

COMMUNIST PARTY AND LEFT WING.

THE main argument now being made against Communist unity through the Communist Party is that the Communist Laborites are the rightful successors of the Left Wing. At the same time they are the rightful "inheritors" of the Socialist Party. We do not dispute with them the latter claim. But it is plain that those who desire to go in the line of the Left Wing evolution within the Socialist Party must now take up the work of the Communist Party.

In spite of all insistence that the reunion of the Left Wing brought about by the National Left Wing Council, through the Joint Call for the September first Communist Convention, was contrary to the will of the National Left Conference; in spite of the contention that the Communist Labor Convention was the real Left Wing Convention, it is discovered by comparison of the lists of delegates that only 11 of the Communist Laborites were also delegates at the New York Left Wing Conference, as against 33 of the Communist delegates.

The five members of the Manifesto and Program Committee at New York were all in the Communist Convention.

The *Revolutionary Age*, the predominant national expression of the Left Wing movement, is merged in the national organ of the Communist Party.

The Left Wing organization of New York, which took the lead in the party fight, was represented solidly in the Communist Convention.

Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Detroit, Newark, Buffalo, Rochester, Providence, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, New Haven—the big centers of Left Wing strength have all become the strongholds of the Communist Party. It was in such locals that the Left Wing movement became an organized force; it was from these cities that most of the delegates came to the New York Conference. It was this membership which acted on the Joint Call upon which the Communist Convention was based.

There is no important Left Wing center in the country without some measure of Communist Party organization.

A committee of five was chosen by each of the conventions at Chicago to consider a basis of merger. The Communist Labor Party Committee, which took the position that it was the only committee which could legitimately speak for the Left Wing, had one member who was also a Left Wing delegate to New York, Alfred Wagenknecht. But it was Comrade Wagenknecht who, upon leaving the New York meeting, was very careful to impress upon the other delegates that he did not consider himself in any way bound by the actions of the Conference; that he looked upon these actions merely as recommendations or suggestions.

On the other hand, the committee of five of the Communist Party, which asked that all additional delegates to their convention should meet the same requirements as to representation of Left Wing membership as the delegates already seated, consisted of Elbaum, Ferguson, Hourwich, Ruthenberg and Stoklitsky, all of whom played an active part in the Left Wing Conference at New York.

The National Editor of the Communist Party was editor of the *Revolutionary Age* from its inception, also editor of *The Class Struggle*. He was reappointed as editor when the *Revolutionary Age* became the official national organ of the Left Wing. The Associate Editor of the Communist Party publications was National Secretary of the Left Wing. The Executive Secretary of the Communist Party received the highest vote at New York as member of the National Left Wing Council. These are but a few items of the Left Wing standing of the Communists before the Wagenknecht-Katterfeld-Lore-Carney-Lloyd judgment was pronounced against their Left-Wingism.

It might seem to the innocent bystander that when the National Wing Conference at New York selected nine men to take over the destinies of the Left Wing that these were the men to assume the Left Wing leadership. The Left Wing Council was chosen expressly to continue and complete the work of the Left Wing Conference. Indeed, the Council was itself the one tangible achievement of the Conference. There were five or six different resolutions as to the starting of a new party, depending on the turn of events. Everyone realized that the responsibility was squarely upon the Council, and everyone realized, who was honest enough to face the facts, that the real job was the starting of a new party, not the capturing of the Socialist Party.

The Council acted in issuing the Joint Call by vote of 5 to 2 (or counting the editors, not voting, the lineup would be 6 to 3). The six were Fraina, Ballam, Cohen, Ferguson, Ruthenberg, Wolfe; the three were MacAlpine, Gitlow, Larkin. These three received the lowest votes as members of the Council at the New York Conference. An Emergency Committee of nine was chosen at New York while the Federation and Michigan delegates were still voting; none of these three were elected, though five of the majority members were chosen in the emergency election.

Tested either by membership or by personnel, the overwhelming preponderance of the active Left Wing was in the Communist Convention and is now in the Communist Party.

The Communist Party will not be distracted from its real work by the hypocritical cry of "unity" coming from those who deliberately set up a new cleavage within the Left Wing without the shadow of a principle (except that of Americanism!) involved in the break. The membership is the only recourse for unity, not dicker with a few pretentious individuals who have set themselves up as a law unto themselves, against anybody and everybody who may disagree with them. The membership is acting; real Communist unity is advancing every day.

COMMUNIST POLITICAL ACTION AND I. W. W.

IT is curious to note the lack of comprehension that the program of the Communist Party has met, on the part of elements, which, because of their relation to the working class movement, would naturally be expected to read it with some understanding.

That the Moderate Socialists of the Socialist Party should declare that after

all there is no reason for the existence of the Communist Party,—for has not the Socialist Party adopted a "revolutionary" manifesto?—is understandable. The Moderate Socialist will never admit that the difference between their position and that of the Communists is something else than the language used in a manifesto. They have not yet grasped the fact that the gulf that divides the Socialist Party and the Communist Party is the question of how the working class is to capture the power of the state,—by electing representatives to congress or by organizing the industrial power of the workers so that in the hour of crisis they will be prepared to use that power to supplant the capitalist state and establish the working class state—the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

But that the spokesmen for the I. W. W. should be unable to grasp this distinction is less understandable. That they do not comprehend the purpose of the Communist Party is shown in two articles which appeared in their publications in recent weeks.

In the "One Big Union" monthly for October, Donald M. Crocker, writing on "The Passing of the S. P." charges the Left Wing with seeking to capture the power of the state by votes and makes an extended argument to prove that it cannot be done! The argument is summed up thus:

"Now, then it is not fairly apparent that the strength of the revolutionary proletariat at the ballot box is ill—the prospect of capturing the political state very promising?"

The other article is an answer to an interview in the *Christian Science Monitor* in which C. E. Ruthenberg outlined the difference between the I. W. W. and the Communist Party. The reply, which appeared in *The New Solidarity* and was written by the editor C. E. Payne, carries the same note as the quotation above. It argues against politicians and politics, leaving the impression that the Communist Party is engaged in the same kind of political struggle as that which the Socialist Party has carried on for twenty years.

A reading of these articles raises the question whether either writer has read the original Left Wing Program or that of the Communist Party. Both programs specifically repudiate the suggestion that the state power can be captured by the proletariat through voting. Both state that the Communist Party engages in election campaigns merely for the purpose of education and propaganda. Both set forth in clear language the industrial organization which the Communist Party seeks to create and that it is through the mass power of the workers that the Communist Party proposes to capture the power of the state.

Are the spokesmen for the I. W. W. unable to find any flaw in the Communist Party program that they must credit that party with supporting a form of political action it specifically repudiates, and then, by laughing that conception out of court give the impression that they are hitting the Communist Party? It would seem so from the two articles referred to above. Though the purpose of such attacks is hard to figure out, coming from such a source.