

Many things have changed since those paragraphs were written at St. Louis. But the facts upon which they were based have not changed. The argument still remains valid, and the fear they express is still real.

This fear may perhaps not be decisive of our attitude towards the war. We may, perhaps, now that our "managing partners" have learned a thing or two during the past year, be in a position to exact from them proper guarantees against an improper peace. As to that we do not express any opinion here. But the point itself is of the utmost importance, and must be carefully weighed and considered whenever the question of a change of our attitude towards the war comes up for discussion. B.

St. Louis—One Year After

There is only one word in the English language which can adequately describe the state of mind of the Socialist Party with respect to the war on the anniversary of the St. Louis Convention. That word is: *Chaos*.

Formally the St. Louis resolution still remains unrepealed. But to a large section of the party membership it has long since ceased to be a rule of action. Just how large that section is it is impossible to say, since the party bureaucracy insists on not permitting the party to express itself either by way of a referendum or a congress of delegates specially accredited by the membership to discuss the subject and reach a decision. All that we can say therefore with assurance is that that section is both large and influential. On the other hand it would not be safe to say that the majority of the party membership has given up its opposition to the war, since some of the leaders who have a genius for discovering where the majority stands are still on the fence.

In the meantime confusion reigns supreme.

In New York the Socialist delegation in the Board of Aldermen of the Metropolis vote for Liberty Bonds, under the leadership of the principal author of the St. Louis Resolution; while in Wisconsin, Victor Berger, one of the principal leaders of the

party and one of its three delegates to the prospective International Socialist Peace Congress, runs for office on a program demanding the withdrawal of our troops from France.

The New York Call publishes a statement of Allan L. Benson, the Socialist Party's presidential candidate in the last presidential election, expressing the hope that Berger would be defeated, while the Milwaukee Leader assures us that Morris Hillquit, the National Chairman and International Secretary of the Socialist Party, telegraphed emphatically denying any criticism of Berger's platform, and expressing the conviction that Berger's election would be "a triumph for international Socialism."

Perhaps the best illustration of the confusion reigning within the party, and the attempts made by the politicians to straddle the issue, is furnished by the New York "Conference on the Party's attitude towards war," which ended in an utter fiasco after trying for six weeks to get somewhere. Early in March the N. Y. State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party called a Conference to consider the question of the Party's attitude towards the war in view of recent developments. The conference,—which consisted of the members of the State Executive Committee, the Executive Committees of the Locals within Greater New York, the Socialist Assemblymen and Aldermen from New York City and other Socialist functionaries—met on March 15th, and after an evening's discussion elected a Committee of Twelve to draft resolutions and report the same to the Conference.

The Committee of Twelve labored hard for a month, and finally reported a set of resolutions drawn up by the authors of the St. Louis Resolution and agreed to by a majority of the Twelve. The Conference discussed these resolutions and a substitute reported by a minority of the Twelve, at an extremely stormy session (held on April 18th) defeated the substitute, but refused to adopt the majority resolutions, sending the whole matter back to the Committee for further consideration. The Committee thereupon refused to consider the matter any further and "referred" it to the State Convention which is to meet on June 29th-30th.