
Communique to the NEC of the Socialist Party of America Announcing the Result of Committee Motion No. 56 from Executive Secretary Adolph Germer, August 20, 1919.

A document in the Socialist Party of America Papers, Duke University, unspecified microfilm reel.
Photocopy in Tim Davenport collection.

Chicago, Ill., August 20, 1919.

Comment.

To the National Executive Committee.

Dear Comrades:

I report as follows:

**National Executive Committee
Motion No. 56.**
by Krafft.

Submitted August 1st. Closing date, August 13th.

“That the charter of the state organization of the Socialist Party of Ohio be revoked, and that National Secretary Germer shall recognize only such organization or organizations within that state supporting the policies and principles of the Socialist Party of the United States, as formulated by the latest national conventions and ratified by referendum.”

Vote.

Voting Yes: Berger, Hogan, Hillquit, Krafft, Oneal, Shiplacoff, Stedman, Work. (8)

Voting No: Holt. (1)

Refusing to vote: Wagenknecht. (1)

Not heard from: Clark, Goebel, Herman, Katterfeld, Mills. (5)

Motion carried.

Berger: “I vote ‘yes’ on the motion of Krafft to expel the Ohio state organization for plain and open violation of the National Constitution.”

Hillquit: “While I have some doubts as to whether the second and third grounds advanced by Comrade Krafft are sufficient to warrant revocation of the charter of the Ohio state organization, the facts recited by him as the first ground for such action seem to be conclusive.

“By officially declaring itself affiliated with the ‘section’ of the Socialist Party which endorses the ‘Left Wing’ program, the state organization of Ohio has clearly ceased to be an integral part of the Socialist Party as a whole, and to be governed by the platform, constitution, and decisions of the party as such.”

Krafft: “When I made Motion No. 56, I was not quite certain whether a lengthy comment to it was permissible. In my desire to be brief, therefore, it may be construed by some that I consider the action of the Ohio organization, in re: Special Assessment Stamps, a violation of the constitution, which is not the case. Such action shows an intent to cripple the National Office in the interest of the ‘new’ party.”

Oneal: “You can record me in favor of Krafft’s motion, though I regret that it is made in the way he submits it. Ohio, through its State Secretary [Alfred Wagenknecht], has gone farther than Massachusetts

in tearing the National Constitution to shreds, and a motion like this should be prefaced by the facts. Comrade Krafft contents himself with submitting only a few.

“Today I have in my possession a document sent out by Wagenknecht, one of the three ‘National Secretaries’ of the Lefts already have. This document together with Wagenknecht’s appeal to the states to withhold funds from the sale of mileage stamps, the action of his own state to withhold the, with the view of crippling the Emergency Convention, and other matters that I have not space to enumerate, places Ohio out of the Socialist Party.”

Stedman: “Commenting on Motion No. 56. While this motion in substance presents the question as to what should be done in view of the action taken by the Ohio State Convention of Socialists, I think it would have been in more accurate form if it was a motion to recognize the secession of the Socialist Party of Ohio from the National Organization.

“The Ohio Party adopted a resolution that the proceeds from the sale of special assessment stamps for the National Convention should be retained by the state treasury and disbursed for the expenses of the Ohio Socialists to the National Emergency Convention. In Illinois we have sold these stamps, the money realized to be used for defraying the expenses of all delegates. It is certain that the special assessment stamps were issued to raise the money for paying the expenses of all delegates who might attend the convention. There is no authority for the state organization of Ohio to take stamps issued by the National

Organization, sell them, and retain the proceeds.

“The statement in the Ohio State Convention proceedings that it shall be affiliated with that section of the Socialist Party which endorses the Left Wing program amounts to the declaration of a party within the party. Every state organization and the members can support any platform, or any manifesto that it wishes for the purpose of securing its adoption by the national organization, but when it does this recognizing bodies not affiliated with the national organization then it amounts to the effect of withdrawing from the national organization.”

Wagenknecht: “You know as well as I that the former National Executive Committee constitutionally ceased to function on July 1, 1919. It has no power to pass motions for the National Office of the party, nor have you power to put them.

“As a former member of the National Executive Committee, I refuse to consider Motion 56, which you mailed me, which relates to the expulsion of the Socialist Party of Ohio from the national organization. The power of the old committee to expel ceased July 1, 1919, and its every act since that date will be considered void by the membership as well as the national convention.”

Fraternally submitted,

Adolph Germer,
Executive Secretary.

AG/HG

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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