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Bourgeois Dictatorship in Local N. Y.

By J Lovestone

BOURGEOIS dictatorship in Local New York! Is it possible? Bourgeois in the Socialist Party? Nonsense!

Comrades, bitter though the pill may be, we must swallow it. Is the Bourgeois Dictatorship in Local New York a mushroom growth? Was it set up recently to fight the revolutionary elements in the Socialist Party, or has it been developed for years, only to appear in true colors in a serious party crisis? Yes, for years we have had a Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie in Local New York. But it was hidden. It was camouflaged. The present Left Wing crisis, however, has torn off the veil. The battle between the Left and Right for Party control has unmasked the bourgeois dictators of Local New York. Here, there is a deadly parallel with the Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie in society. We have always had a Bourgeois Dictatorship in all capitalist countries, monarchies as well as free republics; but it took a world war to make evident to the working class the existence of such a dictatorship.

The writer uses the term "Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie" not because all those who are doing the dictating in Local New York belong to the Bourgeoisie. Many of them are workers. For that matter, many of those who suppress the working class are workers. Remember that scabs, thugs, police, and soldiers are in the main proletarian by birth and status! The term "Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie" is employed because the methods employed by the bureaucratic officialdom of Local New York, in its struggle against the mass of membership constituting the Left Wing, resemble, in many ways, the means employed by the bourgeoisie in its fight against the proletariat.

PARTY BUREAUCRATS AND CAPITALISTS

The Dictatorship of the Party Bureaucracy in Local New York resembles the Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie in capitalist society, first, in the sense that the existence of both depends upon the perpetuation of present conditions. With the death of the capitalist system of production, through a Proletarian Dictatorship, comes the death of the Bourgeoisie as a ruling class. With the death of "Moderate Socialism," Right Wingism, in Local New York, through a victory of the Left Wing organization, comes the extinction of the Party bureaucracy. Without capitalist society, the bourgeois goes to the scrap heap. Without the continuance of the present reform tactics, the Local New York bureaucrat goes to the scrap heap. In a real Socialist (Communist) society, the bourgeois will have to go to work in order to live. In a real Socialist Party, the bureaucrat will have to go to work in order to live. Ignorance of the Proletariat is the food upon which capitalist rule thrives. Ignorance of the mass of the Party members is the food on which Socialist bureaucracy thrives. The bourgeoisie, through subsidizing and owning the educational institutions, make secure their dictatorship by spreading falsities and soporifics among the proletarians. The Party bureaucracy, through its privately owned and controlled institutions of learning, makes secure its dictatorship by misinforming the mass of Party members as to the science and philosophy of Socialism.

Bourgeois dictatorship has bloated the capitalist with the idea that he alone is fit to rule, that he alone is responsible, that the proletariat is unfit to rule, that the proletariat is irresponsible, and that the proletariat must be in the grip of bossism. The Party Bureaucracy has bloated Local New York's leaders of rank Socialist compromise with the idea that they alone are fit to rule, that they alone are responsible, that the mass of the Party members are not to be trusted and unfit to rule, that the mass of Party members are irresponsible, and that the mass of Party members must be in the grip of bossism.

Comrades, our fight is not against the capitalist as an individual. Our battle is against the condition breeding the capitalist—the private ownership of the means of production and exchange. Comrades, our fight is not against the Party bureaucrat as an individual. Our battle is against the condition breeding the Party bureaucrat—the policy of socialist reformism, of Socialist compromise.

EMPLOYMENT OF SHIBBOLETHS

We now come to the second element common to the Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie and to the Party Bureaucracy. I have in mind the employment of shibboleths which blind the workers by their dazzling brilliancy.

When the bourgeoisie is confronted by the work-

Call for a National Conference of the Left Wing

Call for a National Conference of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party, issued by Local Boston, (Louis C. Frana, Secretary); Local Cleveland, (C. E. Ruthenberg, Secretary); and the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party of New York City, (Maximilian Cohen, Secretary).

The international situation and the crisis in the American Socialist Party; the sabotage the party bureaucracy has practiced on the emergency national convention; the N. E. C. aligning our party with the social-patriots at Berne, with the Congress of the Great Betrayal; the necessity of reconstructing our policy in accord with revolutionary events,—all this, and more, makes it necessary that the revolutionary forces in the Socialist Party get together for counsel and action.

This call is therefore issued, for the holding of a National Conference of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party, to discuss:

- 1.—The crisis in the party, and action thereon; the conquest of the party for the party, for revolutionary Socialism.
- 2.—The New International; ways and means to prevent the party aligning itself with the "International" of the social-patriots, of the Ebert-Scheidemann gangsters, and the wavering centre; affiliation with the Bolshevik-Spartan Communist International alone.
- 3.—The formulation of a declaration of principles and purposes of a national scope of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party.
- 4.—Forming some sort of a national council or bureau of the Left Wing for propaganda, securing of information and spreading information.
- 5.—To express and draw together the revolutionary forces in the party; to consider other means of furthering the cause of revolutionary Socialism.

