emphasized above, the main Party issues had been thoroughly discussed in advance and the results reduced to definite form, but without prompting or even the co-operation of those conspicuous on the floor for the Left Wing, there were resolutions introduced touching every instant proletarian fight of revolutionary significance. The comrades abroad and our own class-war comrades in the jails, the strikers of Lawrence and Winnipeg, and the fighting I. W. W.—the revolutionary proletarians everywhere were recognized in kinship in that Convention in the most convincingly genuine way that the writer has ever witnessed in any Socialist gathering. And it is this spontaneous sensitiveness to the world fight of the rising proletariat by the conscious American proletarians which is the vitality of the revolutionary Socialist movement in the United States.

"Regular Party Channels"

AS a few glaring examples of the democracy with which our Party machine works, I like to cite you the following: I am a member of the 5th A. D. of Bronx. Local Bronx submitted to its membership a resolution to affiliate with the Left Wing Section and a resolution by counter-resolutionists (I had almost written counter-revolutionists). At the last meeting of the 5th A. D., which was held on May 27th, discussion and voting on these two resolutions was the special order of business. The Branch had decided that Branch members be given preference in the matter of discussion, and that outsiders would only be permitted to take the floor after the last Branch member who wished to discuss this matter had spoken. At about 10 P. M. Comrade Cook, the State Secretary, Comrade Anna Stern, the Local Secretary and a half dozen or more Right Wingers entered our club rooms. Comrade Cook stated to the chairman that he had a very important report to make which would be supplemented by the Executive Secretary of the Local. We stopped the discussion and gave him the floor. After stating his intention to be fair to both sides in the matter, he produced certain ballots of Left Wing Branches on the National Referendums, which he claimed were fraudulent, the evidence being that several of them were in the handwriting of the same individual, that certain foreign language Branches had voted en bloc for certain candidates, and that certain ballots had votes crossed out for certain

individuals and others substituted. The Local Secretary "reported" practically to the same effect. It is to be noted that neither the State Secretary nor the Local Secretary had ever before appeared at the Branches to "report," and that the evident intent of these "reports" was to prejudice the membership against the "Left Wing" at the very moment when they were about to vote on the Left Wing resolution. No questions, however, were permitted to be asked of either the State or Local Secretaries, and after making their so-called reports, they departed their several ways.

The next day the State Secretary called me up on the wire and asked me how the vote stood on the Left Wing resolution; incidentally he was interested to find out how our Branch took his revelations of "fraud" and "forgery." I explained to him that as far as I was concerned, his evidence did not impress me at all; that anyone familiar with Party affairs knows or should have known that the foreign language Branches generally vote as a unit, and that, being illiterate, the Secretary or some other literate member generally marks and signs the ballots for them. He confessed that he was ignorant of this fact, but that when he had shown several of the ballots which appeared to him to be suspicious to "prominent Socialists," they immediately yelled "fraud" and "forgery." He admitted to me that he had not investigated a single suspicious case to ascertain whether or not there was really "fraud" or "forgery," but nevertheless he was not

going to count or consider the vote of any Branch or Local which appeared to him to be fraudulent.

Subsequently I had been informed by several "prominent" members of Local Bronx, that all those Branches in which the votes on the Left Wing resolution predominated over the votes on the Right Wing resolution, would be "disorganized" and "re-organized" so as to include none but "loyal" members.

Last night, when I appeared at the Local headquarters to attend the "Right Wing caucus" in response to their invitation, I sought confirmation of the fact that those Branches where the Left Wing resolution carried a majority would be dissolved and re-organized, from the Local Secretary. She stated that she believed that to be the fact, but referred me to the State Secretary. This morning I called up the State Secretary on the phone and informed him that I had been referred to him for information; that our Branch meets tonight, and that before handing in our ballots we wanted to know whether we would be penalized for voting on a referendum submitted to us, not in accordance with the wishes or desires of the powers that be. He refused to definitely state his position or the position of the state office in the matter, and referred me to the Local Secretary. However, he stated his opinion to be that a Branch whose majority had voted in favor of the Left Wing resolution would be dissolved.

June 3, 1919.

BELLE ROSEN.

Proletarian Dictatorship

ONE of the most frequent criticisms directed by the Right Wingers against the Communist position assumed by the Left Wing (and this exactly parallels the European Social-patriots' criticism of Bolshevism), is that the Left Wing repudiates Democracy and stands for Dictatorship—Proletarian Dictatorship, it is true, but still, Dictatorship. The bad Bolsheviki, who are pictured in the bourgeois press and the corridors of the Rand School as advocating disembowelment, mayhem and the suppression of all our "hard-won liberties," are described as endorsing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat out of sheer devilishness.

