

President Wilson's injunction to be "neutral in thought." The action of the German Socialists in supporting the Kaiser's government in this war was either openly approved by our official leadership, or else we were admonished not to *disapprove* of it on the plea of "neutrality."

When Germany inaugurated a peace-propaganda in this country, our party entered upon a peace agitation which was not essentially different in character from that of Germany's official and unofficial representatives. We not only waited with the launching of our peace agitation until the official and semi-official German propaganda in this country was ready for it, but the nature of our demands was largely a replica of that propaganda. The Socialist Party even entered into official relations with that propaganda, carried on in behalf of the governing classes of Germany, participating officially in "peace" demonstrations organized in its behalf.

One of the results of this demoralization was the debacle of the Presidential election of 1916.

Another is our complete and pitiful helplessness in face of the crisis which confronts us now that the tide of the Great War has reached our own shores, and the proletariat of this country is engulfed by its waves.

That the pro-ally element in our party should fall an easy prey to the war-fever when it reached this continent was only natural. To the alleged fight for democratic institutions generally, there was now added an imaginary struggle for the democratic institutions of this country. Their diseased imagination conjured up before their mind's eye a sinister attack by Germany upon the free institutions of the United States, which they, of course, felt called upon to defend, even aside from any promptings of vulgar patriotism.

But the official leadership of the Party have done even worse: piling hypocrisy upon stupidity, only to ultimately land in the same camp as their pro-ally opponents. Their first move after the severing of diplomatic relations was a crude pro-German pronouncement in favor of an embargo which was in itself sufficient

to kill any attempt at an honest peace propaganda along Socialist lines. When this move had to be withdrawn, our National Executive Committee substituted in its place a purely bourgeois pacifist propaganda, instead of making the class struggle the basis of our opposition to war. The *leit-motif* of this propaganda was that "we" of the United States have nothing to fight for whatever "the others" may have at stake, that it was not "our" fight and we ought therefore to remain neutral. This was accompanied by shamefaced justifications of the German government's ruthlessness, repeated assurances of our unfailing belief in Mr. Wilson's high ideals, and occasional choruses of "Down with England."

And to cap the climax, these great opponents of war hastened to publicly assure our capitalist class and its government that our opposition to the war will only last as long as they choose to remain formally at peace with Germany, but that as soon as war has been declared we shall do nothing to interfere with the war plans of our masters. Some of our "peace" leaders, among them our representative in Congress, even going to the extent of promising to "stand by the country"—with all that euphonious phrase implies—in case the capitalist class shall rush us into the war which these "peace" leaders of ours had themselves declared to be a useless and wholly unjustifiable butchery of the masses of people of the United States.

In order to save the Socialist Party and the Socialist movement of this country from utter ruin, it is absolutely imperative that we revolutionize the concepts and modes of action of our movement. The revolutionary forces latent in the toiling masses of this country must be brought to the fore, consolidated, and organized into a living power. As a first step in this direction we must abandon the unprincipled and enervating policies of pro-Germanism masked as peace propaganda, and the virtual repudiation of the class struggle conception of war and peace. A positive policy must be placed before the proletariat of this country—principles worth fighting for and ideals worth dying for.

Such a policy is indicated in the closing paragraph of the resolution adopted ten years ago by the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart (1907), and reaffirmed by the International