

Party Branches Protest Mass Expulsions

Rochester and Twin Cities Hit Ouster

Rochester Protests

325 Meigs St.
August 10, 1937.

Roy E. Burt, Sec'y, National Executive Committee.
James Lipsig, Sec'y, N. Y. State Exec. Committee.

Dear Comrades:

Local Rochester, in Special Meeting called for the purpose of considering the inner-Party crisis adopts the following statement to be sent to the N. E. C. and S. E. C.

There exists a grave crisis in the party. After thorough discussion of the report of our Convention Delegate and examination of the minutes of the Chicago Convention, the Constitution, Resolutions and Policies adopted by that convention, after consideration of statements issued by the various factions within the Party, after consideration of the actions and resolutions of the N.E.C., the N. Y. S.E.C. and the N. Y. City Central and Campaign Committees, we have come to the following conclusions.

That the Chicago Convention both in spirit and action was predominantly for a Revolutionary Socialist Party. Was determined to be done with class-collaboration and Poplar-Frontism. The Convention over-ruled all "Red-hering" cries of "Trotskyism" and all insinuations of expulsions. They who raised these cries were discredited by the Convention.

It appears to us that the greatest single cause of the inner-party conflicts today is due to the fact that those officers on whom the responsibility was placed for the carrying out of the actions of the Convention have themselves failed to comply with the spirit and action of that Convention. Political experience has shown that a policy of vacillation and collaboration with extreme right-wing tendencies leads to harmful and futile reformism, which in turn leads to splits and ruin.

After the heroic campaign of 1936, the policy of Local N. Y. is shameful capitulation to the forces of reformism and Stalinism. If we analyze the European situation as well as the local situation, especially that of the W.A.A., we are forced to believe that we have been either overwhelmed by the New Deal landslide, or duped by the Stalinist anti-revolutionists. We believe the Stalinists must be fought on every front and exposed at every turn.

We renew our protest of the actions of the N.E.C. at both the Philadelphia and N. Y. City meetings.

We renew our protest against the "Gag" resolution of the Special N. E. C. meeting and renew our demand for a party referendum on it.

This resolution is fantastic and dictatorial and opened the doors for mass expulsions of left-wingers who do not agree with the present leadership.

We renew our protest against the expulsion drive as a direct violation of the will of the convention and demand the reinstatement of all members expelled and suspended.

We renew our protest against the vacillating policy on the Spanish resolution.

We demand a special convention of the Party.

We reiterate our opposition to the attempts of Local New York

to turn the Socialist Party over to the A. L. P., Republican, Communist Fusion Party. We believe the majority statement of the City Central Committee to show a definite trend toward the policy being followed by the Communist Party. This action is a violation of the constitution (Art. 10, Sec. 9) Labor Party Policy as adopted by the Chicago Convention.

We deplore the fact that the N. E. C. has failed to comply with the action of the Convention re: an inner-party organ. The Chicago Convention ratified a mutual agreement whereby all factions agreed to cease publication of factional organs with the understanding that the N. E. C. would publish an inner-party organ for full discussion by all factions; five months have elapsed; there is still no inner-party paper. While left wing members are being expelled or suspended for this reason, Comrade Thomas is permitted to place the Altman faction's side in the CALL and this same faction is permitted to present its view or arguments in official State and City papers, omitting the side of others. (SEC. Minutes July 23, "Report of Jack Altman". City Central Committee Minutes, July 6th).

Excerpts are lifted from writings of defendants (in true Capitalist fashion) thereby distorting the whole intent of the original text. (SEC minutes July 23, CCC minutes July 6) We protest this procedure as being undemocratic and disgraceful.

State Bulletin No. 4, carried a statement that Comrade Bennem, of Local Rochester, was circulating throughout the state, a letter which was inaccurate and unfair. After thorough consideration of this letter and statements contained therein, and inasmuch as the N.E.C. has failed to comply with the desires of the Convention in establishing an inner-party organ, and inasmuch as Comrade Bennem distinctly stated in his letter—"As I see it,"—we believe Comrade Bennem was acting within his rights as a member in this matter, and we resent the circulation of this statement which reflects upon the name of the Organizer of Local Rochester. We respectfully request that the above statement be carried in the next State Bulletin.

