

The parliamentary minority in Germany regarded the action of the majority on August 4 as a violation of the program. But the minority, trusting time and again that the majority would come to its senses, and realizing fully the value of unity, displayed the utmost self-denial toward the political violations of the universal interests of the proletariat, trying by education and analysis to overcome the breaking up of the International without destroying party action. The minority waited and hoped. It grew steadily stronger, but could not possibly think of becoming a majority. Therefore the difficulty grew in intensity so that it finally became necessary to decide whether the highest interests of the proletariat did not demand that the minority choose what it saw to be the only possible way of re-establishing the International. The question whether the unity of the Social Democratic group in the Reichstag, or the recording of the International stand of the minority was of greater importance was finally decided in the latter sense after severe internal struggles. The unity of the group in the German Reichstag was destroyed but a way had been opened up to the proletarians of all countries. The highest solidarity, the Solidarity of the World Proletariat was the deciding factor in the conflict with the solidarity of a limited group.

And it is on this fundamental point that any judgment regarding violation of discipline by the minority must be based. A violation of discipline constitutes a real crime against the interests of the working class whenever used to place the interest of a group above the whole, as it is then a violation against social thinking. But the minority in the Reichstag were not thinking of their own group, on the contrary they were thoroughly inspired by the principles of social thought; their point of departure was based on the International Solidarity of the working class, the highest point of view in the movement, which in their opinion was menaced by the political action of the majority.

We are not investigating whether the minority figured its prospects of becoming a majority correctly—whether the adopted policy was the most practical for that purpose. We merely wish

to make clear this much: that the policy chosen cannot be attacked as a violation of party morality, for it did not violate social thinking, but on the contrary was the result of it. The unity of action was destroyed by the minority. Of course the majority has the power and also the formal right, where unity of action has been interfered with, to resort to the privilege of excluding the opposition from the organization. But even so, morally the minority is in the right. For while it destroyed party unity in the Reichstag, the majority broke up the International. The real crime against the integrity of the working class was committed in all countries by those whose political course involved the disruption of the International, and not by those minorities whose activity was founded on the true spirit of International Solidarity.

## The Emergency National Convention of the Socialist Party

By L. B. BOUDIN

The National Convention of the Socialist Party just held at St. Louis was long overdue. The Socialist Party of this country is the only Socialist party in the world that we know of that has not held a convention in five years, and the only one in any country where such a convention could be held that has not held one since the commencement of the Great War. The ruling powers within the party do not like conventions. Like all ruling powers they are opposed to "agitation" and "unnecessary discussion." And conventions have the bad habit of being attended by "agitation" and "unnecessary discussion," both inside the convention as well as outside of the same. Hence, the guiding rule of our party management—avoid conventions by all means.

But, as is the case with all forces artificially repressed, there finally came a time when the demand for a convention could be repressed no longer, and we were given a convention. And, as