

Official Left Wing News

THE Cleveland referendum proposal to rescind the acts of the old N. E. C. expelling Michigan, suspending the seven Federations, holding up the election referendums, and putting the national headquarters into the absolute control of trustees, has been seconded by 172 locals, representing 17,800 members. These seconds come from 29 states and 10 Federations. Over 12,000 of the members represented are from the regular English-speaking branches, 2,130 from Russian-speaking branches, and 3,631 from 48 branches of the Finnish, German, Jewish and Scandinavian Federations.

This "straw vote" is all the more striking by reason of its scattered, spontaneous character. It is apparent that the same proposition put to the vote of the entire membership through the regular party machinery would result in a repudiation of these acts of the N. E. C. by practically 100 per cent of the active party membership. As an example of the limited reach of this expression of party sentiment, New York City is not represented at all, nor Detroit, and only a few of the smaller branches from Chicago, while these three cities have over 20,000 party members.

Now it appears that this referendum will never be submitted. It is "unconstitutional" because it contains "comment." Sherlock Holmes, and all the other great detectives, real or fictitious, never exhibited ingenuity equal to this. It was suspected that some way would be found to sidetrack this referendum until too late for the Emergency Convention, but the particular method chosen to get rid of a disastrous rebuke from the party membership was beyond forecast. Except for the extreme seriousness of the party situation and the nasty temper of the rump officialdom, one might find in this latest performance of the hold-over N. E. C. an inspired outburst of the comic spirit.

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THE MICHIGAN-FEDERATION CALL FOR A NEW PARTY

The call for a new party to be formed at Chicago on September 1st, regardless of the Left Wing organization and procedure, is without national significance except as it may work injury to the already difficult task of the Left Wing in drawing together the revolutionary elements of the American proletariat. The call comes from a little committee, most of whom represent none but themselves, and all of whom are desperately bent on playing out a petty game of controlling the future of Socialism in America regardless of the will and understanding of the mass of party members.

This call was formulated in the East with none instructed to that effect except the delegates to the National Left Wing Conference from Michigan, and this was a Convention not a membership instruction. The others who join in this call act under the direct inspiration of three or four would-be

"bosses" of the Russian Federation. There is no question but that these Federation schemes will be sharply rebuked by their own membership at the moment the true situation becomes known. Of course it will be their policy to keep their members properly misinformed, but that sort of policy cannot carry them along very far.

There is a small group of pretentious "leaders" in Michigan who, while they have done some splendid critical and educational work within the Socialist Party, are making a sorry mess of their attempts to take the whole national movement into their hands. The national movement will dispose of itself at Chicago, on August 30th, with representation from every part of the country. A self-Constituted "national organization committee" will never create a "Communist Party of America" when its first act is a repudiation of the initial national effort to draw together the Left Wing elements for common action.

The National Left Wing Council is the immediate embodiment of the National Left Wing. The question of the process of revolutionizing the Socialist Party was most carefully considered at New York by representatives from many States, and it is this decision which must govern the Left Wing Council. The insurgents who could not force the Conference to accept their dictation now presume to march their forces against both the official party and the Left Wing. They expect to sweep everything before them by the magic of the name "Communist Party of America." That is a name which deserves far greater respect than to be used as bait in this sort of game. When it becomes the name of the revolutionary Socialists movement in this country, it will not be by mandate of two little groups of petty intriguers. It will be under auspices which held the name of Communism in too profound respect to make of it a football as in this game for a Michigan-Russian Executive Committee private political party.

There is need to make reservation for the intense sincerity of some of the comrades involved in this call for a new party. But there can be no reservation as to their temporary loss of mental balance with respect to the general proletarian movement in the United States upon which all that they long for depends.

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PLAN FOR MEETING OF NEW N. E. C.

The National Left Wing Council and several of the members of the newly elected N. E. C. are trying to work out a plan for a meeting of the new N. E. C. at as early a date as can be arranged. The election of Comrades Fraina, Hourwich, Harwood, Prevey, Ruthenberg, Lloyd, Keracher, Batt, Hogan, Millis, Nagle, Katterfeld, Wicks and Herman appears now to be certain, while there is still a question about the third choice in the First District, Comrade Lindgren leading without the New York vote.

There is no question but that the final tally of the party elections is available at the National office, but according to the action of the N. E. C. this tally will not be made known until August 30th. Meanwhile the State Secretaries have published enough of the votes to leave no question of the outcome except as above indicated. There may be some variation also in the Fourth District, where the votes are few and scattered. But as to 12 or 13 of the new executive body there can no longer be any question, and according to the party law the new N. E. C. is entitled to control beginning July 1st.

