
Old Local Queens [NY] Votes to Leave Socialist Movement: Report of Meeting of Sept. 14, 1919.

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The following is a report of a meeting of the old Local Queens County held last Sunday [Sept. 14, 1919], indicating its withdrawal from the Socialist movement. The report is made by a member of the old local who was present and who took copious stenographic notes of the proceedings. The report is as follows:

Report of Borough Meeting of Queens County.

The attendance was at the start 100 and then grew to about 130. The meeting was called to order by Maurice L. Paul, and William Kohler of Astoria was elected chairman.

The report of the delegate to Chicago was the first thing on the order of business and Maurice L. Paul, one of the delegates, reported.

The report was about as follows:

Though I started for Chicago with misgivings because of the instructions for me to go direct to the Communist Convention, I learned and am convinced today that the only logical thing to do was to go to the Communist Convention, as we severed our relations with the Socialist Party and had nothing to do with that convention. The Communist Convention was based upon a program and principles which were sent out by the radical element of the Left Wing Convention [the June National Conference of the Left Wing], and your delegate felt that he represented that element in Queens County.

The actions at Chicago have proven that the action of the members to send me to the Communist Convention direct was right. The Socialist Party Convention was packed. For example, New York was represented by 36 delegates, whereas 36 delegates is out of all proportion to the true representation. The Communist Convention and the bolters' convention, or Kangaroos [the CLP], was made up of such comrades who fluctuated one way or another and knew not where to go.

There were 120 delegates at the opening of the

convention and 130 at the close, representing 55,415 members all over the United States.

The Communist Convention and the Communist Labor Party Convention were split on the point of federation control. The Communist Party is not controlled by the federations. The [Central Executive] Committee elected is representative and is not made up of a majority of Russians. The reason we lost out on the election of a committee to confer with the Communist Labor Party was because all those elected were opposed to letting into the Communist Party all elements who were not Communists, and we knew that many of those were not even Left Wingers.

A caucus was held and decided that we would go back to the convention the next day and refuse to participate in the new convention unless a committee were elected and we won out.

Two statements were sent to the Communist Labor Party Convention to come into us on condition that they submit their credentials and come individually. The Communist Labor Party held out for being let in a body, which was not granted. We did constructive work and there is no doubt in my mind that the foundation for a really revolutionary party has been laid.

Edward I. Lindgren was then given the floor to lay before the meeting a report of the Communist Labor Party Convention. He reported at length, pointing out that the real split in the Left Wing movement came not in Chicago, but at the Left Wing Conference in New York [in June 1919], when a small minority decided not to participate in the Emergency Convention [of the Socialist Party] called to clarify matters, but to go to Chicago and form a new Communist Party. The Communist Labor Party followed the mandates of their constituents in trying to go to the Emergency Convention and were consistent at all times; that the element in the Communist Party was dominated by the federations and that a foreign element could never amount to much in this country as a revolutionary party.

No Unity.

It was deplorable, said Lindgren, that a unity was not effected, though tried at various times, and that a unity ought to be brought about. The Communist Labor Party was willing at all times to confer with the Communist Party on condition that they confer with the Communist Labor Party as an organization and not as individuals. A committee had been elected to confer with the Communist Party and unity is hoped for.

Jay Lovestone took the floor to report on the Communist Party Convention also. His remarks were mostly personalities, and of all the speakers of the evening he seemed most bitter. His report tallied in other matters much with Maurice Paul's.

Local Quits Socialist Movement.

The final result of the meeting was that 3 resolutions were handed in. One by Maurice Paul, asking that Queens go on record as joining the Communist Party; one by N.S. Reichenthal, to hold off action for the present and to go ahead with the education of the masses along "Communist" lines, but to try to unite the shattered Communists and leave it to the members themselves to which of the two parties they wished to go if no unity could be effected. The third substi-

tute for the whole, by F.G. Biedenkapp, was to the effect that 5 delegates be elected with Communist Labor Party preference and 5 delegates with Communist Party preference; the two to discuss the matter pro and con and to call a borough meeting and to come before that borough meeting with a recommendation.

Attendance Dwindles.

By this time the number of the persons present had dwindled to about 90. There was much discussion on the various resolutions, and by the time the actual voting took place, which was about 7:30 pm (the meeting having started at about 3 pm), there were but 65 or thereabouts present.

The result of the voting was: Biedenkapp's resolution was defeated by a vote of 24 to 27; Reichenthal's resolution was defeated by a vote of 22 to 33; and Paul's resolution was adopted by a vote of 39 to 8.

A motion was then made to elect a committee of 15 to reorganize Local Queens for the Communist Party, which motion was declared out of order. A new motion to ask for a charter for a Communist Party from the Chicago office was carried; also a motion to call a borough meeting to elect new officials and give instructions to those officials.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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