Socialism is a science. Marx scientifically proved that Capitalism generated within itself the forces which would destroy it; and that it also generated the class-antagonisms which would unite the workers to rise against it, and finally to overthrow it. He also predicted that during the transition period between Capitalism and Socialism, the working class would be the ruling class; and, to make his meaning perfectly clear, he went on to say that this working class rule of society in transition "cannot be anything else but the dictatorship of the proletariat."

There are very few Socialists today who do not see that Capitalism is approaching its doom with tremendous speed; that the forces generated within the system have, under the intensifying pressure of war, finally burst it asunder. Also, the very desperation with which Capitalism attempts to reconstruct the shattered world, reveals in all its naked class-character as the Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie. This, with gigantic strides, is awakening and uniting the working class, and sharpening its class consciousness to the point of action for the overthrow of Capitalism. So are the main points of Marx's thesis proven true.

We American Socialists have had so little to do with shaping the course of working class action, that we find ourselves taken unaware by such demonstrations of working class mass action as the strikes in Seattle, and the general strike in Canada. After all, these strikes, which began as demands for immediate and temporary aims, developed a revolutionary character, in that, for a short time, they displaced the capitalist political government by a government of their own.

This characteristic of the Seattle strike, and more particularly of the Canadian strike, must be em-

phasized. The Seattle workers, after they had tied up the city, discovered that a human community cannot be tied up. The workers must be fed, the sick must be attended, the dead buried, refuse removed, and lights, water and such public needs supplied. Moreover, the city must be policed.

The Strike Committee thus found itself "licensing" certain industries and services to operate, in order that, primarily, *the working class should not suffer*. The restaurant and hotel employees being also on strike, the Committee established its own restaurants. In order to safeguard lives and goods of the workers, a proletarian police was established.

In Winnipeg and Toronto today the same condition is observable. The General Strike, by paralyzing industry, paralyzes government. The Strike Committees are forced to rule the cities, to "exempt" certain industries and services in order to provide for elementary human needs; they must police the cities themselves. Willy-nilly, this "production for use and not for profit" is undertaken for the benefit of the workers. It displaces the capitalist government which operated for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. It proves that the capitalist government is incapable of acting for the benefit of the working class; but what is more important, it shows up in glaring colors the class-character of capitalist government, which in time of labor troubles always acts as the agent of the bourgeoisie against the working class, and must be replaced by a working class government of a peculiar working class character whenever the working class becomes the ruling class, as it is today on a small scale in some Canadian cities.

And here another of Marx's predictions is proven correct. This government of the workers "cannot be anything else but the dictatorship of the proletariat." And still another, demonstrated to all who have eyes to see, that "the working class cannot simply laid hold of the capitalist state machinery and use it for its own ends."

An editorial in the *New York Times* of Monday, June 2d, sums up the situation from the capitalist point of view:

CANADA'S PROBLEM

"In form it is a strike that is on in Canada. In intent it is revolution. The Government is inactive and seems powerless. Let us not be too quick to condemn the Government for inaction. Under the laws, Governments are not empowered to act unless there is violence. There are no riots worthy of the name; the 'strikers' simply assume the government of a town, the police and firemen join them, and there is no overt act of which to take cognizance. Yet nothing is done in any of these cities except by permission of the local Strike Committee. In Winnipeg the milk and bread wagons run by such a permit. The Post Office employees join the strikers in one city after another, and the mails are delivered only as the Strike Committee permits. The police of Winnipeg joined the strikers at first, but when the Winnipeg authorities proposed to raise a new police force the regular one returned to work. This sounds encouraging until you hear the

reason. They returned to work so there should be nobody to interfere with the strikers, who as yet had committed no overt acts of disorder. In Calgary the mails are being distributed by volunteers, the regular postal force having quit. Volunteer fire departments are springing up through the West to take the places of the striking firemen. And all these strikes, even those of the Government employees, are sympathetic strikes.

"The banks of Winnipeg have closed their doors because they cannot do business with the mail and telegraph services disrupted. 'At the Fort Garry Hotel,' says a correspondent, 'meals are served only to women and children,' perhaps by gracious permission of the Strike Committee. In consequence of the desire of some strikers to get something to eat, the Strike Committee granted a permit to several restaurants in Winnipeg to keep open. It also permitted some bakeries to reopen on condition that they placed themselves under its jurisdiction.

"Our own laws may be different from those of Canada. Certainly the sanctity of the mails would not be interfered with without civil war. But as things stand, the Dominion is faced with a problem which its laws seem powerless to avert. The House of Commons will debate the question today. Surely some way must be found by which a menaced Government may find a weapon with which to strike back and save itself."

