

The S. L. P. and the Third International.

It is extremely amusing to watch the intellectual gymnastics of the Weekly People, official organ of the S. L. P. of America, from week to week, particularly on questions affecting the Third (Communist) International. For a narrow, dogmatic, non-Marxian sect, that has been living on its deceased founder, Daniel DeLeon, these last six years, and spewing its venom on the Third International and its affiliated parties throughout the world, it has no equal anywhere.

The younger and more revolutionary elements have long ago split away from Peterson's sect and what is left is constantly undergoing the same partition under the sledge-hammer blows of the Third International—just the same as all other official "Socialist" parties formerly affiliated with the Second International. What is left are a few blind worshippers of DeLeon, who never knew the flaw in DeLeon's emasculation of Marxism—and who to-day are incapable of learning anything or forgetting anything.

The Russian Revolution has passed them by and left them—cold. Like the I. W. W. they prate stupidly that they have nothing to learn from the Bolsheviks. The new orientation in the revolutionary proletarian movement in Europe and America has found them pumbling their old shibboleths bequeathed them by DeLeon and hurling anathema at any who would rouse them from their meaningless incantations.

The growth of the Left Wing movement in this country, in response to the betrayal of the principles of revolutionary Socialism by the existing Socialist movement in this country (The S. P. and the S. L. P.), the post-war conditions and the Russian November Revolution which placed the Communist Party of Russia (Bolshevik) in power, called forth the most bitter denunciation from the Weekly People upon the heads of the leaders of this movement and branding them as "anarchists". The Left Wing itself was designated as "scatter-brained" and "anarchistic". Indeed the contest between the Right Wing of the S. P., the syndicalists of the I. W. W. and the envenomed sectarians of the S. L. P. as to who could sling the most mud at the Left Wing can never be decided. All three were equally facile and prolific at this game.

All three hid their traitorous action behind smooth phrases of sympathy for the Russian Revolution (without making it clear which Russian Revolution they meant). As time went on they were compelled to drop their ambiguity and come out openly against Kerensky whom they had defended against the Bolsheviks, and in favor of the Soviet Government, with sometimes a mead of praise for the "muddle-headed" Bolsheviks. But their fury against the Left Wing and the Communist movement rose in inverse ratio.

The first call for participation in a Congress at Moscow for the formation of a new International, was greeted by the S. L. P. with broad hints that this document was a fraud and a forgery hatched in the mind of international spies. From then on every document that emanated from Moscow was branded in the same terms. Sometimes the allusion was open, sometimes it was veiled. But never did the Weekly People credit the Third International with authorship. The gradual counter-revolutionary development of the S. L. P. became more and more pronounced. From fiery denunciation of the revolutionary Socialists, at home and "sympathy" with the revolutionary Socialists abroad, they tended logically to a denunciation of the revolutionary Socialists abroad. In their open letters to Presidents, Senators and Attorney Generals they went so far as to denounce the Left Wing and Communist parties to the Government. The aftermath of the January raids called forth the irrepressible glee of the Weekly People. "The Physical-forcists" had not what they richly deserved. From then on every reference to the Communist Party which had been driven underground for advocating the principles and tactics of the Third International, was "rat-hole Communists" and similar derisive epithets.

Finally the September 1st proclamation of the Executive Committee of the Third International, signed by its chairman, Comrade Zinoviev, was published in various radical, Socialist and Communist organs in America. For a long time the Weekly People paid no heed to it or else denounced it as a "fraud" or a "forgery". From a report of their convention published in their sheet, it seemed as if this proclamation was even debated at the convention but was shelved on the pretext that its authenticity was ready to be doubted. (It must be noted here that Boris Reinstein, who had eluded the authorities and gone on his mission as a delegate to the Stockholm Congress, and also finally drifted into Russia and acted as a delegate to the Congress of the Third International for S. L. P. was repudiated by the S. L. P.). After some months however, the Weekly People in an open letter to Zinoviev, turned the vials of its wrath against the Third International as well as against the Communist movement in this country in unmistakable terms. They denounced every principle enunciated in that proclamation as the basis for acceptance into the Third International—Mass Action, Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Soviet Power. In lan-

guage more intemperate than Hillquit ever used it ranged itself against the Third International and denounced its principles and tactics.

