

Clear the Decks!

IV

In his article, "The Socialist Task and Outlook," in the *Call* of May 21, Morris Hillquit admits that the Second International broke down,—although he audaciously attributes the Third Communist International. His final, in fact, is to re-constitute the old International! In speaking of the collapse of the International Hillquit says:

It was the economic organization of the European workers, and the pressure of immediate economic interests (as understood by them) that broke the solidarity of the Socialist International. . . . It was not parliamentarism that was primarily responsible for the mischief. . . . The organized labor movement . . . was a movement for the benefit of the better-situated strata of labor—the skilled workers.

This appears as an acceptance of the revolutionary Socialist analysis, until it is considered in itself and together with the conclusion.

The "labor movement" was not really a labor movement at all, but a caste movement of the skilled workers. The demands of this movement were moderate. It has occupied a sort of privileged position.

Always moderate, this "labor movement" with the advent of Imperialism, became directly counter-revolutionary. Imperialism requires a "satisfied" working class, in order to develop that "national unity" requisite in the struggles of international Imperialism. This "labor movement"—the skilled workers—were given "share" in the profits of Imperialism; in return for which it had to support the government and accept social-Imperialism. This meant that the "labor movement" had to use its organized power and prestige to maintain the overwhelming mass of the workers, the industrial proletariat of unskilled labor, in subjection.

Out of this circumstance developed a class struggle within the working class,—a development ignored by the official representatives of Socialism.

The industrial proletariat of unskilled labor constituted the potentially revolutionary class; and it was the task of Socialism to awaken, articulate and organize this class. The dominant moderate Socialism rejected this revolutionary task; it accepted the "labor movement" as its basis, and united with this movement against the revolutionary expressions of the unskilled proletariat,—as did Morris Hillquit & Co. against the I. W. W.

This "labor movement," hesitant and moderate, imposed a hesitant and moderate policy upon Socialist parliamentarism, emphasized by the fact that the dominant moderate Socialism also expressed the requirements of the "liberal" *petite bourgeoisie*.

The fundamental task of Socialism, accordingly, was to split the "labor movement" of the skilled workers and organize a new militant movement of the unskilled proletariat, the dominant factor in concentrated industry. The official moderate representatives of the International, and of the American Socialist Party, rejected this imperative task. Under the control of the moderates, our party officially has been the protector and the ally of the ultra-reactionary A. F. of L.

Hillquit dodges the issue completely. The "labor movement" was what it was. But the task of Socialism is to represent the fundamental revolutionary interests of the proletariat, to articulate and organize that proletarian class which alone is the carrier of the Revolution,—not to become the expression of reactionary "labor."

Moreover, out of this dependence upon the reactionary "labor movement" and the middle class (why does Hillquit not mention this middle class?) developed certain concepts of the dominant moderate Socialism:

1.—Socialist emphasis on parliamentarism,—accepting that "parliamentary idiocy" of which Marx speaks, that imagines parliaments decide all things and "forgets the rude outside world."

2.—Accepting the bourgeois state as the basis of Socialist action, and making Socialism a movement for State Capitalism.

3.—Becoming absorbed in the petty bourgeois national "liberal" movement, the dominant Socialism accepted nationalism and social-Imperialism.

4.—Repudiating industrial unionism and mass action, the revolutionary expression of the real proletariat of unskilled labor.

5.—Having abandoned the revolutionary task and accepted the bourgeois state as the basis of action, moderate Socialism repudiated proletarian dictatorship, which alone is capable of realizing communist Socialism.

The answer of revolutionary Socialism to this illustration of Socialism was mass action in Europe and industrial unionism in the United States, together with repudiation of the policy of petty bourgeois parliamentarism and reformism.

Hillquit now admits certain things which previously he denied. But his conclusion shows his evasion: "The first task of the post-war International must, there-

fore, be to organize and reorganize all grades and strata of labor on broad class lines, not only nationally, but internationally. Not as trade unions, nor even as mere industrial unions, but as one working class union." How? By means of "Socialist propaganda"!

