

# The "Labor Party" is Born

The agitation that has been carried on in a number of states by certain officials of the American Federation of Labor culminated on Aug. 18th in a conference of executive committeemen representing the nine states now having organized Labor Parties, held in the city of Chicago. At this meeting the committee decided to hold the first convention in Chicago sometime in November, for the purpose of determining the policy of the party.

The leaders of the party in Illinois are men who were formerly affiliated with the old reformist socialist party. No doubt some members of the so-called socialist organization will accuse them of "betraying the party," but a perusal of the statements issued by prominent laborites convinces us that they stand just where they did while in the socialist party, as it never was anything but a laborite and petty reform organization. Now that such men as Duncan McDonald and John H. Walker, both prominent in the United Mine Workers of America and co-workers with Adolph Germer, present secretary of the socialist party, have thrown their support to the labor party they will undoubtedly be able to line up all the former trade union fakirs who supported the old party. That will leave the socialist party nothing but its appeal to middle class elements, as the new labor party will be a much more efficient instrument for the purpose of deluding the workers into believing the road to emancipation is paved with "labor" laws. It is quite probable that the politicians now prominent in the defunct socialist party will also line up with the laborites.

The program of this aggregation does not as yet include participation in presidential elections, but rather to endeavor to secure the "balance of power" in the congress that will be chosen in 1920. To strive for the balance of power is quite in keeping with the petty bourgeois psychology of these fakirs. Briefly stated the balance of power means a sufficient number of "labor representatives" in the houses of congress to defeat legislation proposed by either of the two parties unless they accede to the demands of labor; then the party that agrees to support the demands of the Labor Party will receive the support of the Labor Party when it has some piece of legislation to put over. A sublime program and one that should appeal strongly to the slaves!

A noteworthy feature of the convention was the fraternal delegate from the "committee of forty-eight," which is a combination of sentimentalists and freaks who met two days before for the purpose of discussing the advisability of launching a new national party which would be opposed to both profiteers and bolshevists. Probably the forty-eighters will be able to reach an amicable understanding with the labor party, so their support can also be relied upon. With the labor skates affiliated with the numerous state federations of labor, the remnants of the old socialist party and the committee of forty-eight the support of the prohibitionists should also be secured and the contest for balance of power begun. After the election they could control the balance of power and if the Republican party wanted an appropriation of ten million dollars to build a dam over a

creek near Podunk, the representatives of the Labor Party could force them to support their bill to compel bakers to put smaller holes in the doughnuts. If the Democratic party wanted to send some hungry politician, who had failed of election, on a roving trip to Europe to study the decoration on public-buildings the Labor Party outfit could hold up the proposition until the democrats consented to support a bill prohibiting the "predatory rich" from purchasing diamond collars for their poodle dogs. Thus it can be readily seen that the policy of the balance of power would be a great victory for labor. The Labor candidates could then be re-elected upon their records and get some more balance of power.

While this would not in any way assist in securing the emancipation of the working class, at least it would be great for the labor-skates and relieve them of the necessity of exerting themselves except a few weeks before election.

We shall await their platform and constitution and then apply the searchlight of Communist criticism to their combined idiosyncrasies. No doubt the Labor Party

will be able to rally a large number of supporters to its standard, but no intelligent member of the working class will be deceived thereby. It may have an appeal to the middle class, but that class is incapable of independent political action, so the moment the criticism of the revolutionary workers alienates the support of the unconscious organized workers who have pledged their support to it, the Labor Party will cease to exist.

Meanwhile the Communist Party, the party of revolutionary socialism, the party of the Third Internationale, will relentlessly carry on its propaganda and organization against every other political party of capitalism, whether alleged labor or avowedly capitalist, and expose them alike as tools of reaction and servants of capitalism.

We welcome the fakirs of the Labor Party and will meet them in the fray. Although they may try to stem the tide of world revolt and perpetuate this system, the revolutionary workers of the world, over the dead body of all labor parties, will plant the flaming flag of the Communist Internationale upon the ramparts of capitalism.

## ON WITH THE WAR!

In these days of trouble and strife in the labor movement, when controversy and counter-controversy fills the columns of the socialist papers and demands almost the entire time of our deliberative assemblies, let us not forget the duty we owe the unenlightened of our class.

Matters of policy and tactics must be and will be thrashed out, to the end that the "sheep may be divided from the goats"—and that labor's march to emancipation shall be impeded neither by false friends in the labor movement—nor by the failure to reckon and remove obstacles on the outside. And it is well that, in particular, American socialism should undergo a thorough housecleaning. The historic land of enterprise, initiative and mechanical cunning and ingenuity, it was to be expected that America's contribution to the family of socialist and labor movements should be both many in number and bizarre in character. And so the expedients with which the American worker would either palliate the evils of capitalism or overthrow it are known around the world.

It would be a waste of time at this late day to enlarge on the condition which gave birth to the "Greenback" movement, the "Populist" craze, or the Bryan frenzy of a generation ago, when they discovered that labor was being "Crucified upon a Cross of Gold!"

That imported monstrosity which thrived so well west of the Atlantic ocean—the American Federation of Labor—together with the Gompers' tradition which accompanies it needs only passing mention. The American Federation of Labor, with its allies in the now discredited Socialist Party of America—have faithfully done their share to confuse and betray the working class of America to their enemies.

But a new epoch greets us, a breaking up the old—and alignment of the new. And just before the new line up of

forces in America is brought into being—a line-up, let us hope, that will be fit and ready to assist the workers to accomplish their historic mission in society, let us sound an alarm lest amid the glamor of party and sectarian strife we forget some vital principles. The socialist owes a duty to the unenlightened member of the working class the fulfillment of which takes precedence over any other activity.

Let us preach the class war with increasing vigor!

Let us never forget that our message is—to the discontented proletarians of whatever color or language, creed or sex.

In case they should not be discontented (miracles in this day and age) it is our duty in our own interests and theirs to create a healthy discontent by the recital of the mere facts of these decadent days of capitalism.

Let us bend to the task of reaching an ever greater circle of workers with the revolutionary message.

From the soap-bax—in personal talks, and by the printed word let the work gain impetus.

To accomplish our ends the revolutionary party must have a greater grip on—and a greater support from the American working class than it ever has had in the past. So the party must be made worthy of the support of the workers, the misleaders must be discredited, the pitfalls of reform-mongering must be avoided, so that when the decisive hour strikes and the White Terror raises its hand in the land—the mass of the workers will see in the revolutionary battalions bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh, it will instinctively support and be guided by the new power which is even now forming, to the end that the American movement may measure itself up to the full standard of

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