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May First

IN Soviet Russia the first of May is no longer a holiday in the sense that it is in other countries. The Russian proletariat has conquered. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is raising and equipping great armies, and hurling them against the Imperialist forces on all frontiers. Within the country, crippled as it is by the disorganization which inevitably succeeds war, and civil war in particular; starved by the invasion and blockade of Allied troops; inheritor of the collapse of Tsarism and Capitalism, and beset for a year by the ferocious hostility of Moderate "Socialism"—the Workers' and Peasants' Government is increasing industrial production, building railways, roads, canals and gigantic power projects, opening mines, and establishing thousands of new schools.

That it is able to accomplish these "miracles" seems incredible to the bourgeois. But to the Socialist there is nothing improbable about it. *Capitalism obstructs development; Capitalism suppresses human aspirations; Capitalism is inefficient.*

May Day, 1918, came at the darkest period of Soviet Russia's history, when the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had placed Russia at the mercy of Imperial Germany, then victorious in the West, and the Allies co-operated with the German advance eastward by landing troops in Archangel and Vladivostok, the beginning of a vast international offensive against the half-understood menace of the new Russian Government. Industry and transportation were almost at a standstill; food was scarce; and the Red army was still negligible.

Yet it was on that dark May Day that Moscow was decked with crimson, the young Socialist troops passed in review through the streets, and thirty-seven statues to the great dead of the international Labor Movement were unveiled. And the Government announced that May Day, as far as it represented the revolutionary ambitions of the Russian workers and peasants, would henceforth cease to be celebrated as a holiday.

Today, May 1st, the darkness over Russia is slowly lifting. Except for minor setbacks, the Soviet armies are everywhere victorious, not alone with the weapons of war, but with propaganda.

In all countries the working class, which at first was apathetic, has awakened little by little to the real situation. A few months ago the workers of England, France, Italy and America were opposing intervention in Russia; to day they want to know why the Dictatorship of the Proletariat cannot be applied to their own countries.

Never in the history of the world has an idea made such swift and thorough conquests. Amid the crash of bankrupt Capitalism falling, the work-

ers of country after country set up their Soviets and establish the Proletarian Dictatorship. Hungary, Bavaria, then Italy, Germany. . . . The great exploited masses of India, Egypt, China, stir and clamor. The basis of Finance-Imperialism, without which Capitalism is ruined, is crumbling.

May Day for Russia is a holiday of the part. But today Moscow, Munich and Budapest flower in streets of red, and ring to the tramp of the proletarian battalions, making celebration for us—for the nations as yet pools of quiet water beside the torrent of the Social Revolution which rises, a red world-tide, and floods the face of Europe.

May Day, 1919. Date forever memorable, the world-wide blare of trumpets announcing the fall of a great social system, Capitalism, and the emergence of the age in which mankind will be truly free.

May Day. A summons to the worker-masses to make ready for the last great War. Dark lies the cloud of history, shot through with terrible lightnings. But victory is inevitable.

Who Is Splitting the Party?

THE chief accusation against the Left Wing is that it is attempting "to split the Party." This is the burden of every Right Wing attack upon us; like "Bolshevism" in the capitalist press, it covers a multitude of sins. This charge has been hurled at every individual or group who has dared to differ with the Party "leaders," or protest against their stultifying tactics.

During the bitter fight between Industrial Unionism and A. F. of L'ism, those who stood for revolutionary labor organization were reviled as "separatists" and "disrupters." The adoption of Article Two, Section Six, in the Party Constitution, by the Right Wing, drove the revolutionary elements out of our Party, separated it from the class-conscious workers, and threw it into the arms of the petit bourgeoisie.

The result of the internal strife at that time was the expulsion or resignation of a great number of revolutionary Socialists from the Party, and its complete surrender to "moderate Socialism." But the St. Louis Convention of 1917 removed Article Two, Section Six from the Constitution, proving that the rank and file realized what a disastrous course the Party had taken.