From this editorial may be gleaned a hint of what would happen to such strikers in the United States. If there are no laws to interfere with peaceable strikers, the American government would pass them. If there were no riots to provoke massacres, the American capitalist class, and its press, would create them—as it has in other strikes we know of.

At present the Canadian Government does not seem to know what to do. But depend upon it, the capitalist government will find a way. It will suspend its own constitutional guarantees, it will abolish its own democratic political machinery. It will either yield the (at present) moderate demands of Canadian labor—and then emasculate its concessions—or it will find a way of applying force which will break the strike.

Then the workers of Canada—and we hope, of the United States—will learn the final lesson which proletarian revolutions all teach, and which Marx formulated:

"If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class; if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and as such sweeps away by force the old conditions of production; then it will, along these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms, and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class."

It matters not that the Canadian General Strike, and the Seattle Strike before it, were declared for the most elementary immediate demands. The process of the strike, and the logic of its inevitable conflict with the government, cannot fail to drive home the lesson that *no lasting working class reforms are possible under capitalist government; only the overthrow of the capitalist system, and the establishment of Proletarian Dictatorship, can solve the workers' problems and at the same time forever put an end to the class struggle.*

Open Air

MASS MEETING

To Demand "Hands Off Russia!"

To be Held at Second Ave. and Tenth St.,
Friday Evening, June 6th.

The following speakers will address the Meeting: John Reed, Rose Pastor Stokes, Jim Larkin, Dr. Morris Zucker.

Joseph Brodsky, Chairman.

Auspices 8th A. D., Socialist Party.

COME IN MASSES!

LEFT WING PICNIC

Sunday, August 24th, 1919,

at

HOFFMAN'S PARK,

Eastern Boulevard and Fort Schuyler
Road, Westchester, Bronx, N. Y.

Oriental Dances by Miss Katayama and Troupe.

Other attractions to be announced later. A Red Picnic—A Great Time—For a Red Cause. Men, Women and Children of the Working Class. Come and enjoy yourselves!

Picnic starts 10 A. M.

Arranged by the Left Wing Members of the Bronx. Admission, 35c.

HELP THE 1st A. D. REFURNISH ITS HEADQUARTERS

WHEN the furniture was stolen from the headquarters of the 1st A. D. the members found themselves confronted with the task of rebuilding, reorganizing and at the same time continuing their propaganda.

Will five hundred Comrades donate One Dollar each to help maintain this vitally necessary organization?

Address All Communications to

HARRY M. WINITSKY,
180 Henry Street

Kings-Queens Picnic

on

Sunday, June 8th, 1919,

at

Gerken's Cypress Hills Park, Cypress
Avenue, L. I.

Tickets 15c in advance, 20c at the gate.

Take Myrtle Avenue "L" to Wyckoff
Avenue and transfer to Cypress Hills car.

Gate open at 10 A. M.

Grand Pic-Nic

Sunday, June 8th, 1919

To celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of
the Estonian Socialist weekly,

Uus Ilm

to be held at Eastern Boulevard Park,
Westchester, Fort Schuyler (former Hoff-
man Park).

Tickets: In advance, 25c; at the gate 35c.

The Communist Book Department

The Communist asks all members of the Left Wing to order literature through our new Book Department. From time to time we shall publish books and pamphlets of importance to revolutionary Socialists.

A New Letter to the Workers of Europe and America. . .

By N. Lenin

Price, 5 cents. Bundles, 10 to 100, 3½ cents.

Lots of more than 100, special rates.

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John Reed's Story of the Bolshevik Revolution. Autograph Edition.

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Official Report of the Russian Soviet Government on all Activities and Achievements of the Proletarian Republic from November 7th, 1917, to December, 1918. About 400 pages. Paper cover.

Price \$1. Special Rates for quantities.

Send all orders to Benjamin Gitlow, Business Manager, The Communist, 43 West 29th St., New York City.

The Pink Terror

VI. Unrestricted Submarine Warfare in the 1st A. D.

"And lo it came to pass that the bellies of the transgressors were pinched with hunger."

THE Plunderbund of Local New York Executive Committee stared at one another in consternation. What had they done? True, they had accomplished their ambition, the Socialist Party in Local New York was purged—nine-tenths of the members had been expelled or suspended, and almost every Branch had been reorganized out of existence.

