

The COMMUNIST

"All Power to the Workers!"

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA

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HAIL TO THE SOVIETS!

May Day Proclamation by the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America.

Workers of America!

Eighteen months have passed since the imperialist nations of the world signed the armistice agreement which was to bring to an end the slaughter of millions of workingmen upon the battlefields of Europe.

You were told that this war was a war of democracy against autocracy. You were told that out of the bloody struggle would come a better world for you. You were urged to give your labor without stint, to sacrifice your lives without question, so that the cause of "right" and "justice" might triumph.

For a year and half the representatives of the imperialists have been in control of the affairs of the world, wielding power such as few men have held in the history of mankind. Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and their lesser satellites, have re-shaped the world in harmony with "justice."

What has been the result of their labor, workers of America? What have the imperialist masters of the world achieved for you and for the workers of the world?

Have the glowing promises through which they tricked you into supporting their imperialist war been kept? Have they rebuilt the world upon the new foundation through which, they told you, the useless slaughter of the flower of the youth of the nations would be ended? Have they changed the conditions under which you gain livelihood, broken the strangling grip of the exploiters upon your throat and made your lot more bearable?

MAY DAY — Labor's International Holiday — is approaching. On May Day the revolutionary workers of the world will count their gains and losses; they will renew their courage and determination by recounting their victories, and pay tribute to those that have fallen as martyrs to their cause.

Dare you, workers of America, face the facts of the promises and performances of your masters, the ex-

plorers, to whom you have in the past given your support?

Eighteen months have gone since your masters won their victory for "democracy" and "justice". Look abroad in the world and witness their achievement!

The war is at an end, but war still goes on. On two continents, on many battlefields, men are fighting. The threat of war and yet more war hangs over the people of almost every country of Europe and America. Imperialistic ambition and greed — the desire to secure new economic resources for exploitation, which is the characteristic of every capitalist nation — are creating new jealousies and conflicts and continually threaten to again precipitate the people of these countries into the abyss of universal slaughter.

The economic system of Europe is in a state of collapse. The strivings of the "statesmen" at Paris have failed to put this machinery in order. The efforts of the "statesmen" have proven fruitless in the face of the contradictions of capitalist production which are destroying the system. All over Europe the workers are starving because the machinery of capitalist production cannot be set in motion again.

Financially the entire structure of the capitalist system faces collapse. Money is becoming valueless in many countries of Europe, because of the inflation during the war, and in the United States prices mount ever higher. The government has issued paper money and other forms of obligation, and destroyed the wealth these represent, and consequently the value of money has depreciated. The financiers of the world see their danger, but yet they can find no remedy. Capitalism destroys itself.

WORKERS OF AMERICA, YOU HAVE NOT THUS FAR FELT HUNGER, MISERY AND SUFFERING TO THE EXTENT OF YOUR BROTHERS IN EUROPE. BUT ALREADY YOUR MASTERS ARE WARNING YOU. THE BLACK CLOUDS ARE ON THE HORIZON AND THE MEN WHO KNOW THE

FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS ARE FORECASTING THAT BY FALL THE UNITED STATES WILL BE IN THE GRIP OF A PANIC WHICH WILL BRING INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSION, UNEMPLOYMENT FOR MILLIONS, WITH THE CONSEQUENT SUFFERING AND MISERY.

This is the reality of the "better world" with which the capitalists and their tools deluded you into fighting their battles. In place of a "better world" — economic breakdown and wide-spread misery and suffering. In place of "democracy" and "justice" — the brutal suppression of the workers as in the steel strike and the miners' strike.

There is only one way in which the workers can save themselves from the consequences of the breakdown of the present economic system. Capitalism has played its part in the history of mankind. It is no longer workable. It must be uprooted and destroyed, and a new system of industry built in its place. This is the historic task of the working class.

The work of destroying international capitalism has already begun through the splendid achievements of the workers of Russia. Consider Russia and the Communists who control the Soviet Government, and contrast it to the capitalist nations and their statesmen!

The Soviet Government was established in Russia after the old regime had brought about the complete collapse of the economic system in that country. In Russia the chaos existed toward which the capitalist system is tending everywhere. While in the capitalist nations things are going from bad to worse, the Communists of Russia are reconstructing the social and industrial system of that country. Attacked by the capitalist imperialists of the world, they organized the Red Army, which has been victorious on every front. While fighting the battle against counter-revolution, and hemmed in on all sides by the blockade of the Allies, they have still been able to achieve wonders in the work

(Continued on page 4)

Make the Party a "Party of action"

To the members of the Communist Party:

A situation has developed in the party which has compelled the Executive Secretary, supported by district organizers and Executive Secretaries of Federations and a minority of the Central Executive Committee, whose names appear below, to repudiate the authority of the majority members of the Central Executive Committee in order to prevent the disruption of the party.

This statement is submitted to present the facts to the membership and to enlist their co-operation in an effort to preserve the Communist Party of America against the destructive activity of the majority group of the Central Executive Committee.

The immediate circumstances out of which the situation developed will be made clear by the following statement submitted to the majority members of the Executive Council by the Executive Secretary:

April 8, 1920.

STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE MAJORITY OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

Comrades:—

At the meeting of the Executive Council on Tuesday I withdrew from further participation in the meeting when the Council made a decision which I considered an effort to bolster up the control of a certain group in the Council at the expense of creating a situation which might result in the disruption of the party.

Before stating the course of action which it is my intention to pursue, I wish to review the circumstances which lead up to this situation.

