

PROBLEMS OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

By N. LENIN
(Continued from page 1.)

And therefore I was so deeply grieved by the Moscow Manifesto, which was at least premature and certainly useless. And I hope that my French comrades, who have been buffeted about during the last four hapless years by so many slanders and misfortunes, will not succumb to a fit of impatience, and will not also help to split the International solidarity.

Otherwise your children will have to reconstruct this solidarity if the proletariat are ever to rule the world.

JOHN RAMSEY MACDONALD

The author of the above article, as the reader can see, is attempting to prove that a split is not necessary. On the contrary, just its inevitability follows from the line of argument of Ramsay MacDonald: this typical representative of the Second International, worthy colleague of Scheidemann and Kautsky, Vandervelde and Branting, etc., etc.

The article of Ramsey MacDonald is the best sample of those smooth, well-sounding stereotyped phrases, Socialist in appearance, which in all advanced capitalist countries have served for a long time to screen bourgeois policies within the working class movement.

1

Let us begin with the least important but peculiarly characteristic. As Kautsky (in his pamphlet "Dictatorship of the Proletariat") the author repeats the bourgeois lie, that in Russia nobody foresaw the role of the Soviets, that I and the Bolsheviks began the struggle with Kerensky only in the name of the Constituent Assembly.

This is a bourgeois lie. As a matter of fact, on April 4th, 1917, on the very first day of my arrival in Petrograd, I already introduced "theses" demanding the Soviet, and not the bourgeois, parliamentary republic. I repeated this many times during the Kerensky premiership both in print and at meetings. The Bolshevik Party emphatically and officially announced this in the resolutions of their Conference on April 20th, 1917.

Not to know this means—not to want to know the truth of the Socialist Revolution in Russia. Not to understand that the bourgeois parliamentary republic with the Constituent Assembly is one step forward as against the same republic without the Constituent Assembly, and that the Soviet Republic is two steps forward in comparison with it,—means to close one's eyes to the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

To call oneself Socialist and not to see this difference, two years after the introduction of this question in Russia, one and a half years after the victory of the Soviet Revolution in Russia,—means that one remains stubbornly in absolute enslavement to "public opinion of non-Socialist elements," i. e. to the ideas and policies of the bourgeoisie.

With such people the split is necessary and unavoidable, because it is impossible to carry on the work for the Socialist Revolution hand in hand with those who are pulling on the side of the bourgeoisie.

And if men such as Ramsey MacDonald, Kautsky and others, did not want to overcome even such a really insignificant "difficulty," for such "leaders," as of informing themselves from the documents on the attitude of the Bolsheviks

NEWS FROM EUROPE

FRANCE

To the Strains of the "International."

Recently-mobilized recruits of the 1920 class write to "La Vie Ouvrière," of April 16th, as follows:—From Metz: "The departure from the Gare the 1st of April placed amidst the strains of the 'International.'" From Toul: "I have seen in a Nancy paper that the 1920 class was joining up with enthusiasm. This is a little too strong. From Paris to Nancy we sang the 'International.' All the time our captain was saying that all the Parisians were Bolsheviks. On Thursday, while we were going through Nancy, our officers wanted to make us sing 'Madelon.' We all said we didn't know it." Another writes: "We left singing, certainly, but not the 'Marseillaise.' On our arrival and at departure, in all the stations—Château-Thierry, Chalons, Bar-le-Duc, Commercy, the 'International' was chanted, broken every now and then by cries of 'Down with the Army!'"

SWITZERLAND

The Young Socialists in Congress.

At the recent Congress of the Young Socialists of Switzerland, held at Aarau, it was decided to proclaim the complete autonomy of the organization, and to affiliate immediately to the Young Communists' International.—"Le Populaire," April 17th, 1920.

to Soviet power and on the treatment of this question before and after November 7th, 1917, would it not be ridiculous to expect from such men the readiness and ability to overcome the incomparably greater difficulty connected with the present struggle for the Socialist Revolution? None so deaf as those who will not hear.