We, the Left Wing, representing the vast majority of the rank and file,—who, no matter if at times they have been confused by the miserable tricks of Party politicians, are soundly revolutionary by instinct—we have profited by the lessons of the past. We have no intention of being forced out of the Party by the Right Wing. We have no intention of "splitting the Party;" not because we

The following telegram to Eugene V. Debs, addressed to Moundsville Jail, Moundsville, W. Va., by the delegates of the Third Convention of the Ukrainian Federation of the Socialist Party, representing 6,000 members, was refused transmission by Burleson's telegraph companies. The spirit of the message will be transmitted to Debs by waves of thought, born out of the solidarity of the awakening workers, over which Burleson, and the junker class of which he is a typical representative, can exercise no control. The physical message will, no doubt, reach Debs in the course of time. May Day looms on the horizon.

"Dear Comrade Debs:

"The Third Convention of the Ukrainian Federation of the Socialist Party of America sends you hearty proletarian greetings. The iron bars which divide you from us, at the same time hasten our common ideals, and strengthen our courage in the mighty struggle against capitalism.

"Your example, dear comrade, inspires us; and we promise you to follow your path in our proletarian struggle until we are victorious. We believe the victory of our common ideals is near. We believe that 'The day of the people has come.'"

are afraid of a split—for on a question of principle it is better to split and keep on splitting rather than compromise with reaction—but because we intend to capture the Party machinery and mold the American movement into an effective weapon with which to fight the battles of the working class.

It is for this purpose that we have organized into a group within the Party—the Left Wing; it is for this purpose that we have formulated a program and a set of principles, definitely opposed to the outworn principles and program actuating the present Party "ruling class;" this is why we have joined in the call for an Emergency Convention, in which we can state our position, discuss it in open Socialist debate within the ranks of the Party, and finally, register the decision of the rank and file by means of the regular Party machinery.

To this perfectly legitimate course of action the Right Wing, in control of the Executive Committee of Local New York, opposes brutal strong-arm tactics.

Hundreds of workingmen who want to join the Party are held up while a "committee" of miserable Socialist politicians catechises them to find out if they have Bolshevik tendencies. As soon as a Branch has a Left Wing majority, and takes action to re-elect its delegates to the Central Committee, a minority of the "Old Guard" is empowered by the Executive Committee to "reorganize" that Branch, expelling most of the members, locking up the Branch headquarters, carrying off the furniture, and beating up delegates who protest. In carrying out these measures the Right Wing do not hesitate to appeal to the police for help. The 17th A. D. Branch has already been "reorganized" in this manner; out of more than four hundred members, only thirty-two have been accepted as orthodox enough to remain. The same action is being taken with regard to the 18th-20th A. D. Branch as we go to press. In all this there is not the slightest trace of legality. Gerber openly says that he doesn't care whether it is legal or not. His letter on another page of this issue will provide further illumination to the Comrades.

Who is splitting the Party—we, the Left Wing, who have announced our open intention of capturing the Party by means of the majority vote of the delegates of the rank and file in Party Convention assembled? Or the Right Wing in New York, which is disrupting Branch after Branch, disfranchising hundreds of Comrades, by illegal action of the Executive Committee? The Executive Committee has indefinitely suspended the meetings of the Central Committee, a superior body—because the Branches were electing a majority of Left Wing delegates to that body. And behind closed doors the Executive Committee functions, hurling bulls of excommunication against all Branches in which a Left Wing majority appears.

The fundamental difference between Left and Right Wings is summed up in the question of which International shall the American Socialist Party join. The Left Wing declares clearly for the Communist International, the Third International summoned by Lenin; all the sympathies and connections of the Right Wingers are with the bankrupt Second International, which has played havoc with European Socialism much in the same way that the Right Wing has played havoc with the American Socialist movement.

These petty dissolutions and "reorganizations" of Branches in Local New York, these callings upon the police for help in internal Party differences, these suspensions of the Central Committee meetings, are perhaps in themselves of little importance in the world Socialist movement. But they are symptomatic of graver things. They point with fatal logic to the attitude of the Majority Social Democrats in Germany, who, in time of revolution, instead of calling upon the police for help, turned loose Noske and his machine guns against the Spartacides.