After the recent meeting of the Central Executive Committee opposition to the decisions of the majority group of the committee developed in the Chicago District. This movement, as expressed by the Chicago District Committee, which claims that it is but carrying out the wishes of the membership of that district, was based on the following indictment of the majority group of the Central Executive Committee:

1. That this majority group "packed" the Chicago convention through securing the election of about twice the number of delegates representing its viewpoint than any membership basis gave authority for, and through its caucus controlled the convention and placed its members in control of the party.

2. That since the convention this majority group, in place of devoting its energies to building up the party, has been largely concerned with the work of maintaining its control and has decided every question that has come before the Central Executive Committee from the standpoint of

its interests and the maintenance of its control of the party, rather than from the broader standpoint of building up a strong, unified Communist Party in this country.

3. That within a month after the convention certain individuals of this group, who largely controlled its actions, become more concerned with the question of obtaining for themselves junketing trips to Europe at the party expense than with any interest of the party.

4. That Comrade Andrew, after his designation as one of the delegates who were to go to Europe if a Congress of the Third International was held, began an intrigue to secure party funds to enable him to go to Europe, although no evidence was at hand that a congress was to be held. Immediately after the November meeting he attempted to have himself placed on the party pay roll on the ground that he must go into hiding in order to be able to fulfill his mission. On three occasions, through personal demands and through emissaries, he attempted to secure funds from the Executive Secretary, which were definitely refused by both the Executive Secretary and the Executive Council, then located in Chicago. That in furtherance of these personal schemes Comrade Andrew came to Chicago twice, and each time the money for these trips was voted out of the party treasury — the money for the last trip for two members of the majority group being voted out of the treasury by the majority group of the Central Executive Committee after it had been refused by the Chicago Executive Council. These efforts of Andrew culminated in his plan to leave the country as an International Delegate without authority of the party committee, in which plan, according to statements made before the Central Executive Committee, certain members of the majority group abetted him.

To secure funds for this unauthorized trip the party organizations were resorted to and a member of the Central Executive Committee is charged with having gone to Boston and represented to the District Committee that the Central Executive Committee had assessed the district \$100 for Comrade Andrew's trip. Later Andrew appeared and secured the money. Andrew himself confessed before the C. E. C. that he had secured money from party sources on the representation that a certain group considered the decisions of the governing body of the party wrong and therefore was raising funds for the trip as International Delegate contrary to the decisions of that body, which funds would be repaid by the party should this group be proven right by events.

In spite of the fact that Comrade Andrew's culpability was shown by his own statement, the majority group of which he has been a member has refused to even censure him, while on the other hand it has been quick to move against any member of the minority against whom the slightest pretext for action existed, notably in the Wicks case and the removal of Langley from the Executive Council.

5. At the January meeting of the Central Executive Committee this majority group was prevented from securing control of the Executive Council through an ultimatum from certain Federation representatives, who supported the former Chicago majority of the Council. This control, was, however, established by the removal of Langley, which was part of the plan to further trench the majority group. The contrast between the prompt action against Langley because he had missed two meetings of the Executive Council and the action in the Andrew case, who succeeded him as a member of the Council, is in itself the best kind of proof of the motives which govern the majority group.

6. That since it has been in office the majority of the C. E. C. has been completely taken up with the forwarding of personal schemes and maintaining its control and have not taken any constructive action in the interest of building a stronger organization. At no time has the committee considered the question of propaganda policy and the relation of the party to the working class movement in this country. What constructive propaganda and organization work has been done in the party has been done by initiative of the Executive Council while in Chicago and not dominated by the present majority group, and by the Executive Secretary.

7. That in dealing with the problems of re-organization after the January raids and the liquidation of the legal organization this majority group has decided all questions on the basis of its continued control rather than from the standpoint of the best interests of the party.

Personally, I am to a large extent in agreement with this indictment of the majority of the committee, but on the other hand I believe that any movement of revolt against the majority group, shortly before a convention at which all elements within the party would have the opportunity to present their case and at which the party will be definitely reorganized, cannot be justified, and would only result in the disruption of the party at a time when all our energies should be devoted to rebuilding our organization.

I went to Chicago with the purpose of presenting this viewpoint and convinced the committee that the only course to pursue, no matter how bitter the opposition to the majority group of the C. E. C. — and the opposition is bitter, was to go to the convention and fight for its viewpoint. I

went to Chicago to use all my influence to prevent a break in the unity of the party and succeeded.

I reported this settlement to the Executive Council last Tuesday, but in place of accepting it and thus expressing its co-operation in endeavoring to prevent a split in our organization, four members of the Council, representing the majority group of the Central Executive Committee, took action to maintain their factional control of the party — action which is bound to bring about a split — by voting to send a representative of this majority of four to Chicago with authority TO REMOVE THE DISTRICT ORGANIZER. This action was preceded by a proposal to remove the entire District Committee and to reorganize the District, which was only abandoned when it was shown by the minority that it would be impossible to carry out such a proposal because the membership of the Chicago District would not permit it. The four members of this majority (Andrew, Bernstein, Raphael and Sascha) also voted down my motion to refer the whole matter to the full C. E. C. (motion supported by Damon, Bunte and Braun.)

The sending of a representative of the majority group to Chicago with authority to remove the District Organizer can only have one purpose, and that is, to use the temporary authority of the present majority group to perpetuate its control by arbitrarily ousting those who oppose it. The removal of the Chicago District Organizer on this issue would be resisted by the District Committee and the membership of the Chicago District and would bring about a break in the party unity which I succeeded in preventing.

There is no other ground than an effort to perpetuate factional control to warrant the removal of the Chicago District Organizer. He is the most captable man in such a position in the party at the present time. The Chicago District reorganization has progressed farther than any other district. The Chicago District has turned over to the National Organization for the party work more funds during the last three months than all the other districts combined. Yet this majority of four members of the Executive Council in its desperate attempt to maintain its control of the organization is ready to summarily dismiss this District Organizer because he represents a different party viewpoint than they do, at a time when the party has been unable to secure competent men to fill similar positions elsewhere.