The call for the second Congress of the Third International found the S. L. P. weakly attempting to evade the issue by claiming that it was in no position to send delegates. In this manner it fooled its membership—BUT THE FACT IS THAT IT REFUSED TO SEND DELEGATES BECAUSE IT DISAGREED WITH THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL ON THE SAME GROUNDS AS ALL OTHER "SOCIALIST" PARTIES OF EUROPE AND AMERICA.

Now that the Congress is over and the "Socialist" parties of the Right and Centre have been carefully excluded and the conditions for admission have been promulgated, the Weekly People comes out denouncing the S. P. for not affiliating—but the writer must have had his tongue in his cheek while doing so. While ostensibly an attack against Hillquit and the S. P., more space is devoted to perverting the issue to prove why the S. L. P. could not itself affiliate and in attempting to prove that the reasons which actuated the S. L. P. were different than those which actuated the S. P.

How does it prove its case? By calling the Communist parties which accept mass action and armed insurrection and civil war as "anarchists". Mass Action itself is called an "anarchistic" doctrine. They refused to give up their legalistic and opportunistic theories—they demand the right to preach their own doctrines and "national" autonomy.

The very same position taken by the S. P. But the S. L. P. pretends that its case is different. The hypocrisy of the S. L. P. is so self-evident that it needs no further comment.

In the current issue of the Weekly People (October 9th) the S. L. P. returns to the attack of the S. P. by analyzing and proving that the Third International was right in branding Hillquit as a renegade and traitor. It is the first of a series and we have no doubt that the Weekly People will pile up such a mass of evidence that will prove Hillquit's apostasy to the hilt. For Hillquit and the S. L. P. are traditional enemies. They hate each other even long after the causes for hate have disappeared. They are blindly thrusting their spear into the man around whose neck they will yet throw their arms to save them from those "bad, bold Bolsheviks". But this is another story and is yet to be written on the records of history.

What we are more directly concerned with is the fine, machivellian manner in which the Weekly People traduces the Third International, in contradistinction to the clumsy, slap-stick method of Sandgren and the plodding, stupid sallies of Hillquit.

After quoting some of Hillquit's statements from the Cail, the Weekly People introduces its fine Italian hand as follows:

"There is perhaps no more difficult task at this time than attempting to take under consideration statements which come or purport to come from the Third International at Moscow"

The implication is that one cannot be sure of the authenticity of any document that comes from the Third International. And for the following four "reasons":

(1) The accomplishment of Russian Revolution and the three years struggle, and "that nearly the entire previously recognized and leading Socialist movements of the Western countries have either joined more or less openly the camp of the enemies of have damned the Soviets with faint praise, all these and many other circumstances taken together may easily have caused the Soviet leaders to STAND SO STRAIGHT THAT SOME OF THE LESS WELL-BALANCED HAVE COME TO LEAN TOWARDS PHYSICAL FORCE—particularly as they have been fostered under Russian conditions".

(2) The isolation of Russia due to the blockade and the war against her, cutting off Russia from intercourse with revolutionists from other countries which necessarily compelled her to "look at the world with Russian spectacles".

(3) "The news coming from Russia is still garbled and unreliable. So for example, did there appear in the New York Sun of August 31 seventeen "points" purporting to be the authentic demands imposed by the Third International for admission of Socialist bodies.

(4) "So-called "Communist" papers and underground journals of this and other countries are being crammed with "official" documents "issued by the Communist International", laying down laws and dictates which have "FRAUD" WRITTEN ALL OVER THE FACE OF THEM".

These are the four "reasons" given by the S. L. P. for its policy of "labor and wait", as they call it. UNTIL A TRULY REPRESENTATIVE MEETING OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CAN TAKE PLACE".

Those who have read Hillquit's attack upon the Third International will certainly admit that this method is crudeness itself compared with the S. L. P. method of attack upon the Third International.