2

Let us proceed to the second lie (out of countless lies with which Ramsey MacDonald's article is full of, for in this article there are perhaps more lies than words). This lie is perhaps the most important.

John Ramsey MacDonald claims that the International before the war 1914—18 said only that "when war takes on the character of national defense the Socialists should co-operate with other parties."

This is a monstrous, repugnant deviation from the truth.

Everybody knows that the Basle Manifesto of 1912 was unanimously accepted by all Socialists and that this is the only one of the documents of the International which deals exactly with the very war between the English and German groups of imperialist beasts, which, as known to all, was being prepared in 1912 and finally broke out in 1914. Just in reference to this war the Basle Manifesto expounds three points, upon which MacDonald remaining silent, commits the greatest crime against Socialism and proves that with men of MacDonald type the split is necessary, because they actually serve the bourgeoisie and not the proletariat.

These three points are the following:

The impending war can find no justification by even a shadow of interest of national freedom;

It would be a crime for workers to shoot each other in this war;

The war leads toward the proletarian revolution.

These are the three fundamental truths, "forgetting" which (though he subscribed to them before the war) MacDonald ACTUALLY goes over to the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, proving thereby that the split is necessary.

The Communist International will not unite with parties, which do not wish to recognize these truths and are not capable of proving by their deeds their determination, readiness and ability to inculcate these truths into the minds of the masses.

The Versailles Peace has proven even to fools and blind people, even to the mass of shortsighted, that the Entente was and remains the same bloody, bullying, imperialist beast as Germany. Only hypocrites or liars, deliberately introducing bourgeois policies, direct agents and tools of the bourgeoisie, labor lieutenants of the capitalist class (like the American Socialists) or, men who have fallen under the spell of bourgeois ideas and bourgeois influence so that they are Socialists only in words but actually are petty-bourgeois philistines and sycophants of the capitalists could fail to see this. The distinction between the first and second categories is important only from the point of view of personalities, i. e. for the appraisal of John or Peter in the social-patriotic ranks of all countries. From the political point of view, i. e. from the point of view of the relations of millions of people, of the relations of classes this distinction is of no importance.

The Socialists, who during the war of 1914—19 did not understand that on both sides, a criminal reactionary, robbers', imperialist war,—are Social-Chauvinists, i. e. Socialists in words and chauvinists in fact; friends of the working class in words, but in fact lackeys of "their" national bourgeoisie, helping them to deceive the masses by picturing as "national," "liberating," "defensive," "just," etc., the war between the English and German groups of imperialist plunderers, who are equally rotten, corrupt, bloody and criminally reactionary.

Unity with Social-Chauvinists is a betrayal of the revolution, betrayal of the proletariat, betrayal of Socialism, desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie,—because, it is a "unity" with the national bourgeoisie of "their" country against the unity of the international revolutionary proletariat,—it is a unity with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

The war of 1914—18 has finally proven this. Whoever cannot understand this can remain in the yellow Berne "international" of social-traitors (From the "Communist International," No. 4.)

(To be continued.)

A LETTER FROM CHICAGO

Editor's Note: This letter was received soon after the split, but for lack of space was not printed in the last issue. The inference drawn in this letter about "unity" with the "left elements" of the S. P. together with the C. L. P. is more than a wild guess. Certain facts recently come to light and touched on editorially, make this more than a mere conjecture of the author. When all the facts are in, we have no doubt they will prove that the plot to split the Communist Party was hatched in the office of the C. L. P. between their representatives and the representatives of Damon & Co.)

Scarcely eight months have passed since the Communist Party was founded. The formation of the organization not yet finished—the paths of its activities still new and untried—and already a crisis is at hand. A SPLIT is here.

This, no doubt, is agitating the mass of the membership, and is observed with satisfaction from the camps of our enemies.

Naturally, everybody wants to know the cause, is it really impossible for those who appeal to all workers in all lands for solidarity and unity—for those who claim to recognize proletarian dictatorship and armed insurrection—to live and work together in harmony?

