

Ving of the American Socialist Movement

distinction in views concerning party policies and tactics. And we believe that this difference is so vast that from our standpoint a radical change in party policies and tactics is necessary.

This essential task is being shirked by our party leaders and officials generally. In view of the impending change in the tactics of organized labor in this country, we must hurry to readjust the Socialist movement to the new conditions or find ourselves left behind by the march of events.

Already there is formidable industrial unrest, a seething ferment of discontent, evidenced by inarticulate rumblings which presage striking occurrences. The transformation of industry from a war to a peace basis has thoroughly disorganized the economic structure. Thousands upon thousands of workers are being thrown out of work. Demobilized sailors and soldiers find themselves a drug on the labor market, unless they act as scabs and strike-breakers. Skilled mechanics, fighting desperately to maintain their war-wage and their industrial status, are forced to strike. Women, who during the war have been welcomed into industries hitherto closed to them, are struggling to keep their jobs. And to cap the climax, the capitalists, through their Chambers of Commerce and their Merchants' and Manufacturers' Associations, have resolved to take advantage of the situation to break down even the inadequate organizations labor has built up through generations of painful struggle.

The temper of the workers and the soldiers, after the sacrifices they have made in the war, is such that they will not endure the reactionary labor conditions so openly advocated by the master-class. A series of labor struggles is bound to follow—indeed, is beginning now. Shall the Socialist Party continue to feed the workers with social reform legislation at this critical period? Shall it approach the whole question from the standpoint of votes and the election of representatives to the legislature? Shall it emphasize the consumer's point of view, when Socialist principles teach that the worker is robbed at the point of production? Shall it talk about Cost of Living and taxation, when it should be explaining how the worker is robbed at his job?

There are many signs of the awakening of Labor. The organized Trade Unions, against the definite commands of their leaders, are resorting to independent political action, in an effort to conserve what they have won and wrest new concessions from the master-class. What shall be our attitude toward the awakening workers?

On the basis of the class struggle we shall go among them, impregnating them with revolutionary Socialism; we shall teach them solidarity; we shall teach them class-consciousness; we shall teach them the hopelessness of social reform; we shall teach them the meaning of Revolution. And the industrial unrest, the ferment of discontent, will compel them to listen!

Capitalist Imperialism

Among the many problems immediately confronting us are those new questions springing from Capitalist-Imperialism, the final and decisive stage of Capitalism. How shall the Socialist Party meet these problems?

Imperialism is that stage of Capitalism in which the accumulated capital or surplus of a nation is too great for the home market to reinvest or absorb. The increased productivity of the working class, due to improved machinery and efficiency methods, and the mere subsistence wage which permits the worker to buy back only a small portion of what he produces, causes an ever-increasing accumulation of commodities, which in turn become capital and must be invested in further production. When Capitalism has reached the stage in which it imports raw materials from undeveloped countries and exports them again in the shape of manufactured products, it has reached its highest development.

This process is universal. Foreign markets, spheres of influence and protectorates, under the intensive development of capitalist industry and finance in turn

become highly developed. They, too, seek for markets. National capitalist control, to save itself from ruin, breaks its national bonds and emerges full-grown as a capitalist League of Nations, with international armies and navies to maintain its supremacy.

The new situation the Socialist Party must meet. From now on the United States will no longer hold itself aloof, isolated and provincial. It is reaching out for new markets, new zones of influence, new protectorates; not alone, and not in competition with other capitalist nations, but in cooperation with them. They will divide the world among them. And the League of Nations will be the instrument through which they will work.

The master-class of America will soon attempt to use organized labor for its imperialistic purposes. But a restless and discontented working class cannot pile up profits. Therefore in this country we may soon expect the master-class, in true Bismarkian fashion, to grant factory laws, medical laws, old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, sick benefits, and the whole category of bourgeois reforms, so that the workers may be kept physically and mentally fit to produce the greatest profits at the greatest speed.

Dangers to American Socialism

There is danger that the Socialist Party of America might make use of these purely bourgeois reforms to attract the workers' votes, by claiming that they are victories for Socialism, and that they have been won by Socialist political action; when, as a matter of fact, the object of these master-class measures is to prevent the growing class-consciousness of the workers, and to divert them from their revolutionary aim. By agitating for these reforms, therefore, the Socialist Party would be playing into the hands of our American imperialists.