The proposed action of the majority members of the Executive Council (a bare majority of one, for the motion was adopted by a vote of four to three) is exactly parallel with the action of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party last year, when it expelled all those members of the party who opposed it, in order to make certain its control of the convention in August, with the

exception that in the Socialist Party there was the justification of a great difference of principle, while the action of the majority of the Executive Council is based solely upon motives of personal politics and control, even though it attempts to camouflage its motives by talk about "discipline" — discipline which it only invokes against those who oppose it.

In my activity in the party I have consistently stood against disruption and fought to maintain the unity of our organization. I do not believe there is any issue in the party at this moment which cannot be decided by the coming convention and leave the party united.

But I am faced with the necessity of choosing a course of action in a situation in which a temporary majority, a few weeks before a convention, threatens to bring disruption and disunity into the party in an effort to further, not the interests of the party, but its own group control. I have determined that it is my duty to the membership of the party to fight such disruptionist activity when it comes from a majority of the Executive Council, just as I fought it when it came from the Chicago District Committee.

I therefore make the following statement to the majority of the majority of the Executive Council:

Should it persist in the course of action determined upon at the last meeting and this result in the removal of the Chicago District Organizer and refusal of the Chicago District to further recognize the authority of the Executive Council and the Central Executive Committee until the convention, it will be impossible for me to continue to work with the present majority of the Executive Council. I will continue to conduct the work of the office of Executive Secretary and Acting Party Editor and will carry on the work of the party through the District Organizations, including the Chicago District Organization as now constituted, holding all funds and report of my work for submission to and disposal of by the convention.

DAVID DAMON,

Executive Secretary.

The submission of this statement compelled the Executive Council majority to change its position and to call a meeting of the Central Executive Committee, the District Organizers and the Executive Secretaries of the Federations. At this meeting an effort was made by the Executive Secretary and those supporting his position to effect an agreement to maintain the situation as it stood before the Council action, until a convention could be held. The agreement this group proposed is contained in the following statement which they submitted to be majority of the C. E. C.:

STATEMENT BY THE MINORITY GROUP.

The undersigned earnestly desire to prevent the development of a sit-

uation in the party which will result in disorganization and chaos at a time when all the energy of the movement should be directed toward building up a stronger organization and propaganda among the masses of the workers.

They believe that they represent the majority of the membership of the party and that it can be proven beyond doubt that their position in regard to organization tactics is supported by the membership, and that those who support the opposite viewpoint, although they may be in the majority in the C. E. C., do not represent the membership of the party. If the wishes of the membership should prevail, their plan of organization would be immediately adopted.

They cannot, therefore, accept the decision of a committee, which by every standard of judgment and experience, has been repudiated by the membership, but in order to preserve the party unity, propose an agreement on the following statement and conduct of the organization in accordance with same, until a convention can be held and the future of the party authoritatively decided:

That until the convention the existing facts in the party at the time before the meeting of the Council at which the controversy developed shall remain the status quo and neither the Executive Council nor the C. E. C. shall take any action to change the situation so far as the matters of controversy are concerned.

The status quo to mean:

That there shall be no change in District Organizers except to fill vacancies, until the convention.

That the Executive Secretary shall continue as Acting Editor.

On the last point we are willing to agree that two pages of each issue of the paper shall be set aside for each group for the publication of controversial articles. These two pages to be under the complete control of the respective groups.

In regard to the matter of expressing the party policies in harmony with the party program we agree that when the acting editor and associate editor disagree, the article shall be referred to the Council for final disposition.

We further agree, that the majority may send a representative to present its viewpoint to various party units.

Signed: David Damon, Executive Sec., Ed. Fisher, District No. 5, W. A. Davey, District 4-C, Polish Federation Representative, J. E. Wood, District 4-A, Esthonian Federation Representative, A. Smith, District No. 1, South Slavic Federation Representative, German Federation Representative, Ukrainian Federation Representative, J. Kasbeck, member of C. E. C.

The majority group of the C. E. C., however, refused to agree not to remove any District Organizer until the convention and insisted on appointing another editor with equal power with the party editor.

The majority refused to discuss the call for the Convention.

"TALK CONSPIRATORS"

While the insistence of the majority of the C. E. C., as above set forth, on its right to use its power for factional purposes, is the immediate cause of the repudiation if its authority, the fundamental causes lie deeper.

Since the beginning of the party there have been two viewpoints represented in the Central Executive Committee. The majority members of the committee considered themselves "great theorists". They constantly talked about the word "principle", but never about how to relate Communist principles to the working class movement of this country and to make these principles a living reality in action. Although the Manifesto of the party declared proudly that "the Communist Party is a party of action," the kind of action this majority believed in, was hours and days of sitting about a table wrangling about who should go to Europe and be the hero to announce the organization of the American Branch of the Communist International.

This majority talked about theory, but never discussed and applied their theories; they continually used the word "principle", but the principles they adhered to they kept sacredly hidden from the light of day. They believed themselves super-Bolsheviks and were quick to fling the epithet "Menshevik" at those who opposed them, but the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism they never discussed. They have been aptly designated "talk conspirators", who expect to establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat by hiding themselves away in some dark room and talking about theory and loudly shouting the word "principle"

In order to maintain themselves in the position of "leaders", this group pursued the policy of exclusiveness in their attitude toward party membership. They wished to keep the party a small sect of which they could pose as the high priests.