This is sheer evasion. Industrial unionism implies "one working class union." To speak of "Socialist propaganda" is another evasion, since the whole issue is the character of this propaganda. We must emphasize revolutionary Socialism, fight the official A. F. of L., organize a new labor movement. This is the task of the Socialist Party, of the Left Wing that is revolutionizing the Party.

Clear the decks!

The slogan of the moderates is: Split the Party for petty bourgeois Socialism, for the "labor movement" of social-Imperialism!

The slogan of the Left Wing is: Conquer the Party for revolutionary Socialism, for the militant class struggle of the industrial proletariat!

Repudiation

THE ugliest feature of the action of the N. E. C. in trying to split the Party for moderate, petty bourgeois Socialism, is that the gentlemen responsible for the nefarious act have all been overwhelmingly repudiated by the membership in the elections for a new N. E. C., international delegates and international secretary.

The official vote has been secured from the following states: Texas, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Ohio, Colorado, Indiana, Delaware, New Jersey, Tennessee, Florida, Georgia, Rhode Island, Arkansas, Maine, Kentucky, Minnesota, Michigan, Massachusetts, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The results for international delegates are as follows:

The Left Wing

John Reed	14,006
Louis C. Fraina	11,981
A. Wagenknecht	9,061
C. E. Ruthenberg	8,981
I. E. Ferguson	6,607

The Moderates

Victor L. Berger	2,798
Adolph Germer	2,401
Seymour Stedman	2,106
A. I. Shiplacoff	1,736
J. Louis Engdahl	1,647
Oscar Ameringer	1,584
James Oneal	1,410
Algernon Lee	1,252
John M. Work	1,142
L. B. Boudin	910

In these same states, for international secretary, the vote is: Kate Richards O'Hare, 10,627; Morris Hillquit, 3,720.

At the N. E. C. session where 40,000 revolutionary comrades of the Socialist Party were either expelled or suspended, James Oneal feelingly and sanctimoniously, spoke about "the confidence that the membership has in the N. E. C., which we cannot betray." Confidence! James Oneal, A. I. Shiplacoff, John M. Work, Seymour Stedman, and Adolph Germer were of the N. E. C. majority; look at the votes they secured for international delegates, and then measure the extraordinary "confidence" that the membership has in these saboteurs of the Party.

Frederick Krafft and George H. Goebel were also of the N. E. C. majority that sabotaged the Party. They were candidates for reelection to the N. E. C. from District Two. In this district the Left Wing candidates swept the field, the results being (the Maryland and West Virginia vote missing, but very small): C. E. Ruthenberg, 5,786; Marguerite Prevey, 4,885; Fred Harwood, 2,774. Fred Krafft received 849 votes, and George Goebel 492. In their own state of New Jersey, Goebel received 167 votes and Krafft 246; while the Left Wing candidate Harwood received 1,158 votes.

James Oneal was a candidate for re-election to the N. E. C. from District One. In three states of this district—Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Maine—Oneal received 688 votes, Morris Hillquit 838; while the Left Wing candidates received: L. C. Fraina, 3,130; N. I. Hourwich, 2,544; E. Lindgren, 1,472.

The N. E. C. speaks of "fraud," but fraud could never have been perpetrated on such a large scale as to give the Left Wing candidates the tremendous majority they have received.

The Party membership in the elections has overwhelmingly repudiated the Old Guard, the representatives of moderate petty bourgeois Socialism. That is clear. And it is just as clear that the moderates, by refusing to abide by the election results, are trying to steal the elections. Comrades, protect the integrity of the Party!