But, they suddenly discovered, they had killed the goose that laid the golden eggs! No more members—no more dues stamps! No more dues stamps—no more soft jobs! No more Branches—no more well-paid lectures for the Inner Circle! No more membership—and the Party "leaders" would have to make a living out of the Labor Party! Of course the Semi-Comrades didn't mind *that*; but after all, the Labor Party was a bird in the bush, and there would be competition for the jobs. . . .

A gloomy silence fell, broken only by an occasional clicking sound as some Semi-Comrade tightening his belt another hole.

The Chief High Proletarian turned the pages of his Branch Directory. "They've all been reorganized," he muttered, dolefully. "Or at least we've sent out letters inviting them to a reorganization meeting."

"But how about the Party property?" asked Meyer London's lieutenant, with a spark of hope.

"The Left Wingers kept most of it," responded the Chief High Proletarian. Silence again fell.

The Professor of Household Economy at the Rand School cleared his throat.

"Er—didn't we—that is to say, some of us—remove the furniture from the 17th A. D.?" he asked hesitantly. The—er—proceeds—"

The Congressman's lieutenant answered harshly, "We deposited the cash in the same bank with Meyer London's Campaign Fund." He flicked a dust-mote from his new trousers.

"Well," said the Professor of Household Economy, "we've got to raise funds from somewhere."

There was a general growl of assent.

"Aren't there any Branches with good furniture not yet re-organized?" asked someone.

The Chief High Proletarian turned the pages of his book. "There is the 1st A. D.," he said. "But I've already sent letters out calling for a re-organization meeting tomorrow, Thursday, May 29th. We can't take action until we see how the Branch behaves. I have hopes that most of the members will be with us. . . ."

"O pooh!" responded the Congressman's henchman. "Don't get sentimental. The rank and file is all Left Wing, and must be expelled, if we're going to have a decent Party. Don't worry about them."

Now up spake Alderman Calman, who, as the Pioneer Furniture-Snatcher of the Socialist Party, was listened to with great respect upon this subject.

"The police force is very busy gathering evidence against the Left Wingers for the District Attorney," he said. "And I would prefer that we do not disturb them."

"It is not necessary," remarked the Professor of Household Economy. "The same results can be obtained if we give interviews to the reporters of the capitalist press. Perhaps you are afraid?"

The eyes of the revolutionary Alderman flashed. "By my Victory Arch," he cried. "By the War Saving Stamps and two Victory Loans I swear that I am afraid of nothing—that is, almost nothing. But I think that someone else should do the job this time. . . . I'll give you the telephone number of a Tammany truck-driver who used to drive Scheidemann's carriage when he visited New York. . . ."

"What's the market-price on second-hand furniture down in your ward, Alderman?" asked the Chief High Proletarian. The Socialist legislator did some rapid figuring. "I estimate that the 1st A. D. furniture ought to bring in enough for crullers and coffee all around in the Cafeteria downstairs," he replied.

The next morning a little group of Semi-Comrades, led by Mitchell Loeb, filed down through the East Side. Great self-control was needed to prevent the sturdy little band from disrupting as they passed each bakery, but conscious of their revolutionary mission, they achieved it.

About 8 A. M. the conspirators gathered in the *Forward* office to plan out their campaign. There

were present Mitchell Loeb, leader of the raid; Leventhal, Miller and Needleman—the only three Right Wingers in the 1st A. D.—and two utter strangers, who came along because they knew how to use brass knuckles. An Alderman being necessary, Charney Vladek was called in for advice.

About 8 A. M. they approached number 180 Henry Street, and making deaf-and-dumb signals to Scheidemann's former coachman, who was present with a moving van, they stole up the steps of the 1st A. D. headquarters.

At a concerted signal they burst in at the side door. The House Chairman, Comrade Furman, who happened to be in the hall, manifested a mild objection to the proceedings. Mitchell Loeb seized him by the throat, and said that if he made any objection, he would be black-jacked. Loeb still further intimidated the House Chairman by threatening to "call the cops and have him locked up." Then they began to carry off the furniture.

They took everything, including the piano, cut down the chandeliers and broke the electric wires, and then broke up or tore in pieces all objects which they did not think worth while taking.

The furniture belonging to the Y. P. S. L. circle they left—because, after all, Semi-Comrade Spector is trying to soft-soap the Yipsels, and it wouldn't do to offend them at this stage of the game.

They also left two other objects—one a picture of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and the other a placard inscribed, "Free All Political Prisoners!" When asked why they had overlooked these things, one of the bandits replied, "Aw, we only took *Socialist* property. . . ."

That evening at six a convivial party of "prominent Socialist leaders" was seen making merry at a table in the Rand School Cafeteria. The board groaned with piles of shredded wheat, and foaming flagons of Postum. . . .