The Executive Secretary and the minority group, on the other hand, stood for a policy which would make the Communist Party in reality the "party of action" which its Manifesto so proudly proclaims it. They endeavored to relate the party to the life struggle of the workers. They sought to inject the party viewpoint in every struggle of the masses. They believed that a Communist Party should be, not a party of closet philosophers, but a party which participates in the every day struggles of the workers and by such participation injects its principles into these struggles and gives them a wider meaning, thus developing the Communist movement. It was the Executive Secretary and those who stood with him who initiated such efforts to make the party an organization functioning in the class struggle as the Gary leaflet at the time of the Steel Strike, the leaflet on the miners strike and even the recent leaflet on the Railwaymen's strike.

To break up our party into two organizations at a time when all our efforts have been hampered by the existence of two parties calling themselves Communist would be doing the greatest injury to the Communist movement in this country. While the majority group believes in splits and have made them part of their theory of action, the Executive Secretary and those supporting his position desire to preserve the unity of the Communist Party of America through the action of the membership of the party. They will take no steps to split the membership.

The Executive Secretary will continue to conduct the work of the organization through the District Organizers. In those Districts in which organizers will not work with the

secretary a new organizer will be appointed.

We urge every member to participate in the District Conventions in regard to which information will be conveyed to the membership by the District Organizers, and through these District Conventions to send delegates to the national convention. Thus they can themselves take control of the party, preserve its unity and elect such officials as will carry out their desires.

Let us build the party of action, the fighting organization which a Communist Party can be through the effort of the virile membership of our organization, which has already proven by its sacrifice in time of stress its willingness to give everything for Communist principles.

Hail To The Soviets!

(Continued from page 1)

of rebuilding and reconstructing the economic life of the nation so as to end exploitation and secure the necessities of life, education and recreation to those who work.

The means through which the workers have ousted their exploiters and carried on the work of reconstruction is the Soviet Government, through which is expressed the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The workers found that they could not exercise their power through the governmental machinery of their exploiters. They found that the state machinery of their exploiters, whether it appeared in the shape of the autocracy of the Czar, or in the shape of a so-called democratic parliamentary government, such as we have in the United States, was an instrument for their oppression which they must replace by their own institution of government before they could use their power and destroy capitalism.

THE SOVIETS — WORKERS' COUNCILS—ARE THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE POWER OF THE WORKERS. WHEN THE WORKERS OF HUNGARY WRESTED POWER FROM THEIR EXPLOITERS THEY DID SO THROUGH THE SOVIETS. WHEN THE WORKERS OF BAVARIA ACHIEVED THEIR VICTORY IT WAS THROUGH THE SOVIETS. IN GERMANY THE WORKERS HAVE FOUND THAT MODERATE SOCIALISM OF THE EBERT SCHEIDEMANN TYPE AND THE MILITARIST AUTOCRATS ARE EQUALLY THEIR ENEMY, AND THEY ARE FIGHTING AGAINST BOTH FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOVIET GOVERNMENT.

WORKERS OF AMERICA, YOU MUST JOIN IN THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD IF YOU WOULD EMANCIPATE YOURSELVES FROM CAPITALISM. The parties of your enemies the capitalists — the Republican and Democratic party — have proven to you that

they stand for your oppression and exploitation. Labor parties, Moderate Socialism, and the reactionary Trade Unions are merely the new tools through which the capitalists maintain their power when they can no longer dupe you by the old methods.

YOU MUST BREAK THE POWER OF THE CAPITALISTS. You cannot compromise with them as do the Labor Parties, the Moderate Socialists and the reactionary Trade Unionists.

You must develop your power through engaging in the present struggles against the capitalists. The general political strike is the means of expressing your power and the beginning of the revolutionary struggle which will finally establish the Soviet Government and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

While in this country we are not ready for the final struggle, the Communist Party of America calls upon you to show your power on May Day.

There are in the prisons of the United States hundreds of political and industrial prisoners whose only offense is that they fought the battles of the workers. Shall they rot behind steel bars forever? Other thousands are to be imprisoned and deported as the result of the effort of the capitalist government to destroy the revolutionary movement in this country. Are these workers to be removed from the class struggle while you remain silent?

STRIKE FOR THE RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL PRISONERS ON MAY DAY. CLOSE THE SHOPS AND FACTORIES. DEMONSTRATE YOUR POWER.

DEMAND THE FREEDOM OF THOSE WHO ARE IMPRISONED FOR FIGHTING THE BATTLES OF THE WORKING CLASS.

Make the slogan of the day: **ALL POWERS TO THE WORKERS.**

Hail to freedom for all political and industrial prisoners!

HAIL TO THE SOVIETS AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT!

An Open Letter To Eugene V. Debs.

Dear Comrade Debs:—

A year ago you were taken from our midst by the enemies of the working class and thrust into Atlanta Penitentiary — with head unbowed — hurling defiance at the Capitalist Government — the very incarnation of the proletarian revolution in America.

All through the war, while the leaders and officials of the Socialist Party were betraying the class struggle and making a hollow mockery of the St. Louis Resolution, you stood like a rock for International Socialism and against the capitalist-imperialist world war. Later, when the Bolsheviki conquered power in Russia and set up a dictatorship of the workers and peasants, you, Comrade Debs, came out for them in ringing words — while the officials and leaders of the Socialist Party were busy discrediting the idea of proletarian dictatorship as the means of overthrowing capitalism. You also came out openly for the Liebknecht-Luxemburg Spartacan revolt against the Ebert-Scheidemann bourgeois Government, while the official Socialist Party was, and is, defending those traitors and their government as "Socialist"

All your life you had championed the cause of the working class — all your life you had espoused the class struggle and the principles of International Socialism. Not without reason did the Communist Party of Russia (Bolsheviki) in issuing the call for the formation of a New International, invite "the left elements of the Socialist Party of America under the leadership of Eugene V. Debs" to send delegates to Moscow.