On the basis of the class struggle, then, the Socialist Party of America must reorganize itself—must prepare to come to grips with the master-class during the difficult period of capitalist readjustment now going on. This it can do only by teaching the working class the truth about present-day conditions; it must preach revolutionary industrial unionism, and urge the workers to turn their craft unions into industrial unions, the only form of labor organization which can cope with the power of great modern aggregations of capital. It must carry on its political campaigns, not merely as means of electing officials to political office, as in the past, but as a year-around educational campaign to arouse the workers to class-conscious economic and political action, and to keep alive the burning ideal of revolution in the hearts of the people.

For New Policies and Tactics

We believe that the time has come for the Socialist Party of America to adopt the following course of action: to throw off its parliamentary opportunism and to stand squarely behind the Soviet Republic of Russia, the Spartacus Group in Germany, and the revolutionary working class movement in Europe. Thus it will be ready when the hour strikes in this country—and it will strike soon—to take the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle with the capitalist class, instead of obstructing its path with the palliative of parliamentary reforms and lead the workers forward to the dictatorship of the proletariat, the final phase of the class struggle, necessary to the ushering in of the Cooperative Commonwealth.

Political Action

Realizing that the vital difference between revolutionary Socialism and "moderate Socialism" lies in their varying conceptions of political action, and realizing too that on this point revolutionary Socialists are most misunderstood and misrepresented, we append a detailed explanation of the scientific Socialist conception of political action.

Since we assert with Marx, that "the class struggle is essentially a political struggle," we can only accept his own oft repeated interpretation of that phrase. The class struggle, whether it manifest itself on the

industrial field or in the direct struggle for governmental control, is essentially a struggle for the capture and destruction of the capitalist political state. This is a political act. In this broader view of the term "political," Marx includes revolutionary industrial action. In other words, the objective of Socialist industrial action is also "political," in the sense that it aims to undermine the state, which "is nothing less than a machine for the oppression of one class by another and that no less so in a democratic republic than under a monarchy."

Participation in Elections

Political action is also and more generally used to refer to participation in election campaigns for the immediate purpose of capturing legislative seats. In this sense also we urge the use of political action as a revolutionary weapon.

But both in the nature and the purpose of this form of political action, revolutionary Socialism and "moderate Socialism" are completely at odds.

We contend that such political action is a valuable means of propaganda; and further, that the capture of legislative seats is an effective means of capturing the political state, but—and here is the vital point for the "moderate Socialist" goes no further—we hold that this capture of the political state is merely for the purpose of destroying it. The nature of Socialist parliamentary activity should be purely destructive. "Moderate Socialism" aims to "simply lay hold of the ready-made machinery and wield it for its own purposes"—the attainment of Socialism. And so the "moderate" falls into the error of believing that parliamentary activity is constructive,—that he can eventually legislate Socialism into existence.

This error leads to two dangerous practices: (1), making parliamentary activity an end in itself; and (2), making essentially destructive political action the instrument for constructing the Socialist order. To avoid these dangers, and to strengthen Labor's political arm, the Socialist ballot must be supported by the might of "the industrial organization of the working class." Only the economic organization of the working class can build the new society within the frame of the old.

Revolutionary Industrial Unionism

"Moderate Socialism" constantly overlooks this fact. We must continually remind the working class that *Labor's economic organizations are naturally the school for Socialism. All political parties, and without exception, whatever their complexion may be, warm up the working class only for a season, transiently.*

Only through his industrial organization can the worker receive training in the control of production. It is by means of this weapon that the working class will eventually take over and hold the mines, mills and factories, not for the purpose of destroying them but for their permanent control and development. Thus, the only thing worth taking from capitalist society and keeping the highly developed means of production and distribution—will be won for the working class by its *Revolutionary Economic Organization*.

Because of its constructive nature, our Economic Arm, unlike our Political Arm, may take "a little at a time." Our economic movement is not unlike a military movement. All means are used to win a war—in infantry attacks, heavy and light artillery, bombardments, sieges, and guerilla fighting. In the industrial struggle the working class employs strikes, boycotts and the like. The political movement, however, has for its object only the storming of the political citadel of capitalist tyranny; therefore the Political Arm cannot compromise. Our political movement should be the essence and incarnation of our revolutionary aim. With Liebknecht we say, "To parliamentarize is to compromise, to log-roll, to sell out."

Syndicalism and Parliamentarism

In characteristic utopian fashion the Syndicalists
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