We submit this statement for your consideration.

Approved

B. C. BENNEM
Local Secretary

Twin Cities Protest

669 2nd Ave. N.
Aug. 17, 1937

National Executive Committee,
Socialist Party of the U. S. A.,
549 Randolph Street,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Comrades:

We, the membership of the Socialist Party of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, assembled in meeting Sunday, Aug. 15, 1937, vigorously protest and condemn the illegal expulsions of 52 left-wing Socialists in New York City by the Altman-Thomas-Valenti bloc.

We judge this to be a move on the part of the liquidators in the Socialist Party to split the Party and deliver the remnants to La Guardia and the American Labor Party.

We Socialists of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area cannot conscientiously recognize these expulsions. We not only refuse to recognize the expulsions, but we pledge our full support to the expelled comrades, and further pledge to collaborate with them in their struggle against the right-wing liquidators in the So-

A Black Book of the YPSL Leaders

Space does not allow for a complete enumeration of the bureaucratic crimes against socialist democracy and the League membership committed by the Clarityites in the Young People's Socialist League. We enumerate only a few of the more outrageous bureaucratic deeds.

1) The YPSL NEC met in Philadelphia during the Memorial Day week-end—May 29 to 31. Without heaving adequately warned the League circles in advance by special communication, the NEC closed the dues books, upon which circle representations was to be based, as of the day on which the NEC was meeting. The two Appeal members of the NEC pleaded with the committee to open the books for one month, in order that the League might have a really representative convention; they argued that the convention would certainly approve this extension as necessary for a democratic and spirited convention. It goes without saying that the Clarityites in control of the National Office "provided for" their circles.

Fix Arbitrary Ratios

2) This same session of the NEC moved the convention east from the mid-west, knowing full well that this would impose an extra burden on the mid-west and far west circles which are

predominantly left wing and comprise fully 50 per cent of the League membership. A fantastic ratio for the election of delegates was likewise decided upon—1 for 5 members, 2 for 8, 3 for 23; so that a circle with 30 members would get only one more delegate than a circle with 8 members. How this works has already been commented on in the columns of the Appeal.

3) In Cleveland, the Appeal recently won a majority of the League membership. Two of the three chartered circles had Appeal majorities, and were entitled to 4 out of the 5 delegates. The Clarity County Exec. transferred 3 people into one of the Appeal circles, one of whom had already voted in another city (Columbus), and attempted to disqualify comrade Frank Stern. Comrade Stern was able to find his membership book in time to expose the attempt, and to exact an apology. The circle, thoroughly sick of the Clarity maneuvers, become more solidly Appeal. In the second Appeal circle there was a similar attempt to disqualify two comrades.

4) In the Ithaca, New York (Cornell University) circle regular election had been held prior to the end of the school term. Two Appealites were elected. Because a single Clarityite inactive for a year, had not attended the meeting, Al Hamilton,

national secretary of the League, ordered a new, mail election without consulting the circle or regional organizers, and against the protest of the Regional Committee. Some of the summer addresses of circle members are unknown.

5) The Rochester circle with an active and paid-up membership sufficient to entitle it two delegates was told by the NEC that it was not entitled to delegates. Why? The delegates (who will be elected) will be left wingers.

Coast Delegation Cut

6) California with an active and growing membership of 200 has been informed that it may only elect delegates for 130 members. Not being a Clarity state, it did not have access to the National Office books and dues stamps. By now, it is possible that California which has registered more successes than any single section of the League in the last year will have been suspended by the NEC.

7) Chicago, with a membership of 190, has been told it may only send delegates for 120 members. Here, as in St. Paul, and other cities, our comrades did not have the "credit facilities" of the Clarity circles in the purchase of dues stamps.

8) Philadelphia was until recently wholly Clarityite. Our comrades have however made gains. The Philadelphia City Exec. has therefore transferred into the Temple University circle one of their henchmen who has never attended the school, but who may in the future do so (!). The transfer changes the balance in the circle.