Before the prison gates closed upon you, you must have known of the long list of compromises and betrayals of which the leaders and officials of the Socialist Party had been guilty in the past. You must have known of the growing resentment of the rank and file within the party, which smouldered fiercely for two years and eventually burst forth into a conscious revolt against the official machine.

Your article in the February 1919 "Class Struggle", one of the organs of the Left Wing, of which you were one of the editors—"THE DAY OF THE PEOPLE"—was one of the factors aiding this revolt. We shall quote the last part of it in order to refresh your memory: "The reign of capitalism and militarism has made of all the peoples inflammable material. They are ripe and ready for the change, the great change which means the rise and triumph of the workers, the end of exploitation, of war and plunder, and the emancipation of the race. Let it come! Let us all help its coming and pave the way for it by organizing industrially and

Issued by the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of America.

politically to conquer capitalism and usher in the day of the people. In Russia and Germany our valiant comrades are leading the proletarian revolution, which knows no race, no color, no sex, and no boundary lines. They are setting the heroic example for world-wide emulation. **Let us, like them, scorn and repudiate the cowardly compromisers within our own ranks, challenge and defy the robber-class power, and fight it out on that line to victory or death! From the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am Bolshevik, and proud of it.** "The Day of the People has arrived!"

Thus spoke the man whom the capitalist class placed behind prison bars last year.

To-day, after a long tomb-like silence, comes the announcement of your acceptance as presidential candidate on the corrupt Socialist Party ticket.

We presume, Comrade Debs, that you are ignorant of the facts and unacquainted with all that transpired within the Socialist movement this last year, else you might not have accepted a nomination which can only lead to a parting of the ways between the class-conscious revolutionary workers and yourself, their one-time leader.

What made you accept the nomination we know not. We can only infer that the political charlatans, the "cowardly compromisers", who have not hesitated to lie to you in the past, have done so again.

We address this open letter to you because we desire to place the facts squarely before you. Your lifelong devotion in the cause of the working class, your attitude toward Bolshevism and the heroic Communist leaders, Lenin and Trotsky in Russia, and Liebknecht and Luxemburg in Germany, — your scorn and repudiation of the betrayers of Socialism and the class struggle, make it imperative that we acquaint you with the type of party and men you, in your ignorance of the facts, are aligning yourself with.

During this eventful year, while you have been kept behind prison bars, without chance of intercommunication, the Communist International has extended itself to every part of the world.

During this year, revolutionary Socialists of practically all countries have decisively cut themselves off from association with the old parties of the Second International and have formed new Communist parties. In this country the rank and file revolt led to the formation of a Left Wing movement within the Socialist Party, which culminated in September of last year at Chicago in the creation

of a Communist Party of America. Together with the Communist Labor Party, these two parties absorbed all the really revolutionary elements in the old party. Not more than one-fourth remained in the Socialist Party, notably the large Finnish Federation. The Finnish Communists have not yet split off from the Finnish Socialist Federation. The betrayers of Socialism, "the cowardly compromisers", as you called them, remained in the Socialist Party, and even now lead and shape its policies and tactics.

In the recent hearings on the ouster of the five Socialist Assemblymen at Albany, we have the last word of the highest Socialist Party spokesman on just what that party now stands for, and just how it intends to attain its aim. The entire defense of the Socialist Party at Albany was constitutional regularity as the limit of party purposes and actions. They accepted unreservedly the existing form of capitalist government, based upon the Constitution of the United States, as the form upon which to build the future society. They insisted that the Socialist Party did and always would conform to the State and National Constitutions and laws. Not the least mention was made of the class struggle. Instead, patriotism and loyalty was painfully and somewhat ludicrously stressed. The class character of American Government could hardly be mentioned since the Socialist Party boastfully proclaimed itself the arch-defender of "representative democracy" and of "constitutional integrity".

The St. Louis Platform, upon which you and others were convicted and sentenced to long prison terms, was brushed aside as "a scrap of paper" and as of no moment. Whatever was vital and revolutionary in it, even though moderately expressed, was twisted and distorted to rob it of its meaning and significance, and the witnesses all insisted upon their exemplary "loyalty" and "patriotism" during the war. In several other respects, in which the party declarations might seem to have offended bourgeois "respectability", the defense was that the party never did anything of the kind, no matter what it said. Control of legislative representatives by resignations, required by the party constitution, was declared a dead letter. The obligation not to vote for military appropriations was repudiated. Instead of insisting upon the propriety of alien membership in a working class political party, the Socialist Party introduced false figures to prove the "Americanism" of the party membership.

In spite of the achievements of the Russian Communists, in spite of the impending Communist revolutions in other European countries, the chief spokesman of the Socialist Party at Albany characterized the Communist

International as "scarcely more than an idea or a name". There was much insistence upon sympathy for Soviet Russia, but that is quite different from adherence to the principles and tactics of International Socialism as expressed in the Manifesto of the Third International.

There was no one at the Albany fiasco who did not disavow Bolshevism. Nay, more, Morris Hilquit even went so far as to answer a hypothetical question to the effect that the Socialists would shoulder arms and defend America and American institutions from invasion by the Bolsheviks, should the latter declare war on this country. While another Socialist lawyer at Albany, Seymour Stedman, former member of the N. E. C. and next choice of the Socialist Party after yourself for the presidential nomination, branded the Communist Party as criminals in the capitalist courts in order to steal from them their meeting hall in Detroit.

