
Call for a National Convention for the Purpose of Organizing a Communist Party in America.

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In this, the most momentous period of the world's history, capitalism is tottering to its ruin. The proletariat is straining at the chains which bind it. A revolutionary spirit is spreading throughout the world. The workers are rising to answer the clarion call of the Third International.

Only one Socialism is possible in this crisis. A Socialism based upon understanding. A Socialism that will express in action the needs of the proletariat. The time has passed for temporizing and hesitating. We must act. The Communist call of the Third International, the echo of the Communist Manifesto of 1848, must be answered.

The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of America has evidenced by its expulsion of nearly half of the membership that they will not hesitate at wrecking the organization in order to maintain their control. A deadlock has been precipitated in the ranks of revolutionary socialism by the wholesale expulsion or suspension of the membership comprising the Socialist Party of Michigan, Locals and Branches throughout the country, together with seven Language Federations. This has created a condition in our movement that makes it manifestly impossible to longer delay the calling of a convention to organize a new party. Those who realized that the capturing of the Socialist Party as such is but an empty victory will not hesitate to respond to this call and leave the "Right" and "Center" to sink together with their "revolutionary" leaders.

The majority of the delegates to the Left Wing Conference in New York meekly neglected to sever their connections with the reactionary National Executive Committee. Rendered impotent by the con-

flicting emotions and lack of understanding present, they continued to mark time as Centrists in the wake of the Right. Their policy is one of endeavor to capture the old party machinery and the stagnant elements who have been struggling for a false unity and who are only ready to abandon the ship when it sinks beneath the waves of reaction.

The condition confronting the minority delegates representing the following organizations: Socialist Party of Michigan, Left Wing State Convention of Minnesota, Locals Buffalo, Chicago, Union Local, NJ, Cudahy, Wis., Rochester, NY, Rockford, Ill., Kenosha, Wis., New York, Providence, Nanticoke, Pa., Milwaukee, Wis., Boston, Mass., Polish, Lettish, Russian, Jewish, Lithuanian, Estonian Federations of the Left Wing Conference has been met by the call for the organization of a Communist Party in America.

No other course is possible, therefore, we, the minority delegates at the Left Wing Conference, call a convention to meet in the City of Chicago on September 1st, 1919, for the purpose of organizing a Communist Party in America.

This party will be founded upon the following principles:

1. The present is the period of the dissolution and collapse of the whole capitalist world system, which will mean the complete collapse of world culture if Capitalism with its unsolvable contradictions is not replaced by Communism.

2. The problem of the proletariat consists in organizing and training itself for the conquest of the powers of the state. This conquest of power means the replacement of the state machinery of the bourgeoisie with a new proletarian machinery of government.

3. This new proletarian state must embody the dictatorship of the proletariat, both industrial and agricultural, this dictatorship constituting the instrument for the taking over of property used for exploiting the workers, and for the reorganization of society on a communist basis.

Not the fraudulent bourgeois democracy — the hypocritical form of the rule of the finance oligarchy, with its purely formal equality — but proletarian democracy based on the possibility of actual realization of freedom for the working masses; not capitalist bureaucracy, but organs of administration which have been created by the masses themselves, with the real participation of these masses in the government of the country — this should be the type of the proletarian state. The Workers' Councils and similar organizations represent its concrete form.

4. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat shall carry out the abolition of private property in the means of production and distribution, by transfer to the proletarian state under socialist administration of the working class; nationalization of the great business enterprises and financial trusts.

5. The present world situation demands the closest relation between the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.

6. The fundamental means of the struggle for power is the mass action of the proletariat, a gathering together and concentration of all its energies; whereas methods such as the revolutionary use of bourgeois parliamentarism are only of subsidiary significance.

In those countries in which the historical development has furnished the opportunity, the working class has utilized the regime of political democracy for its organization against capitalism. In all countries where the conditions for a worker's revolution are not yet ripe, the same process will go on.

But within the process the workers must never lose sight of the true character of bourgeois democracy. If the finance oligarchy considers it advantageous to veil its deeds of violence behind parliamentary votes, then the capitalist power has at its command in order to gain its ends all the traditions and attainments of former centuries of upper class rule, demagogism, persecution, slander, bribery, calumny, and terror. To demand of the proletariat that it shall be content to yield itself to the artificial rules devised by its mortal enemy

is to make a mockery of the proletarian struggle for power — a struggle which depends primarily on the development of separate organs of the working class power.

7. The old Socialist International has broken into three main groups:

(a) Those frankly Social Patriots who since 1914 have supported their bourgeoisie and transformed those elements of the working class which they control into hangmen of the international revolution.

(b) The "Center," representing elements which are constantly wavering and incapable of following a definite plan of action, and which are at times positively traitorous; and

(c) The Communists.

