The Left Wing and The Call

MONG the ridiculous accusations hurled at the Left Wing by the Right is the charge that we want to wreck the New York Call.

This is based largely on the fact that the Left Wing has refused to support or contribute to The Call's campaign to raise \$90,000 for a new printing plant.

Why?

The Left Wing stands for Part: ownership and control of the official Party press.

The Call is an official organ of the Party. yet it is neither owned nor controlled by the Party. The Call is raising \$90,000 for a new plant, and as an official Party organ, is appealing to the rank and file of Party members for funds. Yet when the printing plant is bought, it will be neither owned nor controlled by the Party.

This is how The Call is owned and controlled.

It is published by the Workingmen's Cooperative Publishing Association, an organization of Party members. Control is vested in the Association, and in a Board of Manager-

Association meets every three months. Party members, and only Party members, may be elected members of the Association, upon the payment of five dollars initiation fee and dues of one dollar per year

The Board of Managers is elected as follows: four members elected by the Association; four members chosen by the four Locals of Greater New York, and the State.

The Board of Managers is elected as follows: four members by the Association; five members by the four Locals of Greater New York, and the State Committee. (At the present time there are five additional members, who act in a more or less advisory capacity, representing organizations. formed at one time to raise money for The Call: we are informed that these additional memberships will be abolished at the meeting of April 25th.)

Two facts are plain. First, that it costs money to enter the "democracy" of the Workingmen's Cooperative Publishing Association. Second, that the "official" Party delegates on the Board of Managers are in a bare majority-five to four. So that by siding with the Association members, one Local delegate could defeat the will of the three other Locals of Greater New York.

Party members pay dues to the Party. For that they are entitled to a voice in Party affair. The Call is an official Party organ; but before a Party member can have a voice in the mangement of The Call he must pay six dollars. This is a mockery of "Party control."

We have stated publicly many times that if The Call would submit to Party control, we would support the campaign of the official Party organ for a new printing plant, and gladly

How can the management of The Call be democratized? Among many plans, the following has been submitted to the Board of Managers:

Every member of the four Locals of Greater New York becomes ex-officio a member of the Association. If the money paid by members of the Association is necessary, an annual special dues stamp will yield the revenue.

Why is there opposition to such a scheme

-or something similar? We are told by members of the Board of Managers that "the initiation fee and dues restricts the Association to those Party members who are really interested in the paper." What a splendid reason for a Socialist!

Why is it, as the Board of Managers says, that "plenty of people kick about The Call, but the kickers are never interested enough to come to meetings?" We have heard similar sentiments from captains of industry, explaining "why democracy is a failure."

Democracy is a failure chiefly because the great mass of the people have nothing to say about the Government. The "democracy" of The Call doesn't work for exactly the same reason. The constitution of the Association places obstacles in the way of Party control. In the first place, it costs money to be a member; in the second place, an applicant for membership must be voted on, and even then he cannot exercise his rights as a member until the next quarterly meeting, three months off.

To the rank and file, impatient with The Call's editorial policy, the Board of Managers and its supporters use strange arguments.

For example, "Party ownership and control is inefficient." This is the same argument used by private capitalists against Government ownership. In a Party which aims at the public ownership of industry, it sounds a little incongruous-and moreover, it shows that distrust of the proletariat characteristic of "Moderate Socialism."

Another: "The ownership of property makes the Party conservative." This is also surprising; if it is true, then the ownership of all private property, which is our aim, will make the workers black reactionaries!

We were told by one membe, of the Board of Managers, "It takes time to accomplish these changes. In the meanwhile, it is vitally necessay for The Call to have its printing plant. Help us now, and then we'll talk about changing the ownership and control." This is the same argument with which the Governments of Europe persuaded their workers to support the War!

The credulous are impressed by another piece of specious reasoning. The Board of Managers says that "Party ownership" is dangerous, for if the Association were identical with the Locals of Greater New York, then any suit for damages against The Call would make it possible to attach the Party funds (if any); or, since the Party is not incorporated, it might make every member liable.

Possibly. That is not the point at issue here. We do not demand the immediate abolition of the Workingmen's Cooperative Association: we demand that membership in the Locals of Greater New York carry with it membership in the Association.

LEFT WING

General Membership Meeting Sunday, April 20, 1919 at 1 P. M.

MANHATTAN LYCEUM

66 East 4th Street

Important matter to be discussed ·····

To our demands, the Board of Managers answers just what the capitalist system answers to the workers, just what the Right Wing machine answers to the Left Wing: "Change it, then, by all means change itbut use the legal and constitutional machinery, which functions to protect us against you."

We reply: "What is your reason for refusing to democratize The Call? There can be no honest reason. Do not talk to us about 'legality' and 'constitutionality,' as if you were afraid of the majority of the Cocialist Party."

Why should the Left Wing want to wreck The Call? On the contrary: the Left Wing wants to take over The Call, with the rest of the Party machinery, at the coming Emergency Convention.

Left Wing Notes

The Left Wing organization has decided to support the following nominees and asks all revolutionary Socialists to do likewise:

For the National Executive Committee, 1st District: N. I. Hourwich, N. Y., Edward Lindgren, Brooklyn, N. Y., Louis C Fraina, Boston, Mass.

For International Delegates: I. E. Fer-Lindgren, Brooklyn, N. Y., Louis C. Fraina, Boston, Mass., John Reed, N. Y., C. E. Ruthenherg, Cleveland, Ohio.

The following branches and locals in Greater New York have affiliated with the Left Wing:

Local Queens: Entire local.

Local Kings: 4th Russian Br. of the Fed. 6th A. D. Branch 2 7th A. D. Branch 1. oth A. D. Branch 1 13th A. D. Branch 1

14th A. D. Branch 1 14th A. D. Jewish Branch

23rd A. D. Branch I -Minority groups in all other branches.

Local New York: 1st A, D. 2nd A. D. 3, 5 & 10th A. D. 8th A. D. 8th A. D. Jewish Br All Russian Branches. All Lettish Branches. All Ukraimain Br. All Hungarism Br. German-Hungarian Br. Esthonian Branch. 2nd Russian Branch (outside Federation.)

Murray Hill German Branch Minority groups in all

other breaches.

Local Bronx: 3rd Russian Branch. Hungarian Branch. Minority groups in all ower branches.

The following are the Lest Wing papers in New York: Der Kampi (The Struggle) lewish: Novy Mir (New World) Russian; Elore (Forward) Hungarian: Robitnik (Worker) Ukrainian.

6th A. D. Branch, N. Y., will hold a symposium debate on party tacties at its clubrooms, Friday, at 8 p. m.