Never before did the Socialist Party of America revel in such orgies of "respectability", "loyalty" and "patriotism". With such men as Judge Hughes and Attorney General Palmer to rally to their defense, surely the Socialist Party has purged itself of every taint and suspicion of revolutionary Socialism! We need only cite the comment of the man responsible for the thousands of deportations and nation-wide raids upon the Communist organizations, Attorney General Palmer: "The Socialist Party in America has cast out the radicals and forced them to organize the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party. The Socialists are loyal and patriotic men though radical. Their aim is to change the government by lawful means, while the "Reds" would destroy lawful authority."

Never was there a more glaring climax of political irony than the publication, during the Albany affair, of the Socialist Party membership referendum vote in favor of allegiance to the Communist International — 3,475 to 1,444 in favor of allegiance without acceptance of its program and tactics, while openly repudiating every principle of Socialism for the sake of retaining a few seats in a capitalist legislature!

In striking contrast with the corrupt Socialist Party, which deceives the workers with the hope of a "peaceful" (!) social revolution" along the lines of parliamentary reforms, the Communist Party enters the parliamentary campaign for revolutionary propaganda and agitation only. Our slogan is "Down with the Parliament! Long live the Soviets!" The Communist Party utilizes parliaments in the same manner as did the Bolsheviks in the Czarist Duma, as Karl Liebknecht did in the German Reichstag — to assist in destroying the bourgeois parliamentary system. Since our object is the destruction of capitalism, and not carrying out the will of the capitalist class, which is, in fact, the only function of executive

officials, the Communist Party, in keeping with this general principle, has eliminated all executive offices from its ticket. From President down to Governor, Mayor and Judges, the Communist Party places no candidates in the field. In other words, the Communist Party is for the full utilization of the bourgeois parliament for our Communist work — as long as we are not yet strong enough to overthrow the Parliament — and not for social reforms and other palliative measures.

The Communist Party is waging the class struggle mainly through extra-parliamentary channels — mass action of the working class through general political strikes, mass demonstrations, etc. And in order to carry on the struggle effectively we call upon the working class to conquer the power of the State, establish the dictatorship of the working class in the form of Soviets or Councils of Worker's Deputies and to break the resistance of the bourgeoisie.

In January the Government staged a series of nation-wide raids upon the Communist Party with the express purpose of crushing it in its infancy. The very existence of a Communist movement is a serious menace to capitalism, and they know it. **But they did not succeed.** — The Communist Party of America cannot be crushed, neither by the Iron Heel of Capitalist Democracy, nor by the cunning stealth of the servile capitalist tools, the Socialist Party of America. They did succeed, however, in driving the Communist Party underground, where, coming directly in contact with the workers in the shops, mills, factories and mines, it receives new reserves of energy with which to carry on the class struggle to its final and inevitable outcome, the Socialist revolution — the overthrow of the capitalist state — the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and through it the Communist Society.

Between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party there can be no compromise. The latter is the most dangerous enemy of the working class, and as such, we shall wage a bitter, merciless struggle against it. The attempt of its leaders to use your name in order to fool the masses will avail them nothing. Their betrayal of Socialism has been too complete and too cowardly. Not even your name can hide their counter-revolutionary tendency. The class-conscious workers of America are through with the stinking carcass that calls itself the Socialist Party of America.

As for their hypocritical act of seeking admission to membership in the Third International without first accepting its principles and tactics — that is too palpable a fraud to warrant any serious consideration. They cannot be admitted so long as they repudiate, by words or by deeds, mass action, proletarian dictatorship and Soviet Power.

Your alignment with the Socialist Party, whether you will it or not, is an alignment against the Communist Movement of America — against the Communist International — against the world-proletarian revolution toward which our heroic comrades in Russia are looking for their salvation. It is against your own inspiring efforts for the working class in the past.

Comrade Debs, we have placed the facts before you. It is yours to choose. The comrades and the class-conscious workers everywhere believe that the shameful record of the Socialist Party since your imprisonment is as yet unknown to you. But if, after you have read this statement, which goes not only to you, but to the workers of this country, you still adhere to the Socialist Party, we shall have to conclude that you have cast your lot with the "cowardly compromisers", as you once called them, with the betrayers of the working class, with the betrayers of the class struggle, with the betrayers of Socialism — and we shall announce that fact to the working class.

The eyes of the revolutionary class-conscious workers of America are forced upon you at this moment. Can you remain a candidate on the Socialist Party ticket with these facts before you — realizing the significance of your candidacy in relation to your own life-work and the International Communist Movement?

Central Executive Committee
Communist Party of America.

The Communist

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David Damon,
Acting Editor.

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Editorial note:—

It is hardly necessary to explain to the party members either the irregularity in publication of "The Communist", nor that this and the next two or three numbers must be devoted primarily to the internal party problems to come before the Convention.

Communications as to party policies from any member or Branch can be transmitted to the Editor through your Branch Secretary and the District Organizer.

The International Communist Conference.

THE Conference of the Communist International, convened in Holland February 10-17, was an event of primary importance in the development of the International. In spite of the enormous difficulty experienced by Communists in moving from one country to another, the Conference met; and in spite of the Dutch police breaking up the meetings before our work was completed, the Conference transacted enough of its business to make it of fundamental value, — particularly in the development of a Communist International functioning actively and unitedly on a world basis, and in initiating the formulation and discussion of problems of party tactics and immediate action decisive for victory in the final struggle.