But at the re-organization meeting of the 1st A. D. only three members showed up, looking extremely nervous; one of these had never attended a meeting of his Branch since Morris Hillquit was a small boy. And meanwhile, in their empty headquarters, one hundred and fifty members of the 1st A. D., who refused to be re-organized, met in regular session.

The Communist Party of Lettonia

By O. Preedin

THE first Lettish Party was organized at a secret meeting in Riga on June 7, 1904. The delegates to this meeting were sent by different Socialist groups and represented about 2,500 secretly organized members in different parts of the Baltic Provinces. The new party was named the Lettish Social Democratic Labor Party.

As is expressed in the name Lettish, the Party was organized on a national basis. At that time the question of national organization was one of the most debated questions among the Socialists of Russia. The Jewish Socialist Party, "Bund", split away from the Social Democratic Labor Party of Russia because its "national principle" was not respected by all the other groups. The Bolsheviks as well as the Mensheviks recognized only the territorial basis of organization. Although our Party was organized as a national (language) organization, we did not accept the so-called "national principle of organization," but were led to this decision by merely practical considerations.

In all centers of Lettonia comparatively strong groups of other nationalities were already in the field. The Bund was very active among the Jewish workers, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks were active among the scattered Russians. It was impossible to unite all these groups in one territorial organization, and as a result there grew up disunited and rival factions all over Russia. Our new Party had at the beginning only a few able workers to tackle the gigantic task of converting the Lettish proletariat to Socialism, and this virgin field consumed all our energy; and it was chiefly for this reason that we remained for the time being as a national organization. The Party did not connect itself officially with any other Socialist groups, but the local organizations were allowed to co-operate with all Social Democratic groups working in their territory.

After a short time, by energetic education and organization work our Party gained the confidence of the working masses, and thus it was easy to form the "Federation Committees"—local representative bodies from all Social Democratic groups. In the "Unity Congress" in Stockholm in the early spring of 1906 all factions of the Social Democratic groups

in Russia formed one united party. The Lettish Social Democratic Party accepted the invitation to send fraternal delegates with instructions to work out plans for joining the Social Democratic Party of Russia.

At the third congress of the Lettish Social Democratic Labor Party it was unanimously decided to join the Social Democratic Labor Party of Russia. Immediately afterwards all the other Social Democratic groups working in Lettonia joined our Party and we re-formed it on a territorial basis under the new name of The Social Democracy of Lettonia.

In its program the Social Democracy of Lettonia differed from the general party only in one important point—the so-called agrarian program which our Party refused to accept. After this refusal we were granted full autonomy on this question, in view of the different developments in the agrarian

situation in our provinces. At present the Social Democracy of Lettonia is an integral party of the Communist Party of Russia and is now called the Communist Party of Lettonia.

During its fifteen years of existence the Communist Party of Lettonia has passed through two revolutions. In the first revolution of 1905, although the Party was only a year old, we were more successful in the actual revolutionary fight than any other organization.

The strong mass movement was in full control in our provinces under the undivided leadership of the Party. We did not organize Soviets at that time as was done in Petrograd, Moscow and many other cities in Russia because our Party was already the revolutionary Soviet, recognized by all the workers in the Baltic Provinces. In the country townships (volosts) revolutionary "Executive Committees" were organized by the Party to take the place of the local institutions of the Czar and the German junkers, who were the main landowners in our provinces.

After the failure of the revolution the Czar's armies smashed everything we had built up. Every roadside ran with the blood of executed revolutionists, hundreds of Lettish peasants' homes were burned to the ground and every repressive measure that Czarist brains could conceive was instituted. But even then our secret party organization was maintained. Even in the darkest days of reaction, during the wildest orgies of execution our Party continued with its work. Leaflets headed "The revolution is killed—Long live the revolution!" covered the posts on every pathway.

In the early morning, when the executions of arrested revolutionists usually took place, all over the land could be heard the cries of our Comrades as they were shot down: "Long live the Revolution! Long live Socialism!" And these last messages from our dying Comrades were not forgotten by those who remained on the job.

If Soviet Russia has now left one open road to the Baltic Sea, one opening in the long line from the Black Sea to the far north, then she and the world revolution must thank the uncompromising, insistent work of the Communist Party of Lettonia.

Exiled

By LOUISE BRYANT

*All day I walk
In a dream.
All night I toss
In bitter safety.*

*I die when each brave comrade dies,
Retreat when they retreat.
I stare into the dark
In unrelieved agony.
The hours drag on*

*Oh, for the sweet relief
To play with death again—
On the barricades!*

*What curse is on me
That I lie
Secure
When Petrograd is burning
And my heart is there?*