

Editorials

DEBS TURNS TO THE RIGHT

As Babushka was used by the counter-revolutionary forces to combat the Proletarian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia, so Eugene V. Debs, once beloved of the American revolutionary masses, is being used against the Communist Party of America and the Communist International, by the social-patriots, opportunists and compromisers of the Socialist Party.

Eugene V. Debs, having accepted the nomination for President on the S. P. ticket, has also begun to speak from behind his prison walls and what he says shows that he has become a conscious and willing tool (not the first time, by any means) in the hands of those traitors who are manipulating his name and prestige to retrieve in some measure, the revolutionary ground lost by the S. P. since the split last year, when all revolutionary elements left the old party.

We need not dilate here on his ridiculous attempts to bring about unity between the Communist forces and the "stinking carrion" of which he is the standard-bearer. Suffice it to say, that between the Communist Party and S. P. there can be no compromise, no truce. The Communist Party is the advance-guard of the proletarian revolution—the S. P. is a bulwark of capitalism and a potentially counter-revolutionary force that will be found (like Kerensky and the Ebert-Scheidemanns) with machine-guns in hand shooting down the workers in the revolution.

Debs' sentimental whining for unity between these two contending parties, shows as nothing else can show, his complete divorce from the revolutionary movement throughout the world as represented by the Third—Communist—International. His silly echoing of the Hilquits and Bergers that there is "no Third International" places him definitely beyond the pale (his past record to the contrary notwithstanding).

Just as the Seventh Communist Congress in Moscow expelled Fritz Adler of Austria from his honorary post in the Third International, so we, the Communist Party of America, proceed to READ EUGENE V. DEBS OUT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT OF AMERICA.

He has consciously aligned himself with the social-patriots and traitors, as against the Communist Party. He has consciously returned to the fold of the miserable compromisers whom he once denounced. His statements, as printed in the Call, show him to be in agreement with them on principles and tactics. Just as there can be no compromise with the S. P. SO THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE WITH EUGENE V. DEBS, LEADER AND SPOKESMAN OF THE S. P.

Eugene V. Debs has sounded his own death-knell as a revolutionary Socialist.

The press carried a statement credited to Captain Swinburne Hale, who claims that he has been acting for the C. L. P. in the Department of Labor at Washington, that he would proceed to argue the case of the Communist Party before that same body in the near future, in an attempt to legalize the Communist Party as he had succeeded in the case of the Communist Labor Party.

The Central Executive Committee hereby announces that it has at no time authorized any attorney to speak in the name of the Communist Party before the Department of Labor in Washington, and we repudiate anyone claiming to speak in the name of the party at any such hearings.

The Third International & Centrist Reconstructionist Schemes

COMMUNICATION OF THE AMSTERDAM SUB-BUREAU OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

Editor's Note: This communication has special interest in this country in view of the attempt of the Socialist Party to "affiliate" with the Third International and the same time participate in the schemes of the reconstructionists (!).

Dear Comrades:

Comrade Johnson, Secretary of the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain has kindly sent us the copy of a letter addressed by the I. L. P. to the Swiss Socialist Party (P. S. S.). In this letter the P. S. S. is invited to take the initiative for the organizing in Switzerland of a conference of the several Socialist Parties, where the basis would be laid of the so-called "reconstruction" of the International.

As the Labor Leader of March 4th observes, the majority obtained at the Strassburg Congress by the Longuet resolution necessitates such a conference. Now that most of the parties of Central and Western Europe have left the Second International without deciding for Moscow, it seems that the formation of a new organism of a bloc of the parties—hesitating between the old and the new tendencies the formulas of the past and those of the future—is no longer to be avoided.

What is the character of this bloc likely to be? What, from a Communist point of view is to be hoped for from the principal parties interested in its formations? The utter political weakness, the absolute lack of revolutionary firmness displayed by the majority of the leaders of the German Independent Socialist Party, Longuet's violent attacks on the Communist International at the Strassburg Congress, together with the inability or the disinclination of the French Centrists to understand the world revolution as the unavoidable consequence of the world war, and at the same time as a process which may be more or less directed and hastened by the conscious will of a proletarian vanguard,—these are, to mention only the three principal parties destined to form the nucleus of a "reconstructed" International, so many signs that the organism expected to be born from the conference which the I. L. P. proposes to the P. S. S., would only serve to sanction in a general way the feeble ambiguous and vacillating policy pursued by men like Crispin, Hilferding, Longuet, Pressemane, MacDonald and Snowden after the war as before. The attempts of these parties, either to demand from Moscow "guarantees" for the admission of compromised leaders, and of deeds essentially hostile to Communist methods, or to form a new intermediary bloc between the Second and the Third International, can have no other result but to weaken, to clog and to hinder revolutionary action in the proletarian masses and thus to hold back the formation of the Soviet system, and the establishing of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Europe and in America.

