

# The Revolutionary Age

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Socialist Party

LOUIS C. FRAINA, Editor

JOHN REED, Associate Editor.

EADMONN MACALPINE, Managing Editor

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Section of the Socialist Party

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We are pleased to be able to inform our readers that John Reed, has joined the staff of *The Revolutionary Age* and will now contribute regularly. It is planned to have Reed cover some of the big happenings that are taking place in the labor and Socialist world so that our readers may have a first hand interpretation of these events and their relation to and effect upon the revolutionary movement as a whole.

## The Internal Struggle

We regret that we are forced to devote so much space in this issue to matters dealing with the internal affairs of the Left Wing. It has always been the policy of this paper to devote most of its attention to the broader aspect of the revolutionary movement. We are, however, going through a crisis in America just now. The revolutionary Socialist movement of this country is beginning to take a definite form. Within a few weeks it will emerge as the Communist Party of America. It is the duty of all revolutionary Socialists to see that this new Party is launched on such a basis as will ensure its steady growth, its unwavering adherence to the principles and ideals out of which it is born, its power among the masses of the proletariat in America and its ultimate success.

Much of what is transpiring may seem to some to be unimportant and in the nature of a petty squabble rather than one of those essential struggles without which no movement can be initiated. On the principles upon which the new party must be formed there is no dispute, on the nature of its organization and the initial tactics it must pursue there have arisen grave differences. These differences must be fought out and eliminated so that the Communist Party of America may be launched as the unified expression of the revolutionary Socialist forces in this country.

It is for these reasons that we may have to devote much space in the next few issues to this internal struggle.

## The Race Riots

THE race riots which have broken out in Washington and Chicago are distinguished from the usual clashes between whites and Negroes by the fact that in both these cities the latter have offered an attempt at organized resistance and in several instances have taken the initiative. The history of the black race

in this country is a story of cowed submission to brutal tyranny. In few instances have the black men struck back.

That they should strike back now is the occasion for much surprise and not a little indignation on the part of the bourgeois press and the "best people." The statesmen in the nation's capital, where the first outbreaks occurred, share the common feelings. Race riots are actually taking place within the sacred precincts of the national legislature, the Negroes roes are fighting back, if they did'nt fight back a one night's lynching party would have settled the whole affair, therefore the Negroes are obviously to blame and they must be punished! Several Congressmen immediately call for the establishment of the Jim Crow system in the national capital.

The Jim Crow system, on the doorsteps of the national legislature where the world's charter of democracy and liberty is at the moment under debate! The Jim Crow system as America's first contribution to the "new freedom!" The Jim Crow system as the laurel wreath for the brows of America's "black heroes" of the late war! The Jim Crow system, the expression of the ideology which causes race riots, as the cure for race riots!

The Washington riots have spread to Chicago and within a few days the list of dead has mounted to nearly fifty, while the list of wounded runs into hundreds. The causes of the riots as given by the newspapers vary somewhat, but the most general is the assault of white women by Negroes. It is stated that within a short period six white women have been assaulted by Negroes in Washington and that this was the direct cause of the trouble. It is not stated, however, by what process of reasoning a whole race is marked down for slaughter because of the color of a degenerate's skin.

As a matter of fact, this is like the boy's cry of "Wolf," it has been used too often to inspire any belief in its truth. The weight of evidence is all on the other side. It is the Negro who has cause for complaint. Only a few days ago an old Negro, over 72 years of age, was lynched for the "crime" of killing a white man in defense of his daughter, while it is generally admitted that all over the South the whites violate Negroes practically at will.

In Chicago, a reason leaks out which is much nearer the mark. It is stated that the big employers have been using the Negro to cut wages, and on several occasions it is reported that the Negroes have been attacked while leaving the factories and shops.

The influx of the Negro into the Northern industrial field has already resulted in several racial clashes, the most notable of which was the East St. Louis riots. But in East St. Louis the blacks did not strike back and the casualties were all on one side. It is, however, useless to blame the white worker for these tragedies. He is not yet able to see below the surface. He feels that he is being injured, he sees the Negro working for less wages than a white man, and he attributes his troubles to the Negro. The color line has become part of the national ideology, the craft unions, obsessed with that ideology, have in the majority of cases refused to recognize the Negroes with the result that the black race has been forced to take employment where it can or starve to death, and the industrial barons have used the influx of Negroes, as they have used the various waves of immigration in the past, against the organized workers.

The workers, whether they are black, white or yellow, have the same interests. The Negro worker has come into industry to stay and

unless both black and white worker recognize their common interests, not only are race riots bound to become more frequent, but each race must inevitably bind the chains of wage slavery tighter round both.

## The Left Wing Conference

THIS issue contains the first instalment of verbatim report of the National Left Wing Conference. Right from the opening of the Conference there was discussion of the question of immediate formation of a new party. The preliminary report of Comrade Batt, as Secretary of the Ways and Means Committee of the Socialist Party of Michigan, at once projected this question.

In view of the developments since June 21st it is important to note that the discussion of a Communist Party, which produced a split in the Conference, was in the first instance an issue of *new party at New York by action of the delegates to the Left Wing Conference*. These delegates had not yet agreed on the first principle of Communism. Conspicuously the Michigan delegates, who first projected the proposition of immediate new party, insisted at all times that they did not agree with the platform of the Left Wing. The most ardent advocate of immediate new party, Comrade Zucker of New York, during and since the Conference, has spoken only in scorn of the Left Wing platform. Of the minority group of the Conference, only the Federation delegates were in entire accord with the fundamental principles of Communism as elaborated in the Left Wing Manifesto and Program.

Comrade Batt makes it very plain that Michigan is the only State where there are any real "reds" worthy of taking the befuddled American party situation in charge. Those who have been taught the truths of Bolshevism by the historical developments of the past two years are not to be taken seriously. Michigan has had a *non-reformistic platform since 1914*, therefore Michigan alone is worthy of leadership. There is much merit in a non-reformistic platform, but that does not by any means make of the Michigan group adherents of Bolshevism. And so this group was unceremoniously told by the real Bolsheviki who agreed with them only on the point of the Communist Party, but who made the Michiganites swallow whole the Left Wing platform adopted by the Conference.

Consider the character of the Michigan proposal: We have laid down the platform and the program of action. You have had no chance to discuss anything at all. But, we tell you in advance, we are here to take you in complete charge, and if you dare go your own way in any respect, be assured Michigan will go right ahead to form a new party all alone. Anyone reading Comrade Batt's speech made before there had been a word of discussion in the Conference, will realize that this little group from Michigan would have been shunted out of the Conference in a minority all of their own, if not for the single fact of new party involved in the Michigan proposal. *It was only on the basis of the Conference platform of Communism that this proposal actually became a plan for a Communist Party.*

For the rest, the preliminary reports showed absolutely no membership mandate for immediate formation of a new party. That was true of New York and of the Federations, whence came the other champions of immediate formation of a new party by the New York Conference. In fact, the representative of the Russian-speaking Federations, Comrade Stoklitsky, made no mention of a new party