

City in June, in condemning the old Socialist Party; and be it further

Resolved, That we greet the organization of the Communist Party of America, and pledge our moral and financial support to the National Organization Committee of the Communist Party.

The Communist League of Newark, N. J.
Walter Gabriel, Secretary.

Communist Locals have been formed in other New Jersey cities. Patterson has a Local of 200 members; Passaic, 200 members; Elizabeth, 432 members. Other Locals are being formed and New Jersey will be represented at the Communist Convention on September 1st, by delegates from not less than six cities.

The work of organizing a Communist Local in Erie, Pa., has been completed. The new Local has 300 members and five branches. One of their first acts was to send in an order for 100 copies of *The Communist*.

The District Executive Committee of the Chicago District, Russian Socialist Federation, at its meeting on August 31st, donated one hundred dollars to the Organization Fund of the Communist Party.

The following Branches of the Russian Federation have endorsed the action of the Minority delegates at the Left Wing Conference: Lincoln, N. H.; Lowell, Mass.; Ansonia, Conn.; South River, N. J.; Endicott, N. J.

The conference of the Polish branches of New Jersey, at which eight branches were represented, adopted a resolution endorsing the action of the Minority Delegates at the Left Wing Conference. The resolution says in part: "The split in the Socialist Party has shown that we cannot longer belong to that party, for this reason we endorse the action of our delegate at the Left Wing Conference, and favor the organizing of a communist party."

The German Socialist Federation and the Communist Party

By Fred M. Freedman

It is always a risky business to make predictions—for they may come true or they may not. Still, if we have a foundation solid enough to carry the burden, we may foresee or predict future developments of a pending question, within certain limits. The particular question now before me is: What attitude will the German Socialist Federation take in regard to the Communist Party which is now in the process of formation?

It is difficult to answer this question in a few words or with a few short sentences. It will be necessary to consider the situation existing in the Federation for a few weeks past, to examine the condition at the present moment, and then to draw our conclusions as to the probabilities in the future.

Unquestionably, ninety per cent of the German Federation is in favor of repudiating not merely the National Executive Committee, but the whole program and structure of the Socialist Party, which, in its present form is manifestly impotent and unfit to serve as a revolutionary instrument. In this sense all but a small part of the German Federation membership is in favor of a general housecleaning. This minority is of little importance, being composed of those who are inactive or who are too indifferent to give the matter any serious thought.

Of greater importance are the various factions who are constantly discussing these matters from different angles. The question of "reforming" the Party arose several months ago, shortly after the November Revolution in Germany, when "Comrade" Scheidemann inherited his high office from his former master. Since that time there have been constant discussions as to which side the Federation should support, the Scheidemann's of the extreme Right or the extreme Left, who oppose mere parliamentarism and insist that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only means for the transformation from capitalism to a socialistic or communistic regime.

A great many of the older comrades, who belong to the early school of the Second International, could not at first accept either of the two extremes. The first is not socialistic, that much was clear to them but the other extreme they were not prepared to accept. They objected to dictatorship in any form. The

will of the masses, as expressed on slips of paper called ballots, was to their minds all that was necessary. Anything else would be in defiance of the expressed will of the great mass which has just awakened from the lethargic sleep of war-time; anything else would be the autocracy of a mere handful of fanatics. So they aligned themselves with those intellectuals in Germany whose names sound so well to their opportunistic ears. They aligned themselves with Kautsky and his associates who have taken the golden middle road; they consciously became centrists. Here they remained until May, when the convention of the Federation was held. Then the situation changed. The drift toward the Left became ever stronger until it is safe to say that the German Federation is now overwhelmingly Left. This rapid change is significant. It did not come out of the discussions, neither was the Rochester convention responsible for it; on the contrary, this convention was the direct result of the rapid drift to the Left.

The change did not come from the few Right wingers, neither from the Centrists, who are but socialists of the old school. The change came from the so-called rank and file, from the comparatively young and inexperienced members of the Federation. They were not theorists, they could not, perhaps, discuss academic propositions; they possibly do not know how many "internationals" have broken down, and if they knew they might not be able to explain just why. But they are workers, they have preserved their proletarian class character and class consciousness; they judged with minds unpoisoned with the enervating reformism of the Second International. They naturally sympathized with the radicals of Europe who gave up their lives to save the revolution. They understood only the demands of the extreme Left, the communists, and did not greatly concern themselves with the possibility of realizing these demands, as did the Right wingers and Centrists. Therefore to the membership belongs the credit that the German federation need not be ashamed of revolutionary socialism. The delegates to the Rochester convention acted in conformity with the sentiment

of the federation membership when they adopted the resolution which calls for the separation from the Socialist Party, if after August 30th the Party remains as at present constituted.

Thus far all was satisfactory, but since the convention the party crisis has reached another stage. Forty thousand members have been excluded from the Party and remain out, the seven counter-revolutionists of the N. E. C. hold office in spite of the protest of many Locals and Branches. They seem to be stronger than was at first supposed. Moreover, they have succeeded in securing the support of influential members in our and other federations. Secretary Germer has been busy endeavoring to confuse the issue, influencing the wavering membership and seeking to control papers. And, it must be admitted, has had some success in the German federation. In Adolph Dreifuss, translator-secretary of the German federation, he found a willing tool. Dreifuss, who for years has been on the federation payroll, was all too ready to do the work ordered by Germer. Although he is mentally impotent, and incapable of adopting any decisive attitude, he is a clever speaker and capable of influencing the weaklings. He sent out the lying bulletins furnished by Germer, he preaches patience and tolerance toward the N. E. C. "who might have some good reasons for expelling the party members who used fraudulent methods to ruin the organization." He claims to have some inside information, and says that while he is not in accord with the action of the N. E. C., he still believes that the federation should not act without hearing the report of the "investigating committee" which will be given at the convention called for August 30th. With such confusing arguments he has succeeded in drawing the attention of the members to minor questions. But even this was not enough. Germer wanted more. He wanted control of at least one of the federation's daily papers, to be used as a medium through which to further confuse the membership. Again Dreifuss was his tool. He is president of the company which owns the *Chicago Arbeiter Zeitung*, the second largest German socialist daily paper in America. Two of the three editors of this paper were communists and in absolute