Organizations represented in the Conference were as follows: Communist Party of Russia, represented by mandate; Communist Party of Germany (Opposition); Communist Party of America; Communist Party of Holland; England: British Socialist Party, Workers' Socialist Federation, and the Shop Steward and Workers' Committees; Communist Group of Switzerland; and the Communist Group of the Socialist movement of Belgium. In all, 16 delegates were officially present; in addition, with a voice but no vote: a member of the Communist Party of Hungary, formerly in the Soviet Government there; a Chinese comrade; a representative of the Communist movement of the Dutch East Indies; and comrades Anton Pannekoek and Herman Gorter. After the Conference was dispersed there arrived delegates from the Communist Party of Germany (Central Committee), the Communist Party of Austria, the Communist Party of Roumania, and the Left Wing of the Socialist Party of Spain. F. Lorient, of the Left Wing of the French Socialist Party, sent a letter expressing regrets at not being able to come, and describing the French movement, its prospects and its defects, particularly lamenting the faith in "the unity of the party" which prevents the emergence of a Communist Party. The delegates who did come but could not participate in the Conference discussed problems with the Executive of the International sub-Bureau created by the Conference.

DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE.

1—The Conference adopted a declaration on Soviet Russia calling upon the workers of all countries not to allow peace with Russia to come through capitalist necessity, but to compel peace by means of revolutionary pressure upon the governments, urging three methods of action, mass demonstrations of protest, demonstration strikes, and coercive strikes, — coercive strikes being the decisive move to compel the acquiescence of

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the governments. The declaration repeatedly emphasizes the necessity of action, and authorizes the International sub-Bureau to issue a call for an international General Strike as the situation matures. The declaration, moreover, provides against repeating the fiasco of the July 21 strike initiated by the Socialist Party of Italy, by —

a) Instructing the Bureau to establish connections with each country to measure the sentiment prevailing; and insuring a period of intense preparatory agitation and organization.

b) Providing that the General Strike for Russia shall include political and economic demands in accordance with the revolutionary requirements in each country, thereby making the movement for Soviet Russia an integral part of the immediate revolutionary struggle of the proletariat

c) Avoiding the fundamental mistake of the July 21 strike of working through the bureaucracy of the trades unions, and urging that preparations for a General Strike shall proceed through the branches of the unions, extra-union organizations (such as the Shop Stewards and Workers' Committees of England), and the creation of extra-union organizations, if necessary.

2—The Conference adopted a thesis on Unionism, which I prepared and introduced in the name of the Communist Party of America, and which was adopted unanimously. This thesis constitutes the first authoritative utterance of the International on the Communist conception of unionism (in general, it agrees with a declaration of G. Zinoviev on Unionism); and it indicates, moreover, that the conception of Unionism developed by the Communist Party of America (which has been misrepresented and stupidly attacked equally by the I. W. W. and the Socialist Labor Party) is the identical conception of the Communist International. This is a summary of the thesis:

a) Unions are necessary organizations for the immediate struggle of the workers; in spite of their limitations they can, particularly as industrial unions, become active means of revolutionary struggle and a factor in the Communist reconstruction of society.

b) The trades unions, while means of resisting and often improving the most degrading conditions of Capitalism, are incapable of actually and materially improving the general condition of labor.

c) The trades unions developed during the epoch of small industry, and of intense national economic development (1870-1900); this circum-

stance, combined with the artisan conception of craft skill as a form of property, produced a property and pretty bourgeois ideology and the concept of limiting the struggle within the limits of Capitalism and the nation. The trades unions represented, and still largely represent, the skilled workers in the upper layers of the working class, the "aristocracy of labor."

d) The dominant trades unionism accepts Capitalism; and, under Imperialism, Capitalism seduces the "aristocracy of labor" with a share in the profits of Imperialism, by means of higher wages, labor legislation, and improved conditions generally; the upper layers of the working class using the trades unions to "stabilize" labor in industry and promote Imperialism.

e) Realizing its economic impotence (an impotence produced by nonrevolutionary purposes and an archaic craft form of unionism unable to cope with the concentrated industry of modern Capitalism) the dominant trades unionism turns to parliamentary action in the form of Laborism; and, as Laborism, trades unionism in its dominant expression merges definitely in State Capitalism and Imperialism. The tendency is for Laborism and Socialism to unite.

f) Laborism becomes the final bulwark of defense of Capitalism against the oncoming proletarian revolution. Accordingly, a merciless struggle against Laborism is necessary; but while expressing itself politically as parliamentarism and petty bourgeois democracy, the basis of Laborism is trades unionism; the struggle against trades unionism, therefore, is an indispensable phase of the struggle against Laborism.

g) This struggle against trades unionism must proceed by means of the Communist Party's general agitation to drive the unions to more revolutionary action, the formation of extra-union organizations such as the Shop Stewards, Workers' Committees and economic Workers' Councils, the organization of direct branches of the Communist Party in the shops, mills and mines, and the construction of industrial unions.

h) The agitation for and construction of industrial unions is a factor of the utmost importance in developing Communist consciousness and the final revolutionary struggle. But industrial unionism must recognize its limitations; it must develop the concept and practice, in co-operation with the Communist Party, of the general political strike. Industrial unionism cannot under Capitalism organize all the workers or an overwhelming majority; the concept of organizing, under Capitalism and gradually, workers' control of industry in terms of industrial unions, is an expression, inverted in form, of the concept of parliamentary acquisition of power

gradually and peacefully — the “penetration” of Capitalism by Socialism.

i) The objective of the class struggle is the conquest of the power of the state. The industrial unions (or the parliaments) are not the means for the conquest of power, but mass action, Soviets and proletarian dictatorship. The parliamentary and doctrinaire industrial union (Syndicalist) conception both evade all actual problems of the revolution.

j) After the conquest of power and under the protection of proletarian dictatorship, industrial unionism comes actually to function in the Communist reconstruction of society in terms of control and management of industry by the industrially organized producers.

