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Communist Party Criticism.

BEGINNING with Karl Marx, the most unsparing critics of the socialist movement have been the Socialists and Communists themselves. The literature of the movement is primarily a critical study of the social process, and this criticism is directed equally to the socialist movement as part of the general social process. It is, indeed, the pride of socialist science that it is no less critical of itself than it is of the bourgeois systems of thought and action.

In the United States, however, there has been largely an acceptance of socialist science as a system of dogma and absolute faith, rather than as a method of analysis. What is required to vitalize socialist science is its constant adaptation to changing circumstances. But the Socialists of this country, for the most part, have considered it sufficient to take over formulas of words without seriously considering the implication of these words in action. The Socialist Party, with "preambles" concerning the class struggle and the social revolution, proceeded strictly along the lines of bourgeois politics, appealing to the workers to use bourgeois politics as their primary method of action.

The Socialist Labor Party some years ago degenerated into a static, sterner observance of phrase-formulas, according to give the least consideration to the constant progression of the class struggle. Recently the I. W. W., in its official literature, has shown stubbornness in insisting upon senseless dogmas, even to the point of savagely attacking the whole Communist movement rather than to give up two or three empty phrases. But the I. W. W., in contrast with the Socialist Labor Party, has a vitality which is belied by its own official propaganda, the vitality of a militant embodiment of industrial unionism.

On the other hand, it is certainly true that the Communist Party is not free from the same vice. The Communist phrases have the advantage, however, of greater inherent vitality, because they are the phrases of the

proletarian revolution in action. Bolshevism, as developed by the Russian and other Marxians during the past two decades, was a synthetic application of the science of Marx to the concrete facts of capitalism at the stage of finance-imperialism. The Communist International expresses not a revision or a variant of Marxism but a faithful adaptation of the underlying concepts of socialist science to the actual social facts of today.

But it is not enough for the American Communist Party to take over ready-made the principles and slogans of the Communist International. There must continue to be an adaptation of these precepts of working class action to the further developments of capitalism. There must be more or less adaptation of these principles of action to the special circumstances of the class struggle as it develops in this country.

It may be said, in all candor, that up to this time our zeal has been more in the direction of faithful imitation of phrases than in Communist expression of the class struggle as it develops from day to day in the United States. We have done only a little toward the integration of Communist understanding with the great working class battles of the past year, but even that little marks off the Communist Party decisively as the most aggressive working class organization in the United States and the most responsive to the mass movements which are the life force of the revolution.

Our crying need is a more precise and more understandable expression of Communism as part of the everyday working class fight in the United States. The vaguest sort of phrases will serve the purposes of celebrating the Russian revolution, which has been too much the exclusive concern of our public meetings. But only the most precise phrases of immediate application will challenge the attention of the millions of workers.

The weakness of the Communist Party is on the side of its immediate program. This is not so much the fault of the September Convention as it is of the Central Executive Committee, which ignored or dodged practically all problems of immediate action, even the primary problem of education of our membership.

Let no one dismiss the present struggle in the party as an affair of a few persons who happen to be the party officials. It is a life and death struggle to save the party from the grasp of the Russian nationalists who have made a demagogic merger of nationalistic and ultra-revolutionary phrases, but to whom the building of a real party to take part in the class conflict in the United States is meaningless.

Against this group are arrayed most of the members of the party, without distinction of nationality. Practically all of the Federation members have made known their hostility to the use of their Federat-

ions as counter-organizations to the party, as has been too long the case. They want Communist propaganda in their own language; they are done with nationalistic demagogism in the interest of Russian-speaking politicians.

There will be no harm to the Communist movement in this country on account of the repudiation of the Central Executive Committee by the active party organizers, if the members survey critically the history of the Left Wing movement since last June and take its lessons to heart.

Our Deportation Cases.

ACTUAL deportation of Communists has already begun. There will be no more "arks", but small groups will be taken on freight or passenger ships right along. A number of deportees from the middle West were gathered at Chicago to start their journey to Europe on May first, among them John Schedel of Fort Wayne, Indiana, who leaves behind him a sick wife and five small children, all born in the United States. Schedel has been in this country since 1906, has always been a steady, industrious worker. But he became a Socialist, then a Communist, so he outlived his welcome to this free country. We have as yet no information as to Schedel's fellow-voyagers.

The first attempt to defeat the Communist deportation warrants by court action was begun in Boston, before District Judge Anderson, some weeks ago. This case has brought to light the lawlessness of the raids as conducted by the Attorney General's staff, also the brutal treatment accorded the thousands arrested, most of them upon the vaguest sort of suspicion. Already the Department of Labor has cancelled more than half of the 3000 warrants of arrest issued at the beginning of the year, and there is every likelihood that many ordered deported will be released by the courts. The record of the Boston cases will no doubt be published in detail as soon as available.

Writs for the release of four deportees have also been filed in Milwaukee, to come up soon before District Judge Geiger.

Meanwhile a vicious attack is being made against Assistant Secretary of Labor Louis F. Post, who is disposing of these cases for the Department of Labor. To be suspected of being a Bolshevik is quite enough in the minds of some of our Congressmen, and it is claimed that Post is derelict in his duty for examining these cases from the angle of legal evidence.

It may now be definitely said that there will be only a few hundred orders of deportation out of the 3000 January arrests. It remains to be seen whether or not these orders will withstand judicial scrutiny, though it is already certain that quite a number of the cases will not be brought into court, because the deportees are not interested in further contest.