

# THE COMMUNIST

Official organ of  
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA  
published by the  
CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Vol. 2. November 1st, 1920 M13.

## UNITY

By the decision of the Second Congress and the Executive Committee of the Communist International the whole vexing problem of unity, which has divided the Communist movement in this country ever since its inception, will be settled once and for all. Of course, the date set in the decision—October 10th—is inoperative because we only accidentally stumbled across this decision on October 13th and it was not acted upon by the C. E. C. until Oct. 19th. In this connection we may mention that the date has since been put forward to January 1st by the Executive Committee of the Communist International upon the appeal of our delegate, Comrade Andrew, who represented our party before that body in Moscow on September 22nd.

The basis for unity is that laid down for all Communist parties and groups in all other countries—the decisions of the Second Congress, the decisions of the Executive Committee, and the method of uniting is by joint convention, based upon proportional representation of membership in both parties.

We, for our part welcome this coming unity convention and the formation of one Communist Party in America. There never was any good reason for the existence of two parties except the inability of the minority of the organized Communist to abide by the decision of the majority of the membership. From the very beginning of the rift in the Left Wing, when the vast and overwhelming majority of the Left Wing membership had been expelled from the S. P. and had no other recourse but to call a convention for the organization of the Communist Party, this same minority attempted to override the majority and falling in that—split.

The C. L. P. became the party of this minority after various excursions in and out of the S. P. convention a year ago last August. Where are the Left Wing delegates to-day who organized the C. L. P. in opposition to the Communist Party?

Out of some seventy odd delegates (many of whom had no mandate from any membership) only a very few are left in the Communist movement. A number of them since openly repudiated the Communist movement and the Third International. Some of them are back in the S. P. Others have disappeared altogether.

only a handful are left reinforced by our own former "minority" leaders who have united with them to organize the U. C. P. in opposition to the Communist Party.

From the very beginning this stubborn Centrist group plotted and intrigued, planned and executed, a series of moves to abolish and destroy the Communist Party. In the Left Wing, in the C. L. P., in the U. C. P., the record of these Centrists and Irreconcilables is one that should have led to their expulsion from the Communist International were that body in possession of all the facts. But they have succeeded in hoodwinking the Communist International just as they succeeded in hoodwinking some of our own membership—by lies and misrepresentation of the vilest sort.

We need not go into this record at this time. It is too well-known to our membership. We shall only take up the latest phase of their rascality. Immediately after the recent split and the coalition of the C. L. P. and the "minority" into the U. C. P.—the leaders immediately sent out the information to Moscow that they had succeeded in uniting the majority of the organized Communists in this country into the U. C. P. Only a few depleted language federations were left, mostly foreigners, who had no conception of the needs of the Communist movement, and would soon be compelled to join the U. C. P. as the Communist Party was no longer in existence. They sent their delegates to the Second Congress in Moscow to protest against the seating of any delegates from the "defunct" Communist Party and demanded the full

ten votes allotted to America in the Congress. Fraina and Stocklitsky were not even in a position to deny the truth of their contention, as they had left this country long before the split. It remained for Comrade Radek to rise and protest the U. C. P. claim on the ground that "they had only heard one side of the case". Pending more definite knowledge, the U. C. P. were given six votes to our four, and were recognized as the major party.

This brazen U. C. P. lie is on a par with the chauvinist lie of the C. L. P. to the Communist International that they were the party of the American or English-speaking elements while the Communist Party were composed only of "foreigners". The point is that they succeeded in hoodwinking the Communist International, simply because they had superior channels of communication—which is no mystery to any comrade acquainted with the controversies in the Left Wing and Communist movements.

But now, by the decision of the Communist International compelling unity by January 1st, the U. C. P. are hoist by their own petard **THEY ARE NOW COMPELLED TO PROVE THAT THEY ARE THE MAJOR PARTY IN AMERICA.** They will have to prove that their membership is ten thousand as they claimed in Moscow and in their official organs.

A unity convention, if it is to be a true expression of the rank and file of both parties, can only be accomplished on the basis of membership figures—dues-paying, good standing membership. Any other way of arriving at the number of delegates each party is entitled to would not be a true index of the rank and file, who in the last analysis, elect and control the officials and lay down the policies by which they are to be governed. This is the method laid down by the Communist International for unity of all Communist parties where more than one exists in any country.

Is the U. C. P. ready to accept the joint convention and proportional representation based upon membership as the ONLY method of accomplishing organic Communist unity? Frankly we are skeptical. Although we have received no official reply to our propositions (printed elsewhere in this issue) they have given our unity committee an unofficial, verbal reply which indicates that they realize that they have been placed in the very unenviable position of acknowledging that they LIED to the Communist International by claiming to be the major party in this country.

