

drive out the Left. The first big test came at the Philadelphia meeting of the N. E. C. There the Right wing permitted, without too much worry, a long list of temporary Clarity "victories" on organizational questions—posts and committees, trager for Labor Secretary, Tyler for the Call, Zam for the Monthly. The Right wing knew—and Altman and Siegel expressed this openly in intermissions—that these victories meant nothing, and that if anything Clarity would only discredit itself the more through its prominence in the apparatus. On the question of the Trotsky Committee—where the Right wing itself is partly divided between its Stalinist and not-so-Stalinist segments, and where the full weight of the campaign of the Left wing on the Trials pressed against the N. E. C.—the Right wing suffered a defeat. But its main energies during the entire Spanish question which with the Barcelona events forming the background of the Special Session ground of the Special Session, and the attention of the entire Party concentrated on Spain, the Right wing knew to be the central issue of the meeting.

The Right-Center Bloc

On the Spanish question, as the membership knows, Clarity capitulated miserably, shamefully, to the Right wing. The infamous and cowardly resolution of solidarity with the assassins of the Catalan workers was passed unanimously—with the exception of the abstentions of Trager and Tyler (the latter of whom, at least, has subsequently become a defender of the revolution). No counter-resolution was even offered.

By this vote on the Spanish resolution, the Clarity leadership laid the political basis for its bloc with the Right wing against the revolutionary Left.

The Right wing went ahead faster than ever. Altman broke up the New York membership meeting. Thomas returned, and lined up with the Right wing. The question of split was put on the order of the day. The Special Session of the N. E. C. was called.

Meanwhile Clarity, terrified as its house of cards tumbled about its ears, called tragically for—a "truce", a "peace". The Right wing sneered contemptuously—it would accept no "truce". The revolutionary Left asked what Clarity meant by a truce. Clarity explained: it meant the giving up of all right to discussion and criticism within the Party for the Left wing, the complete political disarmament of the Left wing, and not a single measure against the Right wing already fully armed and in battle array: it meant that the Left should lie passively and in silence while the Right wing tore it to pieces. The Left was compelled to decline Clarity's generous proposal.

At the Special Session, the Right wing put forward various schemes, including the "Loyalty Oath," for expelling the Left at once and en bloc. None of these seemed workable. The Clarity "truce" proposal was accepted as a basis; and its re-worked form emerged as the "Emergency Policy" Resolution. This Resolution was adopted unanimously by the Special Session.

The Gag-Law Against the Left

What, exactly, is this Resolution? We must be entirely clear about it. We should observe that even apart from the specific circumstances of the Party crisis, this Resolution is a direct violation of the spirit and letter of the Chicago Convention, and of the Party Constitution. In attempts to establish in the Party a régime of martial law, prohibiting internal political discussion and the expression of differences of opinion. Still more does it

violate the entire theory, tradition, and practise of internal party democracy. It is quite literally true to say that for a comparable piece of bureaucratic usurpation of the rights of party members we would have to turn to the history of the Comintern under Stalin. But martial law does not function in the abstract: it is a repressive device made use of by one group or class against another; and to understand the full meaning of the Resolution we must take it in relation to the actual present conditions in the Party.

Not one word or phrase of the Resolution is directed against the Right wing, which is solely responsible for the precipitation and continuance of the Party crisis. What does this lack mean? It means that the Right wing, by the terms of the Resolution, is given a free hand to proceed unhampered in the carrying out of their campaign against the Left.

Every provision of the Resolution, understood in the concrete, is directed squarely against the Left. The N. E. C. never for a moment suggested that Wisconsin or Altman or Lewis or Siegel should stop saying and writing and doing just what they pleased—and they have shown that they would not stop, either within the Party or in public—whatever the N. E. C. might say. What the Resolution aims to do is to silence the voice of the Left wing on Spain, on the Soviet persecutions, on the International question, on La Follette and La Guardia. The N. E. C. has already stated that even the alleged "discussion meetings" to be provided under the Resolution (which will, besides, probably never take place) are not to discuss differences of opinion, but, in true Stalinist manner, to discuss "how to put into effect the decisions of the N. E. C." The literature and speeches which the Resolution aims to remove from the eyes and ears of Party members are not the pamphlet of Paul Porter—still on sale both within and outside of the Party—or the articles of New York Right wingers attacking the Party position in the Jewish Day, the Stampa Libera or the public and private speeches sponsored by the L. I. D., but the pamphlets and documents and addresses of revolutionary socialists.

