

Vital Questions of the New Party

The Program of the A. W. P.

The idea that the greatest immediate need of the working class everywhere is a new revolutionary international and a new revolutionary party in every country, is being accepted by ever wider sections of the radical labor movement.

Because we Internationalist-Communists are for a new party which unites the maximum possible forces on a revolutionary program and for revolutionary action, we have commenced a discussion with the representatives of the American Workers Party, with the aim of establishing the extent to which agreement exists, and consequently, united action and eventual fusion is possible.

The Decisive Question In this discussion, we pursue no narrow or sectional interests. Our fight for the fundamental principles of Marxism (carried on for over five years in this country and ten years internationally) excludes such a conception.

Program is of fundamental importance because by it the party is judged—essentially by program and not by action, because it is the former that determines and guides the action.

And it is precisely in the domain of the program that the founders of the new revolutionary party have a tremendous advantage over those who preceded them.

Settled Questions The experiences up to the time the Third International was formed were sufficient to settle in the mind of every genuine revolutionist—once and for all, irrevocably—the dispute between reform and revolution, social democracy and Communism.

Not being a political Hamlet, who is worthless just because no question is ever settled for him, the true revolutionist engaged in building up a new party must also cast up a balance of the past period, take inventory, and settle in his own mind, and what is more, important settle publicly in his own program, all accounts which the class struggle itself has settled beyond further argument.

It is here that the document issued several weeks ago, "Toward an American Revolutionary Labor Movement, Statement of Programmatic Orientation by the American Workers Party", reveals a number of defects which, we think, require the most drastic revision.

A new revolutionary party cannot be formed—certainly it cannot gain important strength—without justifying its existence. It cannot justify its existence as a separate organization, at least not in the eyes of the more advanced workers.

without showing conclusively that the parties already operating in the field are fundamentally outlived or injurious to the interests of the working class.

Following the classic example of the "Communist Manifesto" a revolutionary party must make its programmatic debut with a criticism of society in which it lives and which it aims to overthrow, and conclude with a criticism of all the parties of any importance, and above all, of their basic conceptions.

For purposes of concentration, we will in this article confine our comments to the third chapter of the A. W. P. statement: "The Inadequacies of Existing Parties as Instruments of Revolutionary Change."

The International Approach In the case of both parties, the problem cannot be approached from the angle of one country. The bankruptcy of social democracy and Stalinism in this or any other country derives from the fatal explosion caused in both instances when their fundamental conceptions, universally held, were tested against decisive events.

By failing to deal with the two principal labor parties from this angle, the A. W. P. statement not only presents an inadequate and partly false criticism of them, but one which characterizes its dangerous approach to the problem of internationalism.

The Socialist party, it says, is not a party of revolution, but of ineffectual reformism. Yes. But no reference is made to the essential characteristic of present-day socialism: its renunciation of the class struggle and, consequently, acceptance of class collaboration.

If the American Socialist party is small and weak today, that does not signify that a social basis does not exist for it (or its successor, or surrogate tomorrow, in the form, say, of a "Labor" or "Farmer-Labor" party) to serve as the main pillar of bourgeois democracy.

As the party of petty bourgeois democracy, its alliance with the trade union bureaucracy lies in the very nature of things. "The Socialist party," says the statement, "takes cognizance of the workers' industrial struggles only to the extent of rendering auxiliary relief or publicity services, but in every other way seeks to remain 'neutral' in the conflict of ideas, objectives and organizing principles which these struggles so abundantly express or reflect."

The Austro-Marxist school, in the deepest sense of the term, left its proletarian in the lurch at the crucial hour! It shored the Austrian Sanson of all his strength so that when his strength was tested the pillars of reaction could fall upon him and crush him to earth.

Adler's Indictment "As faithful servants the leaders of the proletariat strove to save the organization. But in so doing, they have betrayed their real class interests, they have betrayed the international, and the idea of the social revolution."

S. P. "Neutrality" in the Unions This passage is either wrong and contradictory, or just plain wrong.

If the S. P. "seeks to remain 'neutral' in the conflict," why does it follow a "policy of siding with the conservative as against the progressive forces in every contest?"