Very important reasons must be shown by those who stand for a split at this moment; who take upon themselves this great responsibility at the moment when the Third International comes out with a proposal for unity into one party even those Communist elements which stand outside—chiefly in the ranks of the Communist Labor Party.

The National Executive Secretary together with two other members of the Central Executive Committee have taken upon themselves this responsibility, as against the other members of the C. E. C.—an overwhelming majority of ten. Yet the Secretary had the funds of the party, the addresses and other connections, which were all seized by the "minority" and helped them greatly in the disorganizing of the party.

The Secretary claims to be acting quite properly, because, elected directly only by the Convention, he says, he will be responsible only to a convention. But the funds were entrusted to him not by the Convention, but by the Central Executive Committee—for the sake of greater efficiency. Why doesn't he return them where they belong? Well,—because "the majority has means enough—from the Language Federations remittances..." (as stated by the Secretary himself.)

The split is still more unjustified because the next convention of the Party was right at the door. The split was brought about for an obvious purpose—the "minority" on their hook attempted to arrange this convention in order to turn over the Communist Party into hands of the Communist Labor Party.

The "minority" claims, that the break was forced not by any theoretical or tactical differences, but by minor details, which taken separately were quite a big heap during the last eight months; for example, the Secretary questions the right of the C. E. Committee to remove District Organizers whom he had appointed; he is dissatisfied with the sending of delegates to Europe (to meetings of the Third International), although such delegates were elected at the September Convention; and other minor matters.

But, neither individually, nor all together, can they justify the split. What kind of a Central Executive Committee would it be, which could not appoint or remove its agents (the District Organizers) entirely according to its own discretion and necessity? How could such a Committee discharge the trust placed in it by the Convention if it should only pay salaries of the District Organizers, but would let them work each according to his own will and sometimes against the decisions of the Central Executive Committee?

A mistake was already made at the September Convention, when, besides the Central Executive body there was elected another independent executive power in the person of the Secretary. It appears that there has been more or less friction right along between these two powers.

Just now the split is in the process of developing fully—from the top down to the bottom—to the sub-districts, branches and groups. Good wishes, good intentions, hysterical moralizations cannot stop it—the split has a logic of its own and it must run its course.

It is very possible, that together with the Secretary of the Communist Party will leave those elements, who by their sympathy already stand with the C. L. P. In the triumvirate of the "minority" there is, for example, a member who took part in the so-called Anarcho-Menshevik Russian Conference (Jan. and Feb. 1919), and who was so characterized even by Gregory Weinstein—at that time, editor of the Novy Mir.

A similar division is noticeable in the branches. If discussions should be conducted on the real issues and principles involved, it can be foretold in advance that the Communist Party of America will emerge from this crisis clarified and strengthened. If Centrist elements split off, it is only a desirable process.

Let us not forget the conclusions arrived at by the International Conference in Holland, namely, that "opportunists (to which belong all Centrists without exception—St. R.) are the most dangerous enemies of the proletarian revolution when in their tendency they lean toward the Left."

Therefore, it is well that they go. It would be a bad thing for the movement only in case,—by various hooks and crooks—the Centrists should pull away with them some really Communist elements. That would be a real loss.

This argument about Centrists is not an invention but an actual fact. One of the members of the C. E. C., a close friend and partner of the Secretary, had resigned some time ago for the reason that he could not get used to the new conditions in the Party. He represented the so-called "legalist" group, and he is with the "minority."

Further, the Communist Labor Party in their official organ express satisfaction at the split and really invite the "minority" into their ranks. They write in their May issue, among other things, as follows: "Unity between this (the splitting-off minority) and the C. L. P. should come very shortly."

And so, the right wing of the Communist Party will unite with the left wing of the Communist Labor Party—and we shall have something like the Independent Socialists in Germany. The right wing of the C. L. P., however, in all probability, obeying the invitation of Debs, will go back to the old Socialist Party, which, you know, has also decided to join the Third International and has applied for a charter. In the extreme Left there will remain the Communist Party—the true representative of Bolshevism in the revolutionary working class movement of America.

St. R.