3—The Conference adopted a thesis on Social Patriots and Unity, which I prepared and introduced in the name of the Communist Party of America, after adding one amendment strengthening the proposals. The thesis stresses the fact that the social-patriots and opportunists are the worst enemy of the proletarian revolution, with whom there can be no Communist unity or co-operation; and, moreover, it particularizes and accomplishes five very definite and practical things:

a) Provides that the Communist International reject the admission of any party or group (such as the Longuet “majoritaires” in France or the American Socialist Party) even should these affiliate with the Third International.

b) Rejects definitely the proposals of Jean Longuet, Morris Hillquit and the Independent Socialist Party of Germany for the organization of “another International” to include the social-patriots and opportunists of the Second International “and also” the Bolsheviks and the Communists.

c) Emphasizes the incompatibility of a Communist Party tolerating social-patriots and opportunists in the party (indirectly condemning the Socialist Party of Italy for not expelling its social-patriots and opportunists, particularly in the parliamentary group).

d) Uncompromisingly repudiates Communist Party co-operation with social-patriot or opportunist organizations, with bourgeois or social-patriotic parties, with parties affiliated with the Second International, or with the agents of Capitalism in the Labor movement. (This implies that the Communist Party about to be organized in England by unity of the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Party, the Socialist Labor Party, Workers’ Socialist Federation and the South Wales Socialist Society, must reject affiliation with the Labor Party — the British Socialist Party favors this affiliation, the others are against).

e) Rejects the concept of Communist unity “in general”, urging that unity must be based not upon formal acceptance of general principles, but agreement upon fundamental action.

The tendency of the thesis on So-

cial-Patriots and Unity is to preserve and strengthen the revolutionary integrity of the Communist International, to prevent the International being swamped under the onrush of undesirable elements from the Second International.

4. — The Conference did not act on the problem of Parliamentarism, being dispersed by the police. There were before the Conference three proposals on this problem — a thesis introduced by Anton Pannekoek, a series of amendments introduced by myself in the name of the Communist Party of America, and a resolution introduced by Sylvia Pankhurst — (Workers’ Socialist Federation of England) the tendency of which was to reject the Communist use of parliamentarism. The resolution of Sylvia Pankhurst would have received her own vote, and perhaps that of the delegate representing the Opposition in the Communist Party of Germany. The original thesis and the amendments would, I think, have been adopted substantially if not actually as proposed; they thus formulate the problem:

a) Parliamentarism is not the means for the conquest of political power — the proletariat must create its own organs of struggle and of state power, the Soviets and proletarian dictatorship. The Communist use of parliamentarism is secondary to the mass struggle of the proletariat, being used for purposes of agitation only and to emphasize the political character of the class struggle.

b) Even in the epoch of Imperialism, when parliaments degenerate in function and become side-shows, the revolutionary use of parliamentarism and participation in election is important in mobilizing the proletariat for action and the conquest of power.

c) The tendency to opportunism latent in parliamentarism must be resisted by (1) emphasizing its agitational and secondary character, and (2) rigorous party control of parliamentary representatives and their immediate expulsion should they develop an opportunist or non-Communist tendency.

d) Limiting the number of public offices for which nomination are made, the limitation to be determined by the conditions in each country (as, for example, the Communist Party of America excluding nomination for executive offices of the bourgeois state).

e) In periods of intense class struggle, although not yet revolutionary, a temporary abstention from parliamentarism may most effectively promote our revolutionary purposes; in that event, a Boycott of the Elections becomes necessary.

d) In the period of actual revolution, the complete repudiation of parliamentarism may become necessary.

While the Communist use of parliamentarism in this sense was insisted upon, the Conference did not make mandatory the acceptance of parliamentarism; in the thesis on Social-Patriots and Unity the conditions proposed as the basis on which

Communist groups should unite are mass action, Soviets, proletarian dictatorship, and no compromise — (including acceptance of the necessity for a Communist Party as the unifying and directing force in the revolutionary struggle).

5. — The Conference devoted a large part of its labor to the problem of organization — of making the International actually function on a world basis, of unifying and centralizing the movement. While the Executive Committee in Moscow still remains the supreme executive authority, the Conference organized supplementary machinery for purposes of immediate contact, expression and unity.

a) The Conference decided to create an International sub-Bureau composed of one delegate from each country (where in a country there is more than one organization affiliated with the International, the one vote is divided equally). Meetings of the sub-Bureau may be held when there are present the representatives of five out of the six following countries: England, Germany, France, Italy, Holland and the United States.

b) An Executive Committee was elected composed of Henriette Roland-Holst, S. J. Rutgers and D. I. Wynkoop. The Executive is located in Holland; it is to act for the sub-Bureau and to issue a Bulletin in German, English and French.

c) The sub-Bureau and the Executive Committee are empowered to complete certain phases of the work of the Conference. Their chief task is to link up the world movement with the Central Executive of the International in Moscow; and to facilitate this task the Conference created two subsidiary bureaus — (a) A Central European Bureau, for activity in Germany, Austria, Poland, Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria; — (b) the American Bureau of the Communist International, to be organized provisionally by the Communist Party of America; this Bureau to call a Pan-American Conference of Communist organizations at which the Bureau is to be organized on a permanent basis. It has since transpired that a representative of the International recently organized a Latin-American Bureau in Mexico City, which publishes an organ “El Soviet,” and which has issued a call for a Conference. The mandate given to the Communist Party of America by the International Conference must, accordingly, be exercised in conjunction with the Latin-American Bureau the machinery of which must be utilized and transformed into the larger activity of the American Bureau of the Communist International through the intervention of our party. The American Bureau is to represent the International on the American continents, unite the movement of Latin-America, the United States and Canada, and issue proclamations on affairs immediately concerning the proletariat of the Americas.

(To be continued.)