

Socialist Tactics?

LOCAL New York Executive Secretary Gerber caused a mild sensation in the State Committee meeting on Sunday last by suddenly producing and reading copies of the minutes of the Left Wing City Committee. That the minutes disproved what he sought to prove: that Comrade Gitlow had been sent out by the Left Wing as State organizer, is of little moment. The question is: Where did Gerber get the minutes?

The Left Wing is not a secret organization. Its Central Committee meets openly and now that the Left Wing is in possession of a medium of expression, the minutes will be published. We are informed that Gerber had an actual copy of the minutes, and this precludes the possibility that he was acting on a report of the meeting. Where did he get his copy? But even the means that Gerber employed to obtain a copy of our minutes is not for the moment important. The important point is that an official of the Socialist Party reads from copies of minutes that he had no title to possess, to one of the highest delegate bodies in our organization. It was obvious to everyone present that he had not come by his copy openly, yet he was allowed to proceed without anyone making a protest.

The party has been protesting vigorously against the espionage carried on in this country both by official government agencies and by unofficial stool-pigeon organizations. Yet when information obtained by methods manifestly similar to those employed by the espionage agencies is laid before our "Comrades" no protest is made, but on the contrary the Right Wing sits open-eared and prepares to act upon the information.

On what ground does the party protest against government espionage? Is this a sample of Socialist honor? Is this typical of the revolutionary integrity of our Party?

The possession of a copy of our minutes did us no harm and consequently we are not suffering under the sting of defeat. Are these the methods the Right Wing intends to use in future? Does the membership of the Party support these methods? Forewarned is forearmed.

National Left Wing Conference

The call for a National Left Wing Conference, published in *The Revolutionary Age*, has our heartiest endorsement. Just as the Left Wing has united all the truly revolutionary elements within the Party in New York, so must we join forces with these same elements the country over, so as to organize more efficaciously for the capture of the Party both locally, Local by Local and Branch by Branch; and nationally in the coming Emergency Party Convention.

The Centrists protest that they agree absolutely with the principles and program of the Left Wing, but they do not approve of a "separate organization" within the Party. How then, we ask, shall we actually go about capturing the Party machinery? They tell us to form caucuses in the Branches and the Central Committees, and at the same time to agitate our principles and program among the rank and file.

Instead of a series of little caucuses, we substitute one big caucus—the Left Wing—which at the same time agitates our principles and program. The National Left Wing Conference will create a National

Caucus, which can present in action within the Party a disciplined and united front.

It is true that the Left Wing has called for an Emergency National Party Convention. It is argued by many Comrades that in view of this fact, a National Left Wing Conference is unnecessary—since the rank and file is with us already, and a conference of Left Wing delegates to the Emergency Convention, held a few days before it, could accomplish our purpose of arranging for united action in the Convention.

To a certain extent this is true. But we must remember that, although the rank and file of the Party members are much more revolutionary than their leaders, they are not by any means united on the details of Party tactics.

The Left Wing has an immense propaganda to accomplish before, in this country, we have a Socialist Party fit to take its place as the "most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties." Even after the delegates to the Emergency National Convention are elected, the education of the rank and file must go on, so that they may intelligently follow and pass on the significant action of the Emergency Convention.

A National Left Wing Conference will weld into one conscious unit the delegates of Locals from all over the country, and their return to their homes will carry into the remotest branches Left Wing principles and tactics, which will operate to change the fundamental ideas of the Party more profoundly than ten thousand speakers sent out on tour from New York, Boston or some other center.

Will Debs Come Out, or Shall We Go In?

ON Saturday, April 13th, 'Gene Debs went to prison for ten years.

The editors of this paper, and every member of the Left Wing, stand squarely behind the position of 'Gene Debs, and we herewith endorse the speech for which he was convicted.

'Gene Debs told the truth about the war. Every event that has happened since he spoke—the invasion of Socialist Russia by the International Imperialists, the armistice terms to Germany, the futile proceedings of the impotent "Peace Conference" at Paris, and the mobbing, suppressions and arrests of Socialists at home—all these things prove clearly to the blindest that the War was nothing but a capitalists' war, and no workingman had any place in it.

The court which convicted 'Gene Debs, and the Supreme Court, which sustained the conviction, proved his charge—that the courts of this country are created to defend and protect the capitalist class against the workers.

The ruthless ruling class of the United States, hysterical at the sight of red clouds in the east, turns instinctively to its sole weapon against the righteous wrath of the tyrannized and exploited workers—brute force. They have taken away our beloved 'Gene; they have shut in their ferocious bastille our fearless Comrade, who dared to speak what is in the hearts of thousands of us.

The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party has arranged to hold five thousand meetings of protest all over the country on May 1st.

Protest? To whom? To the capitalist Government that put Debs in jail—and whose spies and petty agents have riveted

on America for the past two years a veritable White Terror? The Government pays no attention to our protests; the Government allows Tom Mooney to put in prison for life, convicted on perjured evidence; the Government permits torture of conscientious objectors, and holds behind bars thousands of political prisoners, under terms of imprisonment unparalleled in modern countries.

Does the Government yield to our protests? One hundred odd conscientious objectors out of many hundred have been set free; before sailing for Europe the last time President Wilson "pardoned" one Socialist political prisoner, who didn't commit the crime for which he was convicted, and "reduced the sentences" of others; from twenty and fifteen years down to one, two and three years. The press reports that he has sent from Paris for the "papers" in the Debs case, presumably to "reduce the sentence."

No, Comrades, our protests and our prayers did not win these contemptible sops. It was the European comrades, the Communists of all countries, who, growing tired of lies and hypocrisy, have turned to action. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is the workers' answer to the White Terror. It is to quiet the giant of awakening Labor in Europe that Wilson hands out these crumbs, saying, "See, here's an amnesty. I'm a Democrat—I love the workers."

Protests are foolish. Prayers are despicable. The only way to answer the brute force of the ruling class is by means of the organized power of the American workers. Right, justice, reason mean nothing to our rulers; organized power is the only argument they recognize.

If the workers of the United States were to stop work for three days, the jails would open and Debs and our other Comrades would be free.

We are sick of protests and prayers!

We are sick of resolutions and manifestos

We demand the release—not "pardon"—of 'Gene Debs.

We demand the release—not "pardon"—of Tom Mooney.

We demand the release—not "pardon"—of all political prisoners.

The Amnesty Convention

IT has been proposed to call a National Amnesty Convention of all the organizations in favor of a Government amnesty for political prisoners—including bourgeois Liberal societies such as the Civil Liberties Bureau, etc.

We have nothing but admiration for the handful of Liberals who stood out against autocracy in this country, not only during the War, but afterward. We realize that Socialists owe them a debt of gratitude. We heartily approve of their desire to liberate political prisoners in the United States.

But the time has come for Socialists to withdraw from active cooperation in reform movements, and to devote their energies to organizing the proletariat so as to make its strength felt directly—which will do away with the necessity for Amnesty Conventions.

Our own National Emergency Convention of the Socialist Party will meet soon—and there we shall take action according to Socialist principles on the matter of the political prisoners.

For these reasons we condemn Socialist participation in the proposed National Amnesty Convention.