The answer of the Special Session of the N. E. C. to the mighty international and national events and to the profound crisis of the Party itself was: the attempt to suppress by administrative decree the voice of the revolutionary left wing, and the simultaneous grant of a *carte blanche* to the Right wing.

Clarity Final Stage

In the unanimous vote for this Resolution, the Clarity leadership consummated the bloc with the Right wing, which was prepared for politically by the Spanish Resolution of the Philadelphia meeting. Thus the Clarity leadership enters the final stage of the centrist evolution. Let no one make the slightest mistake about this, least of all the Party militants who still follow or believe they are following the Clarity leadership. That leadership is now in a bloc with the Right wing, which is not altered by any amount of radical words and phrases. In actuality, there is now taking place a "division of labor" in the campaign of the Left. While the Right wing proper proceeds directly and brutally to the immediate task of expulsions and suspensions and charter-liftings, the Clarity leadership puts the party members off guard and blunts the counter-offensive of the Left by "softening the struggle", by assurances that "you can rely on us", by promises that "the N. E. C. will protect you".

This must be made plain: Neither the Clarity leadership nor "its" N. E. C. can be relied

on a single iota. They cannot because they are in alliance with the Right wing, against the Left wing. Is this not obvious? Is it not obvious that of the Clarity leadership and the N. E. C. were going to act with and not against the Left, it had a perfect chance at the Special Session? There it acted with the Right and against the Left. And the Right wing-Clarity alliance, far from weakening from now on, will necessarily grow closer with the further development of the struggle.

Meanwhile, the other phase of the final centrist development has also been rapidly taking place in the months since the Convention, and still more rapidly at present. As the centrist leadership enters its definite bloc

with the Right, the ranks of the centrist grouping fall away. The passive and reactionary sections of their following have almost entirely gone completely into the camp of the Right wing, where they belonged in the first place, and where they find a more firm and decisive leadership. The active and militant Party members, seeing the gulf between their own view and the actions of their supposed leadership ever widening, fuse with the adherents of the revolutionary tendency. This process was well under way at the first State Conventions held following the Chicago National Convention. Following the Philadelphia N. E. C. session, with the Spanish resolution taking first place at the subsequent State Conventions, the process was

speeded. In State after State, we witnessed what took place, for example, at the Pennsylvania Convention: the united forces of the Clarity leaders (Felix and friends) together with the Right wingers on one side, the adherents of the Appeal together with the militant and active members formerly following Clarity united on the other. The process goes on, greatly stimulated again by the direct treachery of the Clarity leadership at the Special Session. Even today, except for remnants in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, Clarity, as an "independent tendency", remains as a mere sterile hulk.

Such is the universal fate of centrism.

7.-Perspective of the Left Wing

Revolutionary Marxism bases its plans and proposals upon reality. There is nothing either demagogic or utopian in revolutionary politics. It does not build on hopes or wishes or fears. Coldly, soberly, it observes and analyzes, and draws conclusions. Utilizing the methods of Marxism, the perspective of the Appeal Association, the organized revolutionary Left wing of the Party, follows, thus, naturally and easily from the analysis of the actual situation in the Party.

Let us summarize briefly the situation in the Party, which has been herein stated in some detail: The Party is in the grip of an intense crisis. This crisis is a reflection of crucial national and international political events, as well as of the specific circumstances of the Party's internal development. In this crisis, the aim of the Right wing is the suppression and expulsion of the revolutionary Left wing. The Center (Clarity), nominally in control of the national apparatus of the Party has not merely proved itself incapable of leading the Party and unable to resist the campaign of the Right wing, but has, in the persons of its leadership, entered into a *de facto* bloc with the Right wing against the Left. A majority of the active and militant membership of the Party adheres to the Left wing, an overwhelming majority (if we include those not yet definitely and consistently with the Left) is opposed to the plans at the Right wing. Nevertheless, in direct violation of the decisions of the Chicago Convention, the Party statutes, the tradition of party democracy and the will of the membership, the Right wing and the Right wing-Centrist bloc (functioning as the N. E. C.), usurping the rights of the membership, carry on their campaign against the Left by brutal administrative and bureaucratic measures. Fundamentally, the present crisis is the culmination of the opposition in the Party between the revolutionary Marxist current and the anti-revolutionary currents; specifically, this opposition is now focussed on the four key political questions which we have discussed. The Right wing has gone too far to be able to draw back from its split course.