9) Into a Newark circle, Irving Barshop, executive secretary of the New York League, transferred, without consulting any members of the New York Action Committee, a Clarityite who to this date still lives in New York. This may change the balance in that particular circle.

10) The now famous and scandalous Barshop letter to Al Hamilton, suggesting the manipulation of dues records, and advising against reinstating the four Yipsels. Barshop has committed more breaches of democracy than this one flagrant act. He has constantly arrogated to himself an authority which he never possessed; e. g. he set voting days, without consulting the Committee and then after his motion was defeated in committee by a tie vote. We wished to delay the voting until a maximum of discussion might be arranged. In the whole pre-convention discussion period, there has been exactly one city-wide discussion meeting in New York—and that a fizzle.

It needs to be added, that the Appeal members, of the DEC, all of whom were elected by the largest single block of votes in the last election, were allowed but one district office, and that a holdover from the previous committee. A shining example of equal participation in League leadership!

11) Rescinding by a machine vote of the Clarity right wing majority on the DEC of a referendum on the four dropped Yipsels demanded by one third of the committee, according to the provisions of the Constitution. This perfectly outrageous act pretty nearly tops anything the Clarityites have done in the bureaucratic line. A referendum would have demonstrated who had the support of the League membership, and who had not.

The Politics of Gus Tyler

(Continued from page 7)

however, Tyler, the very left wing of the left wing of the Clarity group, remains true to type in the crisis. He is now the purveyor of arms and ammunition to Altman. In his caucus letter he wrote a few weeks ago, in contrast to his March article: "The latest trick of the Trotskyists—an attempt in my mind on the part of a top group to whip the rank and file into line—is to proceed recklessly to violate elementary discipline and then—when brought on charges—to cry: persecution! The existence of a real campaign of petty and major persecution preceding this, of course, gives the semblance (!) of truth to the new outcry.

cialist Party.

The Socialist Party members here assembled call upon the National Executive Committee to put an immediate stop to all expulsions; to restore to all expelled Party members their full Party rights; to provide for and insure full democratic expression on the issues facing the Party. In view of the crisis in the Party, in view of the deliberate distortion of National Convention mandates by the present National Executive Committee, as typified by its failure to issue an internal discussion Bulletin, or to abide by the Convention Resolution on the Peoples Front, we call upon the present National Executive Committee to issue a call within 30 days for a special emergency National Convention, with one of the items on the agenda of this Convention, to be the election of a new National Executive Committee.

Copies of this resolution are to be sent to the National Executive Committee and the Socialist Appeal.

Unanimously adopted.

Fraternally yours,

C. R. HEDLUND,

Chairman of meeting

KARL S. KUHEN,

Secretary of meeting

But how long can we tolerate this—especially when the perspective of the Trotskyists toward making a party of their own becomes ever clearer."

All that Altman has done is to give a prompt and vigorous reply to the question in Tyler's last sentence by saying "We can tolerate it no longer", and to make use of Tyler's first sentence in order to justify the expulsions. What better function could Tyler perform for Altman than to make it possible for him to say: "Even Tyler, who is practically a Trotskyist, charges them with reckless violations of discipline. Tyler has asked me, Altman, how much longer I will tolerate this, and my answer is—not for another minute." And if this is the assistance given the right wing by the "most left" of the Clarity leaders, it is not hard to realize the role played by the other liberals who make no claim to being so "radical".

The pernicious part played in the party crisis by the rotten liberalism of the Clarity leadership—at once cover and prop of the right wing—is sometimes obscured for some observers by the indubitable fact that the centrists and right wingers are often at odds on many questions. They polemize against each other often enough, and sometimes raise their voices above the point of polite social intercourse. This is quite true. And even though, in concrete practice, their differences, as indicated above, do not prove to be of a fundamental nature, it is not at all out of the question that, given the present relationship of forces in the party, the right wing and the centrists will present the party with a second split—this time between themselves. We leave to another article an examination of the reasons for this impending split in the bloc of the right wing and the center and a consideration of the fatal, truly sectarian perspective which the Clarity leadership is now opening up to the followers of its political line.