The N. E. C. Speaks

WHILE it is being repudiated by the Party for its criminal actions in trying to split the Party, the N. E. C. "justifies" itself in a declaration to the membership. The declaration is signed by James Oneal, A. I. Shiplacoff, Dan Hlogan, Seymour Stedman, George H. Goebel, Fred Holt, Fred Krafft and John M. Work,—four of whom were pro-war, all of whom favored a Wilson peace, and all of whom have been overwhelmingly repudiated by the Party in the elections for a new N. E. C.

This "declaration" is a unique document. It is a tissue of lies and slander. It viciously attacks the revolutionary comrades in the Party. It sets its face as steel against the development of revolutionary Socialism in the Socialist Party. It is a document of desperate men, and of criers after the dead.

The "declaration" says: "Evidence in our possession indicates an organized and systematic attempt, of nation-wide scope, to capture the organization by fair means or foul . . . using the foreign language papers in a disgusting campaign of slander against the Party and its elected officials. The Party and its officials were helpless against this cowardly tirade as we could not know what was taking place." (Our italics.) The Left Wing organized openly to conquer the Party for revolutionary Socialism. It appealed to the membership, by means of constructive criticism and agitation. Its campaign was open. It is dishonest for the N. E. C. to limit the agitation to the language press: there is *The Revolutionary Age*, the *New York Communist*, *The Proletarian*, the *Ohio Socialist*, the *Buffalo New Age*, and other English papers that agitated for the Left Wing policy. The moderates could not succeed against the campaign, of which they were perfectly aware, because they had no arguments and were repudiated by the mass of the comrades in the Party. The "capture of the Party" is simply the party itself asserting its control against the reactionary bureaucrats.

Fair means or foul? Let the membership judge who uses the foul methods: the Left Wing uses agitation, constructive criticism, ideas; the moderates use expulsion, sabotaging referendums, strangling the will of the membership. Eight men split the Party, after being overwhelmingly repudiated by the Party: are the means fair or foul?

Fear means or foul? Let the membership judge: The N. E. C. declaration says: "If constant repetition of phrases, common action with government officials, and systematic sabotage of the Party are 'revolutionary,' then this group [the Left Wing] is correct." Can you conceive anything more foul than stigmatizing the action of the revolutionary comrades of the Left Wing as "common action with government officials"?

The Left Wing was against the "Amnesty Convention" because it considered the convention as an abandonment of the policy of the class struggle. The Left Wing agitated in favor of militant action to release our class war prisoners, in favor of the mass strike to compel the government to act; it was against "amnesty," appeals to the government of the capitalists and co-operation with reactionary bourgeois "liberals." The Left Wing maintains that only the action of revolutionary Socialism can compel the release of our imprisoned comrades. But the N. E. C. "declaration" in speaking of the Left Wing opposition to the Amnesty Conference makes this contemptible statement: "Between betrayal inside the party and suppression by government officials, our imprisoned comrades are made a sacrifice to capitalist reaction."

We urge a revolutionary policy to release our imprisoned comrades—and are accused of using "common action with government officials." We demonstrate that the petty bourgeois policy of the N. E. C. will never release the class war prisoners—and are stigmatized as "making a sacrifice of our comrades to capitalist reaction." These are the "fair" means used by the treacherous N. E. C. against the "foul" means of the Left Wing—of the Party, for the Left Wing is now the Socialist Party!

The N. E. C. "declaration" accuses the Language Federations of trying to "dominate" the Party. In another statement, the N. E. C. speaks of an American Party. The Left Wing is acting in accord with any peculiarity in American social and political conditions: its acceptance of industrial unionism, developed by the American revolutionary movement and which the N. E. C. repudiates, is proof of that. But the fundamentals of Socialism are international in scope: our's must be an international movement. The "Americanism" of the N. E. C. is simply petty bourgeois "Socialism."

The N. E. C. convicts itself. It evades all problems of revolutionary action and of fundamental Socialism. It is desperately using the most desperate and infamous means to preserve the supremacy of moderate, petty bourgeois Socialism; to wreck the Party. Comrades of the Socialist Party, act to protect your Party!