There can be no "legality" by which a defunct Executive Committee can keep the newly elected committee from taking office. By such "constitutionality" the old body could perpetuate itself indefinitely, let the members vote as they like. Stopping referendums is the method chosen to make sure that the members consent.

A motion for a meeting of the new N. E. C. has been made by Comrade Katterfeld, who happens to be a member of both the old and new Executive Committee. In case National Secretary Germer refuses to put this motion, as is most likely, Comrade Katterfeld will himself take the vote of the newly elected committeemen.

This meeting is of the highest importance. It is up to the new N. E. C. to keep up the continuity of the party. The only valid party authority today, officially speaking, is the newly chosen N. E. C. Fundamentally, the final party authority is the party membership, and in obedience to this authority it becomes the duty of the new committeemen to meet and take up the executive work of the party. If there is any question about the elections it can only be raised by contests coming from any district where defeated candidates may claim seats on the N. E. C. The uncontested committeemen must decide these contests.

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THE FINNISH FEDERATION LINES UP.

It was evident at Chicago that the main reliance of the Opportunists was on the Finnish Federation, which has long been first in the list of Federations. Now the news comes to hand that the Finnish Federation denounces the actions of the N. E. C. and demands that the August 30th Convention shall take no account of the expulsion and suspensions. The proclamation coming from the Executive Committee of the Finnish Federation characterizes the majority of the N. E. C. as petit bourgeois opportunistic Socialists. Finally, comes this significant statement: "If the internal crisis created in the party unavoidably leads to a division of forces, we join without hesitation those that follow unalterably in the wake of the uncompromising class struggle. There shall be our place."

I. E. FERGUSON,
National Sec'y.

Greater New York News

PENDING the consolidation of the locals of Greater New York the City Committee of the Left Wing has called for the immediate formation of a central committee of New York. The New York Left Wing branches have had no centralized unifying governing body up to the present with the result that there has been little work accomplished along those lines. We must engage in the primary fight among other activities and that also requires some centralized body to carry on the work.

The New York Left Wing branches are therefore called upon to elect delegates for the N. Y. Central Committee at its next meeting where they have not done so already. The first meeting of the delegates of the Central Committee will be held on Tuesday, July 22 at our headquarters 43 W. 29th Street at 8 o'clock. Minutes of that meeting will be published in the next issue of *The Revolutionary Age*.

Branch organizers or secretaries will please notify this office when and where their meetings are held. Also their other activities of interest to the comrades of the Left Wing.

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Dear Comrade:-

As another instance of the already over-accumulated examples of the Democratic actions of the Right Wing, let me describe the one perpetrated upon the 18-20 A. D.

This branch of the S. P. did not participate in the actions and reactions between the Left Wing and the Right Wing—but it was definitely decisive-

ly revolutionary in spirit. Local New York felt that it had to do something, surely, in order to get rid of the revolutionary elements. Not having any real ground, a fictitious one would do just as well, in the opinion of the Right Wing.

Letters were sent out saying: inasmuch as there was a disorderly element in the branch (no meeting had ever been taken off in disorder); inasmuch as the branch officers had been recalled (this also a lie); the branch was to be reorganized. The Black Committee came around and took our names. All activities of the branch were suspended. Some four weeks later another letter was sent out. This time Gerber was there and explained that the other reorganization meeting was not supposed to have taken place, was uncalled for

and so on. Comrade Alcinikoff asked for the floor of the members, who granted it with acclaim, in order to answer Gerber. But not having asked it of his august self, Gerber, the party hired secretary kept on beating with his hammer. This continued until Gerber and the rest of the Black Committee were ejected from the hall by the members. Some six of his kind left the branch with him. On going out Gerber shouted out, "You'll pay for this, you are no longer members of the party."

One month later, a masked gang of three, easily recognizable by their smell, according to the man who described them, as being Spritzer, Shub and Extract, broke into the branch during the morning hours by way of the fire-escape window. All the furniture was taken out, the fixtures of the lights were torn from the walls and ceilings, even a book-case belonging to the Y. P. S. L. did not escape their rapacity, but was jimmied open. Some of the books were stolen. We only hope that they will read them and perhaps learn some Socialism.

Jacob Hillquit, the brother of Morris Hillquit, was the treasurer of the branch and had some \$250 of the branch's money—so that besides the furniture, upon which they will be able to realize quite a little sum, these few have the \$250.

How much lower must such as these fall in order to be on the same plane with the Eberts-Scheidemanns-Noskes of Germany?

Fraternally,

WM. BOURSTEIN

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Sunday, 1 P. M. August 3, 1919.
MANHATTAN LYCEUM
66 East 4th Street, New York
Ratification of the National Left Wing
Conference and election of officers.
Admission by Left Wing Application Card
and Socialist Party Card.
Application Cards can be secured at head-
quarters or from Branch secretaries.