The fact is that by its whole incorrigible nature, the S. P. is not and cannot be neutral in the trade unions, either with or without quotation marks, any more than can the other political groups in the labor movement. "Neutrality" in the trade unions, like its cousin "No politics in the unions", has always been a pleasant mask behind which reaction fought against awakening class consciousness and against a class struggle policy and leadership.

Why is no mention made of the international connections of the Socialist party? Even for a party whose absorbing concern is with the problems in this country, the Second International is worth something more than one casual and one accidental reference.

that if the government imposed a Fascist constitution on the country, if a government commissar were appointed in Vienna, or if our party or the trade unions were dissolved we would strike. Our party stuck to the last to these four points.

The Dissatisfied Masses "The dissatisfaction and agitation of the workers against the conservative policy of our party committee grew as the government provocations increased. The workers said the government was making itself more powerful militarily, was wearing down our spirit and was choosing its own time to attack us. Excitement rose to a fever pitch during the last weeks."

"I was alarmed to hear of the spirit, and after discussion with my informant we both decided that urgent messages must be sent to the workers to keep cool. I arranged for them to be told that if we in Vienna could submit patiently to an arms search in party headquarters they must try to do the same. Apparently the message arrived too late...."

It is by these methods and with this spirit that the Bauers were whom the Austrian proletariat, over whom they wielded an undivided and undisputed influence, for the decisive battle which they fought and lost. What does it matter if, unlike so many of their German party, a few Bauers or Deutsches did engage in the actual fighting?

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Ad infinitum. Ad nauseam.

A revolutionary program which does not establish the bankruptcy and perdition of the Second International in the imperialist war and in the post-war revolutionary storms (and it must), might at least record the fact (and the why of it) of the second terrific collapse and treachery of the Second International in Germany in 1933, and the irreconcilability of the revolutionary party with that International, its foundations and ideas.

There is, unfortunately, a great deal in the A. W. P. statement which lends itself too easily to such a conception. If it should prevail, the results would be little less than fatal. The true revolutionist of today, despite the nationalist reaction which has intoxicated and poisoned whole sections of the labor movement, is like the true revolutionist of yesterday: first and foremost an internationalist.

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The Waterloo of Pseudo-Radicalism

Vienna: the Socialist 'Millennium'

Except for the Fascist hounds, who glory in the extermination of the militant proletariat, acclaim for the unbounded heroism of the Austrian social democracy (and it must), might at least record the fact (and the why of it) of the second terrific collapse and treachery of the Second International in Germany in 1933, and the irreconcilability of the revolutionary party with that International, its foundations and ideas.

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the capitalist press appreciates the services of Austro-Marxism in maintaining bourgeois civilization that they now reproach Dollfuss. (Yesterday he was hailed as a "modern David")

When the Hapsburg monarchy collapsed in 1918 and Austria became the ball instead of the bat in the European game, Socialists and Christian Socialists (the bourgeois Catholics) cooperated to salvage the ruins of the Empire. The despised Marxists who barricaded themselves in their tenement houses last week saved Austria from Communism in 1919.

Need we explain further that the destruction of Austro-Marxism meant the loss of a steadfast ally to the democratic and liberal capitalist class in Europe and America. Under the cloak of democracy and in the guise of a gradual peaceful evolution from capitalism to socialism the Bauer's, the Adler's, and the Renner's stayed the tide of the proletarian revolution long enough for the Heimwehr to thrust it far out of danger.

"Red Vienna" was the symbol for Austro-Marxism. It was hailed by its supporters as living proof that it was possible to attain a great maximum of socialism without violence, without depriving the capitalist class of its wealth or privileges—without acting as Communists. They built apartment

houses which the Times says "became models for city planners throughout the world. Rents were astonishingly low, and it was only natural that these blocks should become strongholds of socialism."

And further "Under Socialist rule in Vienna utilities were taken over and in general income from taxation was employed for public improvements and social welfare. Socialist legislation provided for the citizen from a few months before his birth until his burial. Health, housing, wages, unemployment dole, all came within the scope of municipal government."

Thus the utopia of reform socialism reached its pinnacle in Vienna and here too it ended in a horrible debacle. The Achilles heel of the Austrian workers was the lack of state power. The treachery of its leadership lay in their harnessing the struggle for state power when the time was ripe and the proletariat ready. Between the Communist which lasted but two months, and "Red Vienna", the socialist millennium there was this difference: state power. That is all the difference in the world. The capitalist press is thankful to Bauer and Co., because they did not follow the sure road of the proletarian revolution.