They have put forward the tentative claim that they are entitled to a majority of the delegates at the joint convention **BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AS THE MAJOR PARTY. THEY HAVE PUT FORWARD A TENTATIVE DEMAND FOR AN APPORTIONMENT OF DELEGATES BASED UPON THE REPRESENTATION ACCORDED THEM IN THE SECOND CONGRESS—THAT IS, SIX TO FOUR.** In plain language they want a majority of the delegates on the basis of the very lie that gave them the six votes in the Second Congress.

For unmitigated gall this beats anything they have ever perpetrated. Just think! **THEY ARE AFRAID TO SUBMIT PROOF THAT THEY ARE THE MAJOR PARTY AS THEY CLAIMED BUT NEVERTHELESS THEY WANT US TO SWALLOW THAT LIE WITHOUT PROOF AND GRANT THEM THE MAJORITY OF THE DELEGATES AT THE JOINT CONVENTION.**

We do not know if they will persist in this demand but the very idea they put forth should convince any unprejudiced member of either Communist Party that these leaders are now trying to "get away with the goods". The Communist Party, we are certain will not consent to enter into deals, or compromises or "secret understandings" with these leaders of the U. C. P., in order to help them save their faces therefore the Comm. Party will not consent to any apportionment of delegates to the joint convention that is not based upon membership figures that can be substantially proven. Certainly the Communist Party will not consent to any ARBITRARY apportionment of delegates.

The decision of the Communist International is clear. It calls for complete unity by January 1st This means organic Communist unity. The Communist International has laid down the basis of accomplishing unity—only through a joint convention based upon proportional representation. This was clearly stated in the

belated appeal for unity between the former C. L. P. This is the method which the Executive Committee of the Communist International has ordered for England and any other country where two parties exist.

We are certain that the Communist Party will not retreat from this position, sanctioned and endorsed by the Communist International.

It remains to be seen whether the U. C. P. leaders are prepared to disobey the mandate of the Communist International.

## JOHN REED

A few days before the third anniversary of the Soviet Republic comes the news that John Reed died of typhus in Moscow. The death of John Reed removes one of the most picturesque characters in the American Communist movement. A journalist, a poet, a revolutionist, Reed had the wonderful opportunity of gazing upon and participating in birth-pangs of Soviet Russia in those memorable days which he so ably described in his "TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD". What he witnessed there and then gave a new impulse to his wandering, restless spirit. It gave a new direction to those remarkable talents of his, which were to be dedicated hereafter in the cause of the emancipation of the working class of the entire world.

We do not have to pen extravagant and hypocritical eulogies over John Reed, now that he is dead. We leave that to the bourgeois liberals and the petty-bourgeois "Socialists" who are vying with each other in lauding him as a martyr and a patriot. It is the way of petty souls to defame and besmirch a man during life and then to lavish fulsome praise when he is gone. This is not the way of Communists who measure all men by their devotion or antagonism to the cause of the world proletarian revolution.

John Reed was a young man. He came into the Communist movement by a circuitous path. He was only just beginning to find his bearings in the Communist movement. His previous flirtations with the radical and labor movements were of a somewhat dilatory character. He worshipped at the shrine of Art, and adventure—and was attracted to the radical movement because he found there new art values, new art concepts and a kindred spirit of adventure—primarily because the movement itself or contact with it filled the needs of his soul and his spiritual aspirations. He lacked the basic Marxian knowledge and the plodding industry of a Marxian Socialist. But he had something which made up amply for this lack. He had vision and courage and daring and the tradition of a revolutionary spirit that smoldered within him until he came in contact with a new world in the making and then those latent qualities burst forth in a splendor and profusion that transformed the erstwhile "art rebels" into the most austere, self-sacrificing Communist.

John Reed was destined for great things in the future. But Fate cut him off almost at the beginning of his career. His skill as a writer, his wanderings and adventure, his knowledge of human nature, and his mastery of the revolutionary art-forms were only a period of novitiate for John Reed. All these would have been cast into the melting pot of revolutionary struggle and heroic self-sacrifice had he lived. He had his part yet to play. No one acquainted with him and understanding the transformation that the Russian Bolshevik Revolution had wrought in him doubts but that his part would have been in the forefront with the choice and noble spirits who have dedicated their lives and talents to the Communist reconstruction of society the world over.

The mourn the loss of John Reed. We mourn the loss of a faithful comrade and a sincere Communist. We mourn the loss to the Communist International and to the American Communist movement in which he was fast becoming an indispensable and indefatigable worker in the common cause. John Reed is dead but his memory will live as a flaming inspiration to those he left behind in the movement for which he gave his life.