

The Socialist Party Draws the Final Consequences

By JOHN PEPPER

The sixteenth annual convention of the New York State Federation of Labor which was held in Plattsburgh showed clearly that: 1.) The reactionary labor officials still hold undisputed sway over the machine of the State Federation of Labor. 2.) The Gompers-Holland clique is selling the organized hundreds of thousands of workers of the New York State Federation of Labor, lock, stock and barrel, to the Democratic Tammany Hall. 3.) The Socialist Party has given up the sham fight against the capitalist parties, which in Albany it had still staged.

Ten Facts

To prove this terrible accusation we will marshal ten outstanding facts of the Convention:

The first fact. The president of the State Federation of Labor, James P. Holland, introduced and recommended Al Smith as the "next president of the United States."

The second fact was the call for "Three cheers for the next president!"

The third fact was the silence of those scores of delegates who are Socialist Party members. We do not expect them to have called for "three cheers for the revolution"; but at least they might have called for "three cheers for the Socialist Party's presidential candidate, Eugene V. Debs."

The fourth occurrence was when Governor Al Smith, the big representative of Tammany Hall recommended that the Convention elect James P. Holland as president of the New York State Federation of Labor. This was fine team work: Holland recommends Al Smith as president of the United States and Al Smith recommends James P. Holland as president of the New York State Federation of Labor.

The fifth happening was the unanimous re-election of Holland and the entire reactionary administration. All the Socialist Party delegates in attendance voted for these most reactionary officials of the whole American labor movement. Governor Al Smith issued the order to elect Holland; the party of Hillquit carried out the order promptly. The New York Call of August 30 gives the following report: "The only danger of a difference between the administration and progressive delegates was averted today at the convention of the New York State Federation of Labor, when the report of the compensation committee, presented by Curtis, was adopted with the concurrence of the administration."

"The administration slate received a unanimous vote at the caucus late tonight."

The sixth fact was that President Holland lauded with the greatest vehemence non-partisan political action as the only political method for the labor movement.

The seventh point was that those delegates belonging to the Socialist Party, to the American Labor Party, to the old Farmer-Labor Party protested or argued just as little against Holland and the non-partisan policy as they fought in a single speech or a single resolution against the Democratic fake—so outspoken a capitalist politician as Al Smith.

The eighth fact was, as the New York Call of August 30 reports: "Committee reports adopted, in no instance extended beyond the suggestions made by Governor Smith in his speech yesterday, except for the education committee."

The ninth point was that the Socialist Party, the American Labor Party and the old Farmer-Labor Party delegates made not a single attempt to have the Convention adopt resolutions which at least in some instances would extend beyond the suggestions made by Governor Smith. The Socialist Party, which is supposed to be a party of Socialism, class struggle and revolution did not find it necessary to oppose an independent policy to the capitalist policy of the Democratic governor, even if not in the name of Socialism, and revolution, at least for the immediate demands of the class struggle of the exploited workers.

The tenth fact is that notwithstanding the silence and betrayal of the Socialists, it was all of no avail. They kissed the hands of the reactionary labor leaders, but they only received a slap from them again. The echo of the ringing slap resounds in the New York Call of August 31: "A savage attack on Morris Hillquit, counsel to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and Judge Jacob Panken by James P. Holland, state president, directly preceded adjournment of the Convention at the New York State Federation of Labor at noon today."

These ten facts are ten terrible documents of self-degradation of the Socialist Party and its two tools and masks, the New York Labor Party and the New York Farmer-Labor Party.

From Albany to Plattsburgh. The tactic of the Socialist Party lately has been but a desperate effort to gain the alliance of reactionary labor leaders. It realizes that it has lost the militant rank and file for good, and the only possibility for it to become a factor in the labor movement is to ally itself with the reactionary labor leaders, so as to acquire thereby that part of the working class as voters who are still under the influence of the reactionary trade union leaders. This over-slick tactic so far has brought no success to the Socialist Party, but only defeats. The fruits of this tactic are Albany and Plattsburgh.

