

with opportunism and its result: The leaders of the party vied with each other in finding excuses for their co-patriots in Europe—who were voting appropriations to their various governments for carrying on the war—pleading with the party membership that internationalism in war time must give way to nationalism; that the worker's immediate concern was "his job, his home and country." It left the rank and file aghast and bewildered. The leaders in whom they had had implicit faith, whom they had cheered and acknowledged as the true exponents of internationalism, had failed miserably when the time came to uphold that which they had expounded to be the true philosophy of the proletariat.

A convention was demanded by the rank and file of the party. It was held and in no uncertain manner declared its position. The result was the now world-famous St. Louis Resolution. It was sent for a referendum vote and adopted by an overwhelming majority.

Was the question settled? No!

The party machinery was still in the hands of the opportunist apologists for the European parliamentarians, and, of course, it would interfere with their program of social reforms should they insist upon elected officials carrying out the spirit of this resolution. The result was that throughout the entire country, with a few exceptions, the elected officials voted and worked for war appropriations and other measures pertaining to the war.

To many members of the party, as well as the people in general, it meant the death of the Socialist movement. They were mistaken, it was not the death of the Socialist movement, but the death of that slimy, treacherous creature, known in the world of politics as the parliamentarian, who in the guise of practical politics had misled the workers the world over to believe that Socialists in a capitalist legislature can, by working for social reforms, introduce a Socialist industrial state.

It has taken the party membership a long time to realize the fallacy of such action. Russia with its Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, Germany with its Majority Socialists and Spartacus groups have clarified the atmosphere. Where a few years ago only those who remained close to Socialist principles could see it, today, almost anyone who understands the theory of the class struggle, has no trouble in comprehending the reason why comrades are fighting and slaying each other and that opportunism must necessarily create a division in the ranks of the Socialist movement,—for that which should be a means to an end is made the end itself.

The "Left Wing" group is the logical outcome of a dissatisfied membership—a membership that has been taught by the revolutionary activities of the European movements "to compromise is to lose." And hold, with the founders of modern Socialism, that there are two classes in society; that between these two classes a struggle must go on, until the working class seizes the instruments of production and distribution, abolishes the capitalist state and establishes the dictatorship of the proletariat. They will not wait until the vast majority of the people will vote them into power. But—if the proletariat during its struggle with the bourgeoisie is compelled by the force of circumstances to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by

force the old conditions of production—then it will, with these methods, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class-antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

The Socialist Party has been too flexible where it ought to have been firm, and too rigid where it ought to have been flexible. Just as capitalism is inflexible in its class attitude, but flexible towards new problems, so must the Socialist Party as "the most resolute and advanced section of the working class parties," be inflexible in its class attitude, but by all means be flexible towards the new problems as they arise.

The degree of flexibility will be the test of its revolutionary character. The Soviet government of Russia is very flexible and therefore it succeeds. It is inflexible only on the fundamental class question; the dictatorship of the proletariat is the basis of its flexibility. And so with our own Socialist movement. The class struggle and the class struggle alone must be the basis of its flexibility.

On the basis of the class struggle must it reorganize itself, must prepare to come to grips with the master class during the difficult period of capitalist reconstruction now going on. It can do so only by teaching the working class the position it faces,—it must preach revolutionary industrial unionism and political action and urge the workers to develop their craft unions into industrial unions. It must carry on its political campaigns not as a means of electing officials to the legislature (as they have done in the past), but as year-around educational campaigns for the enlightenment of the working-class to class-conscious economic and political action and keeping the revolutionary fervor alive as a flaming ideal in the hearts of the people.

The "Left Wing" group therefore believes "that the time has come for the Socialist Party of America to throw off its parliamentary shackles and stand squarely behind the Soviet Republic of Russia and the revolutionary movements of Europe. That it will thus be enabled, when here the time comes—and it is soon coming—to take the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle with the capitalist class. Instead of standing in its path dangling the bait of parliamentary reforms, push them forward towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, the final phase of the class struggle, transient and necessary to the ushering in of the Co-operative Commonwealth."

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

That we stand for the abolition of the social reform planks of the Socialist Party, together with all present municipal, state and congressional platforms.

That we teach, propagate and agitate exclusively for the overthrow of the capitalist state.

That the Socialist candidates elected shall adhere strictly to the above two provisions.

Realizing that the Socialist Party of itself cannot reorganize and reconstruct the industrial organization of the working class; that that is the task of the economic organizations of the working class themselves, we demand that the party must assist this process of reorganization by a propaganda for revolutionary industrial unionism as a