
Sugarman Replies to Työmies: Says Finnish Machine is Menace to Party: Urges Election of Dirba as State Secretary.

by A.L. Sugarman

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(Note: The following article is submitted to us by Comrade Sugarman with the request that it be printed in full. Comrade Sugarman takes full responsibility for every statement therein. [—Jack Carney, Editor.])

An alleged socialist newspaper called *Työmies*, a rag which gained considerable notoriety during the great Mesaba strike a few years ago by advocating scabbery, in its issue of July 23rd [1918] carried a story denouncing the State Secretary of the Socialist Party [A.L. Sugarman], the Party itself, and devoted considerable space to urging the election of Anna Maley, one of the most reactionary socialists in the movement, to the position of State Secretary.

The charges against myself were for the most part so silly that no thinking comrade would place the slightest credence in them. For instance, the item stated that I wanted to go to jail for 3 years so that I could write books therein. Such a stupid statement is really beneath notice. I suppose [Jeremy] Bentall wants to go up for 5 years so that he can write a pamphlet on the farm question; I suppose [Allen] Broms went so that he could complete his work on psychology; I suppose Kamman, Ungar Tresseler, and the others are engaged in writing works on "The Joys of Being a Conscientious Objector"; and I suppose Carney is extremely anxious to get at least 10 years so that he can write a textbook in journalism!

Then [Henry] Askeli, the Finnish dictator, who nearly knocked down physically a group of Finnish comrades at the state convention because they voted "wrong" on a question, raves on — to say that he never gets reports from the State Office. Suffice it to say that

all reports going out from the office were mailed to all Translator-Secretaries. If they did not arrive, it is the fault of Uncle Sam; we are now getting mail at the State Office dated February and March [1920]. And then Mr. Askeli said that I delayed the election of my successor as Secretary, despite the fact that I have no more to do with the conduct of the election than Askeli himself. Such matters are handled by the State Canvassing Board, of which I am not a member.

As to the use of funds for defense purposes, what would these people have me do? If Bentall is arrested for making a socialist speech under our auspices, should I have him go to jail without a fair trial? If I was indicted because I went down to Henderson to organize a local, should I not be defended by the organization in whose service I was employed? Shall all these comrades be allowed to go to prison cells for long terms without a fight?

As to the blanket statement, wild charges that the office is grossly mismanaged, the fact remains that the membership is now 3500, whereas when I took office in February of last year [1917], it was less than 2,000.

The reason we have not lost considerably is the fact that we have taken an uncompromising stand as regards both the war and the Non-Partisan League. Neither the war gods nor Townley's fakers could crush us, and even Askeli's Finnish machine cannot do it!

As to the existence of a Finnish machine, Askeli's article itself urges the machine to get well oiled so that Maley can be slipped over on the membership as State Secretary.

Maley is an out and out compromiser. When

[Charles] Dirba resigned as city campaign manager because a motion prohibiting fusion with the old guard was defeated in Minneapolis, Miss Maley accepted the job gladly. She is campaign manager, editoress of the weekly paper, assistant secretary to the mayor, candidate for school board, and State Secretary all at once. A truly remarkable woman! When Carl Thompson was running the campaign in the National Office in 1916, Miss Maley was sent out as a speaker to tour the Pacific Coast at \$12.50 a day, with the provision that if there was no meeting, she should receive but \$10.00 — which I should say was a rather good salary from a working class organization.

Dirba is so far superior to Maley that there can be little comparison. By trade a bookkeeper and stenographer, he is easily able to handle the work of the office. His wide propaganda experience as Secretary of the Hennepin County organization makes him far the best fitted for the position. As to Miss Maley, she tried to control the movement in Washington but was driven out of the state. Comrade Wagenknecht, State Secretary in Ohio [and former Washingtonian], writes us that “outside of being a crook, a cheat, and a general good-for-nothing, she (Miss Maley) may be all right.”

Dirba is not an IWW, but he believes that socialism means socialism and nothing else. Both in matters of policy and efficiency, Dirba will make a secretary that will help the movement grow, whereas if Miss Maley is elected, it can be expected that our organization will lose its identity in a sea of Non-Partisanism.

Fraternally yours,

A.L. Sugarman.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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