

formerly bitter critics of the A. F. of L., acquiesced in every single reactionary action. The disgusting level to which these renegades stooped may be seen in the pledge which they and every other delegate had to sign:

"The undersigned hereby affirm that it is the duty of all the people of the United States, without regard to class, nationality, politics or religion, faithfully and loyally to support the government of the United States in carrying on the present war for justice, freedom and democracy to a triumphant conclusion, and gives this pledge to uphold every honorable effort for the accomplishment of that purpose, and to support the American Federation of Labor, as well as the declaration of organized labor's representatives, made March 12, 1917, at Washington, D. C., as to 'labor's position in peace or in war,' and agrees that this pledge shall be his right to membership in this conference of the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy."

It is a disgusting pledge. Moreover, it is a complete abandonment of Socialism. It abandons the class struggle. It abandons an independent policy. It abandons the international concept. It is an acceptance of the reactionary A. F. of L. as the mentor of *Socialist* activity during the war.

The single radical action of the convention was its demand for the conscription of wealth. But that in itself is not an independent policy. The demand is being made strongly in Middle Class and even in Imperialistic circles. Moreover, the conscription of wealth is itself a necessity of a definite, organized Imperialism. As a measure of war it has already been introduced in Great Britain. The conscription of wealth is a plank in the platform of the new liberal Imperialism and State Socialism. In their apparently radical demand, accordingly, as well as in their general attitude and deeds, the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy is taking its place as a factor in the new social alignment precipitated by Imperialism—an alignment that distributes the burdens as well as the profits of Imperialism among privileged classes, including the aristocracy of labor.

And it is precisely in this that the American Alliance is sig-

nificant in the larger sense. It is a preliminary step in the formation of a national social reform movement, which, representing the interests of the new Middle Class and the aristocracy of labor, is willing to barter away democracy and independent revolutionary action in return for concessions of social reform from a "liberal" Imperialistic bourgeoisie. This has been the policy of German Socialism, and to a lesser extent of European Socialism generally. An imperialistic social reform party—that is what will surely, in one shape or another, become a reality in the days after the war.

There are many forces working for the consummation of such a party. Certain elements of the Socialist Party, their attitude on the war aside, are fitter elements for a program of national social reform than for Socialism. That, indeed, has been the program of our party bureaucracy, which, prior to the war, was dominated jointly by John Spargo and Morris Hillquit.

The People's Council, moreover, is equally making recruits for such a party of national social reform. The rancors of war don't last forever, and the elements in the two camps now opposed to each other may agree to get together during the days of peace. For the People's Council has unquestionably proven its bourgeois, nationalistic character. Their attitude during the week when they were trying to hold a convention, their craven refusal to go straight to Minneapolis, permission or no permission; their general social policies and peace terms—all these circumstances indicate their character as nationalists and social reformers. Their pacifism is a very sorry thing, and based largely upon the impulse of the moment. The People's Council's praise of President Wilson's reply to the Pope's message on peace is indicative of their bourgeois psychology.

The Socialist Party in its support of the People's Council has again made a tactical error of the first importance. Indeed, the tragedy of the situation is seen in the circumstance that our party has practically lost its identity nationally as a force against the war. All its anti-war activity is virtually centred in the People's Council, an organization that does not