As regards the Social Patriots, who everywhere in the critical moment oppose the proletarian revolution with force of arms, a merciless fight is absolutely necessary. As regards the "Center," our tactics must be to separate the revolutionary elements by pitilessly criticizing the leaders. Absolute separation from the organization of the Center is necessary.

8. It is necessary to rally the groups and proletarian organizations who, though not as yet in the wake of revolutionary trends of the communist movement, nevertheless have manifested and developed a tendency leading in that direction.

Socialist criticism has sufficiently stigmatized the bourgeois world order. The task of the International Communist Press is now to overthrow this order and to erect in its place the structure of the Socialist world order. Under the Communist banner, the emblem under which the first great victories have already been won, in the war against imperialistic barbarity, against the privileged classes, against the bourgeois state and bourgeois property, against all forms of social and national oppression — we call upon the proletarians of all lands to unite!

Program of the Call.

1. We favor international alliance of the socialist movement of the United States only with the Communist groups of other countries, such as the Bolsheviks of Russia, Spartacans of Germany, etc., according to the program of Communism as above outlined.

2. We are opposed to association with other

groups not committed to the revolutionary class struggle, such as Labor Parties, Non-Partisan Leagues, People's Councils, Municipal Ownership Leagues, and the like.

3. We maintain that the class struggle is essentially a political struggle, that is, a struggle by the proletariat to conquer the capitalist state, whether its form be monarchistic or democratic republican, and to destroy and replace it by a governmental structure adapted to the socialist transformation.

4. The party shall propagandize class-conscious industrial unionism against the craft form of unionism, and shall carry on party activity in cooperation with industrial disputes that take on a revolutionary character.

5. We do not disparage voting nor the value of success in electing out candidates to public office — not if these are in direct line with the class struggle. The trouble comes with the illusion that political or industrial immediate achievements are of themselves steps in the revolution, the progressive merging of capitalism into the Cooperative Commonwealth.

The basis of our political campaign should be:

(a) To propagandize the overthrow of capitalism by proletarian conquest of the political power and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

(b) To maintain a political organization as a clearing house for proletarian thought, a center of political education for the development of revolutionary working class action.

(c) To keep in the foreground our consistent appeal for proletarian revolution; and to analyze the counterproposals and reformist palliative in their true light of evasion of the issue; recognizing at all times the characteristic developments of the class conflict as applicable to all capitalistic nations.

(d) To propagandize the party organization as the organ of contact with the revolutionary proletariat of other lands, the basis for international association being the same political understanding and the common plan of action, tending toward increasing unity in detail as the international crisis develops.

6. Socialist platforms, proceeding on the basis of the class struggle, recognizing that the socialist movement has come into the historic period of the social revolution, can contain only the demand for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

(a) The basis of this demand should be illustrated by the first steps and general modes of social reconstruction dependent upon and involved within the proletarian domination of the political life of the nation.

(b) The implications of this demand should be illustrated by the first steps and general modes of social reconstruction dependent upon and involved within the proletarian domination of the political life of the nation.

(c) A municipal platform of socialism cannot proceed on a separate basis, but must conform to the general platform, simply relating the attainment of local power to the immediate goal of gaining national power. There are no city problems within the terms of the class struggle, only the one problem of capitalist versus proletarian domination.

7. We realize that the coming of the social revolution depends on an overwhelming assertion of mass power by the proletariat, taking on political consciousness and the definite direction of revolutionary socialism. The manifestations of this power and consciousness are not subject to precise pre-calculation. But the history of the movement of the proletariat toward emancipation since 1900 shows the close connection between the revolutionary proletarian assertion and the political mass strike.

The mass action conception looks to the general unity of the proletarian forces under revolutionary provocation and stimulus. In the preliminary stages, which alone come within our predetermination and party initiative, the tactics of mass action includes all mass demonstration and mass struggles which sharpen the understanding of the proletariat as to the class conflict and which separate the revolutionary proletariat into a group distinct from all others.

Mass action, in time of revolutionary crisis, or in the analogous case of large scale industrial conflict, naturally accepts the council form of organization for its expression over a continued period of time.

8. Applying our declarations of party principle to the organization of the party itself, we realize the need, in correspondence with the highly centralized capitalist power to be combated, of a centralized party organization.

Organizations endorsing the principles and program outlined as a tentative basis for the organization of a Communist Party are invited to send delegates to

the convention in Chicago on September 1st, 1919.

The basis of representation to be one delegate for every organization and one additional for every 500 members or major fraction thereof.

Provided also, that each Language Federation shall have one fraternal delegate at the convention.

Provided further, that in states where the states are organized, they shall send delegates as states. In states which are not organized, the Locals shall send delegates as such. In Locals which are not organized, a part of the Local may send a delegate.

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