In Albany the Socialist Party attempted an alliance with the reactionary leaders of the railroad unions. But at the same time it wanted to save at least its mask, if not its face, and it therefore staged at least a fake-believe fight against the capitalist parties. The reactionary labor

leaders preferred to ally themselves in Albany with the Democratic politicians of Tammany Hall. The Socialist Party failed to appeal against them to the rank and file; it did not undertake the fight for the Labor Party. The final result of Albany was therefore: the rank and file scored the Socialist Party, while the reactionary labor leaders threw them out mercilessly.

After the crushing defeat in Albany, the Socialist Party had two possibilities before it. One way was to draw the consequences of the defeat, to ally itself with the rank and file, to start a fight for the Labor Party, in a word, the United Front with the Workers Party and the struggle against the reactionary labor leaders. The Socialist Party, whose real leader is still Hillquit and not Debs, did not choose this path.

After Albany, the Socialist Party drew the consequences in a different direction. In the Plattsburgh convention of the New York State Federation of Labor we witness a Socialist Party which, following the defeat of Albany, is still seeking to maintain an alliance with the reactionary labor leaders at any price. In Albany, the reactionary labor leaders required that the Socialist Party, as a condition of its being tolerated, shall no longer fight against the influence of Tammany Hall in the labor movement. In Albany, the Socialist Party did not as yet accept this condition, and was kicked out. In Plattsburgh, the Socialist Party accepted entirely and absolutely this condition for its toleration imposed by the reactionary labor leaders. Against Al Smith as candidate for president of the United States, it did not present its own candidate, Eugene V. Debs. It did not, with a single word, criticize the capitalist policy of the Democratic governor, and it allowed this policy to be endorsed unanimously by the State Federation of Labor. With not a word or resolution did it protest against the non-partisan policy of Gompers and his agent Holland. The Socialist Party delegates betrayed not only the Labor Party idea, but even the vague phrase of "independent political action." In a word, in order to win the alliance of Holland and his reactionary gang, the Socialist Party gave up the fight against the influence of the capitalist parties within the labor movement. Hillquit's Tammany Hall was beaten in Albany by the real Tammany Hall, after it had risked at least a sham fight. In Plattsburgh Hillquit's Tammany Hall did not take up the fight at all. Hillquit is willing to tolerate the real Tammany Hall in the labor movement as long as his Socialist Party-Tammany Hall is not driven away from the sound table of the reactionary labor leaders.

After the Albany conference I wrote the following in "The Worker":

"The greatest lesson at Albany is that against the real Tammany Hall, the petty S. I. Tammany Hall is powerless and useless. Albany has definitely shown that the Labor Party of the American working class can be created only thru the struggle against the capitalist parties, and thru the struggle against the reactionary labor leaders. It has shown that everyone who does not fight against Gompers and Johnston simply delivers the working class to Harding and 'Al' Smith."

Not a month has elapsed, and already these words have turned out to be true. The Socialist Party does not want to fight against Gompers and Johnston, or against the New York agents of these chiefs, thereby helping to deliver the hundreds of thousands of organized workers of New York in the most literal sense of the word, to "Al" Smith.

But of course, thru this tactic the Socialist Party has delivered itself up to political decay. The example of the Socialist Party shows clearly that a party of the working class can go to ruin thru two tactics: 1. The tactic of the Socialist Party in the past, thru dual unionism, thru artificial self-isolation from the masses of the organized labor movement. 2. The tactic of fear of isolation, thru the policy which, in order to escape isolation does not conduct a fight for the systematic, gradual winning over of the rank and file, but makes a weak-kneed race for the grace of the labor leaders of various shades and brands.

New York Branch, Daily Worker Campaign, Directors Meet Friday

A meeting of all Daily Worker Campaign Directors of the New York Branch will be held Friday, Sept. 7, at 8 P. M., at Worker's Hall, 208 E. 12th St. The plans of the District Campaign Committee will be outlined at this meeting, and then the problem of selling shares far and wide will be taken up.