The very terms of Comrade Johnson's letter to the P. S. S. are evidence that the bases of International Socialist unity as contemplated by the I. L. P. have nothing whatever in common with the principles of unity laid down by the First Congress of The Communist International held at Moscow in 1919.

The letter mentions the possibility of constituting anew one single International "whilst allowing the most complete autonomy in the matter of liberty of action and of tactics for every individual country." This, evidently, means that the double dealings which have led to the disaster in which the Second International was wrecked, will be consistently, advisedly adopted as a new starting point, and that the terrific catastrophe of the world war would have been of no benefit whatever to the proletariat. Each and every national party would be free to wage the war against "its" capitalism and "its" ruling class in its own way, or even to substitute to this war the collaboration of the classes; the disciplined and centralized action of the workers of all countries, the international unity tactics absolutely necessary in the Imperialist era would, from the beginning, be repudiated by the charter of the reconstructed International, and it is supposed that the Communist Parties will fall into this trap.

Comrade Johnson's letter says further, that the new International will be able to embrace all the parties accepting as the principal basis of Socialism the collective ownership and use of the land and of the principal instruments of labor in such a way the exploitation of the public

services as of industry in general and of all that concerns the public wealth, falls to the state or to the municipality, in order to increase the prosperity and the happiness of all citizens." This definition of the basis of Socialism is, evidently, absolutely insufficient from a Communist point of view; on the other hand not only the reformist and social patriot parties, but many simple bourgeois reformists can straightway accept it. It seems to absolutely ignore the fact that the capitalist ownership of the means of production can only be abolished after the downfall of the bourgeois state and the revolutionary organs of the proletariat will have to be the means of transforming it into collective ownership. Comrade Johnson's definition is apparently contented with a state and municipal Socialism, which would change nothing or very little in the social misery and in the degradation of the workers, and which would even aggravate their dependency.

It seems to us that for the Communist groups and parties to participate in a conference of this kind, would be a waste of energy, time and money, that it would be a real betrayal on their part of our principles and of the grand work of construction pursued by Soviet Russia. The old fetish of "Socialist unity" (that worthy pendant of the equally dangerous and no less fatal Class Truce)—will be made use of, for an attempt to induce all more or less hesitating spirits to capitulate before double heartedness and lies. Phrasemongering demagogy, the pathetic appeals of able leaders will only serve to cover the absence of ideals, of revolutionary faith (that is, of faith in the masses), of class-consciousness and of firmness.

It seems to us that the Communist groups and parties would commit an exceedingly grave fault by taking part in the conference of the "reconstructionists". They would aggravate the confusion still obtaining amongst the masses, they would render it more difficult for them to free themselves of the old formulas and the old fetishes (democracy, peaceful evolution, Socialist unity, etc.) and consciously orientate themselves toward the Communist theory and tactics.

That is why we are of opinion that the British Socialist Party in Great Britain and the Committee for the Third International in France have done well and acted as communists should, by absolutely refusing to participate in any conference of reconstruction, as the new International which answers to the needs and the aspirations of the working class in the era of the world revolution, already exists. And we ardently hope that the example of these British and French comrades will be followed by all Communist groups and parties.

We in no wise wish to dictate rules of conduct to the advanced groups of countries where a Communist Party does not yet exist or is only in a nascent state. Evidently these groups are themselves the sole judges in the question of the exact moment when they will think it necessary either to leave the old parties to which they now belong, in order to constitute a Communist Party and affiliate to Moscow, or to prevail upon the majority of these parties, the necessary process of cleaning having been effected, to follow them. But we would feel we failed in the fulfilling of the mandate entrusted to us by the Amsterdam Conference, if we neglected to warn our Communist friends against the very real neo-confusionist danger constituted by the founding of an International lacking a precise conception and a definite character. The attempt at re-establishing the so-called "Socialist unity" is a dangerous snare in which the spirit of criticism and the spirit of truth may equally be deceived. The only real living and efficacious unity is the one which has for its base not only the formal acceptance of the Communist principles and theory, but above all the revolutionary practice arising out of this theory. And in order to constitute on the national as on the international scale this real and living unity, we must also have the courage to reject nationally the traditional plea for unity, as to refuse on the international field to lend a hand towards the formation of an organism built on the sands of lies and illusions, and fatally destined to confusion and to impotency.

The Executive of The Amsterdam Sub-Bureau of the Third International.

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