How clear is the difference in tactics and results between Communism and social democracy! The bombed tenement houses in Vienna stand as demonstration of the futility of trying to reform capitalism out of existence. The thousands of proletarian corpses are dumb witnesses to the fact that the gradualism of the Vienna lackeys meant the gradual arming of the counter-revolution and the not-so-gradual annihilation of the flower of the working class.

"Red Vienna" is now red only in worker's blood. The pride of "international" socialism has become its everlasting shame! —G. C.

Victory In Minneapolis Coal Strike

Inspiration and Example For Union Workers The methods used and the manner in which the organization work was carried out, stands as a model for the benefit of those who will take up the vast work that lies just ahead.

The Open Shop bosses have learned a bitter lesson. That they are far from idle is well known to every wide-awake worker. The example of the whole police force ranged on the side of the bosses in the futile effort to break through the picket lines with scab coal, has only one meaning for the Union and each member of the Union. Be prepared! Be prepared! BE MUCH BETTER PREPARED! for the next test.

Every member of the Union as well as those workers who will be members in the coming period, should be vigilantly watching the Regional Labor Board. What exactly has been its role? It is well to note the fact that in all the efforts made by the Union Committee to present the coal workers demands to the bosses, the Board was only an agency to transmit an insolent reply and a flat refusal of the bosses to deal with the Union. During the most advantageous time of the winter season this Board together with several Labor officials were instrumental in postponing action under one pretext and another, which gravely weakened and endangered the coal workers' position.

When in spite of these obstructive tactics, the justly angered and aroused workers STRUCK the bosses, demonstrating to the bosses and to all who wished to see that the union did actually speak

AGAINST HOOLIGANISM The Spartacus Youth Club (Brownsville) unanimously condemns the actions of the disrupters of the mass meeting in Madison Square Garden called by the Socialist Party and A. F. L. trade unions. We feel that the blame falls squarely on the shoulders of the Stalinist misleaders who are doubly to be blamed because they are prejudicing the cause of Communism among the working class of America. SPARTACUS YOUTH CLUB

Hotel Strike

of Pollyanna optimism. We repeat: heroic action and a sharp turn of policy are absolutely necessary. The genuine militants in the union must understand this, shout for it and FIGHT for it. In our opinion concentration is necessary especially on two practical tasks:

1. Relief. Mobilize the strikers to collect funds. Organize a tag day. Put five hundred strikers on the busy corners, in the subways and at workers' meetings and gathering places with collection boxes to raise money quickly. Organize a big squad of strikers to canvas union meetings. Open a real kitchen and really feed the strikers. Send squads out to collect food supplies from stores, sympathizers and workers' neighborhoods. Circularize every workers' organization with an appeal for funds, get out collection lists—raise funds at once by every practical means and utilize the latent energies of the strikers themselves for the task. The strike depends relief now. The force to collect it doesn't need to be hunted for. It is right in the union headquarters. Let the leadership organize it.

2. Picketing. Connect the dispensation of relief directly with service on the picket line. Real and systematic picketing combined with mass demonstrations can force a settlement, and nothing else can. Instead of subordinating the actions of the strikers to the negotiations, subordinate the negotiations to the actions of the strikers. On his line the situation can be changed in 24 hours, morale can be restored and the strike can take on new life. There is no other way.

3. To the Leaders. Quit chasing after "respectability." Stop crawling before the Labor Board and its chairman, Mrs. Herrick. Answer the insults of this strike breaker in a manner worthy of the leaders of striking workers. Let the world know that the hotel workers are fighting for their rights, not begging for them. Above all try to convince the strikers by deeds that you conceive of the strike as a class battle and lead it accordingly. Stop your treacherous maneuvers and intrigues against the militant elements in the union and give up the idea that you can silence them with strong arm methods. Remember this is a progressive and democratic union, not a reactionary, bureaucratic one; it is the A. F. W. not the A. F. of L. Therefore try to act like progressive and militant labor leaders, not like bulldozing labor fakery.

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