This call is issued to locals of the Socialist Party, branches and Left Wing groups within the party. The test of admission, provisionally, will be acceptance of the Manifesto of the Left Wing of the Socialist Party of Greater New York.

Left Wing locals are invited to send delegates officially. Where a local officially refuses to participate, branches or minority groups in the party accepting the principles of the Left Wing should send delegates.

Representation—one delegate for every 500 members. No local or group should send more than four delegates. Locals or minority groups with less than 500 members are entitled to one delegate.

The conference will be held starting Saturday, June 21, in New York City. Each delegate will be taxed \$25 for a central fund, out of which will be paid the expenses of all delegates.

Left Wing Locals and Branches, act! Send communications to Maximilian Cohen, 43 West 29th St., New York City.

ers' demand for a larger share of the products, it says: "We, the capitalists, have built up the industries through many years of hard, nerve-racking labor. If it were not for our brains there would be no large scale production and efficiency. We give you wages and thus keep you alive. If it were not for us, you would starve." When the Party bureaucrats are confronted by a demand of the mass of membership for a larger share of Party power, they say: "We, the leaders, the officials, have built up the Party through many years of hard work. If it were not for our skill and efficiency, there would be no Socialist Party. We made the Party and you should be thankful to us."

Should there be danger of the proletariat becoming class-conscious, then a patriotic revival is started—a war is declared. The bourgeois then prates of his friendship for the poor workingman, of his sacrifice for the fatherland, and of defense of country. He cries: "Labor must do its share. Save the country! Labor and capital must present a united front against the common enemy. Unity! Unity! Let us have unity!" Should there be a danger of the mass of the Party members becoming self-conscious, then campaigns for buildings, printing plants, and defense funds are set going. The

Party bureaucracy yelps from above: "Unity, Unity! At this time above all, unity! Let us have a united front against the common enemy! Let us rather fight capitalism than fight each other! Save the Party organization!"

The proletarians who become spokesmen for their class are branded by the Bourgeoisie as traitors, foreign agents, yellow dogs, spies, and Bolsheviks. The insurgents speaking for the revolting mass of Party membership are branded by the leaders of the Right as agents provocateurs, disrupters, lunatics and Anarchists.

The time comes when the workers are class-conscious enough to establish a Proletarian Dictatorship, and begin the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the building of the Communist order. Then the capitalists and their intellectual sycophants shed tears. They plead for democracy! They yelp: "Save democracy! Give every one a chance to decide the kind of government he wants. Vote! We don't believe in a dictatorship of any class! We want no class rule! We despise violence! We are all members of God's human family! Why look for new roads of freedom when we have a Congress, a Constitution, courts of justice, a President, and the ballot? Why not employ the regular channels of government to attain your goal?" The time comes when the mass of Party members become clear-headed and self-conscious enough to be systematically united, that is, organized for the realization of their will to revolutionize the Party. Then the Right Wing phalanx, accompanied by a horde of lying and ignorant educators, hurls anathemas. From the housetops they shout: "Why not use the regular Party channels? Why build a 'state within a state'—an organization within an organization? We have conventions! We have national, state, city central and executive committees! We have Branch meetings! Vote! Discuss! Let everyone have a right to his opinion! Be tolerant! Be fair! Be just! Be democratic! We are comrades after all!"

In the hey-day of bourgeois democracy the tyranny of the capitalist class is veiled by parliamentary forms. Behind these parliamentary forms is hidden the Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie. The administrative section of the government, the Cabinet, is nothing less than the executive committee of the capitalist class. Bourgeois control of property and the means of life is given undivided attention and complete protection. Proletarians are disenfranchised! Their votes are either corrupted or destroyed. And eminent personalities vie with each other in dopping the working class with social narcotics! The press, the pulpit, and the law serve as a new holy trinity to club the workers into ignorance.

Yes, in the hey-day of Party democracy, in the hey-day of the use of regular Party channels, bossism serves as the lubricant of the Party machinery. Behind the regular democratic Party procedure, and legality hides the Dictatorship of the Party Bureaucracy. Witness the high-handed, wholesale "re-organization"—in reality, disruption—of Local New York by its regular Executive Committee! This same Executive Committee, created by the Central Committee, indefinitely adjourns the meetings of the Central Committee. The highest committees and officers are part and parcel of the Party Bureaucracy. Our Socialist Bureaucracy controls all Party property and all organs of propaganda and education. *The Call, The Forward*, and the Rand School are privately owned and controlled enterprises. The treasurers and lessees of most Branches are either part of the Bureaucracy or its subservient agents. The Socialist Bureaucracy gives its undivided attention to devising ways and plans of making most secure its hold on those means of Party life. Comrades are disenfranchised unconstitutionally! Witness the case of the Jewish Downtown Branch; of the 17th A. D.; of the 6th A. D.; of the re-organization of Local New York. Votes are declared void on the smallest technicality, and vague, conflicting instructions are issued. Party referendums are blocked or sabotaged. Our "Right" leaders vie with each other "visiting" Branches and wielding their "influence" most mercilessly. The mass of membership is given such anaesthetic

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