Capitulate or Fight!

Even this summary shows that there is only a single alternative before the Left wing: put bluntly, the Left wing must either capitulate or fight. It must either sit back passively and silently while the Right wing rides roughshod over it, cuts it to pieces, leaves it in the end a political corpse; either this, or it must undertake a mighty counter-offensive, all along the line, relentless, sharp, uncompromising. It will need no argument to defend the choice which we have made: to fight.

Our fight is the fight for the

defense and advance of revolutionary Marxism and its adherents toward the great goal of a genuine revolutionary party in this country as an integral part of the international revolutionary movement. We shall conduct this fight on the only possible basis: the full program of revolutionary internationalism. The dominant political issues—though these cannot be separated from the full and rounded Marxist program—are dictated by the terms of the crisis itself: defense of the Spanish proletarian revolution, solidarity with the revolutionary workers of Spain, irrevocable opposition to the traitors and assassins of the Popular Front and their defenders throughout the world; defense of the heritage of the October Revolution, and unshakeable opposition to the Stalinist hangmen; the forging of the new revolutionary International, the summation of the Marxist answer to the problems of our epoch; the defense and advance of independent working class politics, altogether clear of every class collaborationist tangle.

As the necessary organizational instrument for our fight, we are re-constituting the Socialist Appeal Association throughout the Party and YPSL, drawing thus on the splendid and consistent revolutionary tradition of the Appeal tendency.

As a further indispensable instrument in our fight, we are undertaking the immediate publication of the Socialist Appeal. The solemn decision under which the Appeal suspended publication at the time of the Chicago Convention has been brazenly violated. The internal discussion organ has never appeared; and has, in fact, been voted out of existence by the N. E. C. at its Philadelphia meeting. The official press is a purely factional press from which we are systematically excluded. The Left wing is expected to stay muzzled and now, with mass expulsions, to remain silent about the crimes committed against it. We refuse to be muzzled! The Appeal is our answer to the gag-laws and the split drive.

Every revolutionary consideration demands its immediate appearance as the militant and uncompromising spokesman and banner-bearer of the Left wing.

Perspective of Fight

What will be the result of the struggle? It is neither necessary nor useful to speculate on the precise form of the outcome. The Socialist Party is now reaching the end of the long process which started four years ago. For it there are only two possibilities: On the one hand, if the Right wing succeeds in its aim, the Party will be not merely doomed as a potentially revolutionary force, but will collapse as any kind of independent political organization. The entire strength and promise of the Party, the sole force which can build the Party and

lead it, lie in the revolutionary Left wing. With the Left wing out, there will be nothing left but a skeleton. The unholy alliance which is held together only by its common opposition to revolutionary Marxism will fall apart into its constituent elements. Wisconsin will find that La Follette provides plenty of politics without the bother of an "independent Party". Lewis and others will be satisfied with the L. I. D. Still others will need no more than the American Labor Party. Many, by one or another route, will jump or drift into their proper Stalinist home. Some will leave the movement altogether. A small clique (perhaps form the Clarity group, some of whom are already thinking and even negotiating in this direction) may well engineer a deal with the Lovestonites. The Socialist Party will simply drop apart, like the one horse shay that had outlived its time.

On the other hand, if the Left wing succeeds in defeating the Right wing, in re-conquering for the Party a normal life and the possibility of normal development, the future of the Party is assured. There would still be a split, it is true: not because the Left wing "desires" a split, but because from the nature of the case the hardened core of the Right wing would quit the Party. But such a split would strengthen and invigorate the Party. With a Left wing victory, in the face of the mighty political events now unfolding around us and the unprecedented opportunities which they hold out, the Party will go mightily forward, expanding and deepening its roots in the mass movement, assuming leadership in the class struggle, and preparing as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class for the final conflict.

Can the Left wing succeed in the Party struggle? The majority of the membership, above all of the active membership, is with us. Many more will join us in the days just ahead. Party legality is with us, for it is our opponents who have shattered every requirement of Convention decisions and Party Constitution and democratic tradition. History is with us for our ideas and aims represent the interest of the progressive class in society, and of the social revolution. But in the Party struggle we should be blind not to recognize the reality and state it openly. Our opponents control the greater part of the apparatus of the Party, and they have already shown that they will utilize their administrative position in the most ruthless and bureaucratic fashion. They have at their disposal a heavy weight of dead-wood book-members. They have made clear that they will not regard in the slightest the will of the active membership. They have announced openly that they