Hillquit's attempt to discuss principles and set up what he calls his "Socialism of the Western type" as opposed "to the doctrine from Moscow" fooled no one. The merest tyro could see through Hillquit as an apologist of social-patriotism, reformism, opportunism and pacifism. But here we have a different enemy to deal with. There is no attempt to discuss

principles. The four "points" of the S. L. P. are dipped in the distilled poison of DOUBT and SOLICITUDE FOR THE GOOD NAME OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL which is being bandied about by self-appointed "committees of Communists" in western Europe and even in America, "taking upon themselves the function of speaking as 'Committees of the Third International'."

Mark you, it is the S. L. P. which becomes the "champion" of the Third International against its traducers, The Communist Parties of Western Europe and America! Why, it even champions the Third International against some of its "less well balanced" leaders in Russia! You see, all of them are unbalanced but some are "less well-balanced" than others!

To enter into discussion with such a bunch of scoundrels is a waste of time. Our task is to expose them and leave them to the well-deserved contempt of every honest class-conscious worker.

Point (1) makes the dishonest assumption that there are leaders of the Third International who differ on the question of mass action and the inevitability of a violent revolution to overthrow the capitalist governments of the world.

WE CHALLENGE THE S. L. P. TO PRODUCE THE WRITING OF ANY OF THE RUSSIAN LEADERS OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL, LENIN, ZINOVIEV, RADEK, BUCHARIN, TROTSKY, ETC., WHEREIN THEY STATE THAT THEY ARE OPPOSED TO THE USE OF FORCE IN THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION OR PROPAGATING THIS TACTIC TO THE MASSES!

The cheap, sinister, provocative attempt of the S. L. P. to denounce the Communist Party to the Government by using the term "physical force" instead of mass action—which latter is the recognized terminology for this tactic in the Third International—is obviously intended to scare away its membership from discussing and understanding this question.

Point (2) that due to the isolation of Russia she has been compelled to "look at the world with Russian spectacles", is only another but more pernicious way of repeating Hillquit's clumsy phrase of Socialism of the western type versus the doctrines that emanate from Moscow. The implication is clearly defined nevertheless, in this statement as in Hillquit's, that a violent revolution may have been well enough in backward, Czarist Russia, but in the enlightened democracies of Western Europe and America, where "the will of the majority" can be expressed through the ballot—where even capitalist institutions permit of a "lawful", "legal" change, such methods are unthinkable, and uncivilized".

This negation is completely at variance with Marx's own dictum on the origin and function of the state. It exposes the bourgeois-democratic ideology of those who believe that the capitalist state in the form of a democratic parliamentary republic differs essentially from the monarchical form of state, insofar as the class struggle for the emancipation of the working class is concerned.

These "eneuchs of Marxism" try to make the workers believe that the use of force, the breaching of force, is peculiarly a product of the Russian Revolution and heretofore had no place in Marxian Socialism. Therefore the reference to "Russian spectacles".

It is unnecessary to quote from Marx and Engels to disprove this arrogant lie. Lenin has done it so well in his "STATE AND REVOLUTION", (which book the S. L. P. imports from England but never reads), that most of our readers are thoroughly familiar with it.

Point (3) attempts to confuse the garbled and unreliable news from Russia as printed in the capitalist papers with the authentic and reliable news of the Third International which is disseminated in the Communist papers here and abroad. The Weekly People gives the impression that the documents or theses from the Executive Committee of the Third International are just as garbled and unreliable as the news printed in the capitalist papers. This is the only way in which it can continue to hide its opposition to the principles and tactics of the Third International. But the Weekly People cannot deny that it knows of the "Communist International" magazine, printed in Moscow and Petrograd, in Russian, French and German, which is the OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL!

All the documents, theses, official statements, communications etc., which are printed in the Communist papers here and abroad, and which are credited to the Executive Committee of the Third International, are either taken or translated from this magazine. (The Weekly People itself, in the current issue, reprints an article entitled "The Working Women in Soviet Russia", which is a translation from the No. 6 issue of the Communist International magazine, by Comrade Gelena Blinina).

This proves that they know of the existence of this magazine and do not doubt its authenticity where ordinary articles are concerned. They begin to doubt it only where the Executive Committee of the Third International issues its official documents, or the theses of the