



THE PROLETARIAN

A Journal of International Socialism.

Vol. II. No. 3

JULY, 1919

Price Ten Cents



Down Tools! Free the Class War Prisoners.

SPARTACAN SPARKS

"Taft indorses Gompers' regime."

Suffering cats! Is Sammy as bad as that?

* * *

"The decision of the Supreme Court in the Debs case has taken one candidate out of the presidential race next year."

Maybe, but you never can tell.

* * *

According to the latest news reports, the French marines revolted on the Black Sea.

Apparently seaing is believing.

* * *

"Labor holds great beer demonstration, led by Samuel Gompers."

The longer labor guzzles booze instead of thinking, the longer Sammy will hold on to his job.

* * *

The industrial unrest in this country reminds us of the old saying, "That a man will gladly die for his country, but will refuse to sweat for someone else."

* * *

United States Congress will stamp out Bolshevism to quiet industrial unrest. Drastic action to be taken against Reds and Labor Disturbers. Socialist literature to be forbidden the mails.—News item.

Once upon a time a great comet appeared approaching the earth. It soon became apparent to astronomers that the "heavenly visitor" would come in contact with the earth, causing great loss of life and property, damage to the earth's surface as well as a decided change in the climate. Each issue of the daily press announced the coming disaster, giving details of time of collision, etc. Fortunately, the wise United States Congress averted the catastrophe by sending all the astronomers to jail.

In spite of the expulsion of Michigan and other left-wing elements by the National Executive Committee, the victory of the revolutionary rank and file seems assured. First thing we know, the Socialist Party of America will be a socialist party.

* * *

We read that drug victims in this country total a million. The figures are entirely too low. The number of workingmen who have been doped with the vile poison spread by newspaper editors and other cheap scribblers total several million.

* * *

"G. O. P. opens war on Socialism."

When did we sign a peace treaty with the G. O. P.?

* * *

"It is reported that Princess Mary, daughter of King George, is to marry an American."

Another triumph for democracy.

* * *

Although the Esthonians captured Petrograd the last week in May, and overthrew the tottering Bolshevik regime, June 4th finds the Esthonians in a rout and calling on the Allies for military aid.

Awfully live dead ones, those Bolsheviks.

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One of our enterprising capitalist dailies asks the question, "Why are aliens leaving our country at the rate of a thousand a day?"

May we suggest that possibly "our country" has become undesirable?

* * *

"The strength of the Catholic Church is one of the reasons why Bolshevism does not thrive in Poland."

"According to the latest report, the Baptist Church is going to wage an incessant warfare against radicalism of all kinds."

Yet we find some Socialists who claim that religion is a private matter.

* * *

"But it is quite obvious that there are times when class interests and class warfare must be set aside in favor of larger social interests, * * * as, for example, during disasters like the Johnstown flood and the Messina earthquake, etc."—Bolshevism, by John Spargo, p. 37.

And we might add in times when one imperialistic government attacks another imperialistic government, and one of those governments offers you a job at a good big high remuneration; then, of course, the class struggle must be laid aside.

* * *

"The A. F. of L. officials are working hand in hand with American and Canadian officials towards 'suppressing' the One Big Union movement in Canada."

Christians to church. Judas Iscariot has arisen from the grave.

* * *

"The teachers in Red Hungary receive three thousand kronen a month, the maximum salary allowed by the soviet government."

Say, Alice, where would you rather teach, in Hungary or in New York, at \$750 per year?

THE PROLETARIAN

Vol. II

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The Parting of the Ways

By Dennis E. Batt

At a certain period in the development of the Socialist movement in all countries a split is bound to occur. In some countries it happens before the revolution and in others it comes during the course of the revolution. But come it must. When in the course of development the understanding minority becomes the majority, and is in a position to take control of the organization, a split is imminent; for the petty bourgeois-minded conservatives within the ranks of the Socialist movement can not, and will not, accept a real Socialist position. Rather than do so they would wreck the organization.

In Russia this was so. When the crisis arrived and it was necessary to take up a real Socialist position the "broad-minded and constructive Socialists" were found lacking. Driven to joining the Socialist movement because of their anti-czarism, when the test came, it was found that Kerensky and his element did not want Socialism. They were enamoured with bourgeois democracy and had no conception of the historic mission of the proletariat and knew nothing of the dictatorial powers that it must assume in order that it might perform that historic task. It was impossible for them to put into effect the Socialist program for they did not accept it. They could not give the peasants the land nor the working class the factories, and therefore their support disappeared like the snow before the spring sun. The workers under the leadership of the Bolsheviki had to conquer the "yellow" Socialists over the barricades in the streets.

In Germany much the same course has been followed with the exception of the fact that as yet the working class has not been successful in gaining control. For years the German Social Democratic Party was the model for Socialist parties throughout the world. It was dominated by elements who had a bourgeois outlook upon society and it was therefore a bourgeois party. Year after year the delegates of the German Social Democratic Party opposed any decisive action in the International upon the question of war. The reason for this action was seen in 1914 when the German "Socialists" went scrambling over the top in behalf of German Imperialism. It was a party built on a bourgeois basis and its action in supporting the German Imperialists was no surprise to those who understood Socialism. It was plainly apparent that the German party was of no use to the proletariat of Germany as a revolutionary weapon. Scheidemann, Ebert, et al., were quite willing to sacrifice the blood of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg rather than institute a complete working class control of the country.

The Hungarian Socialists succeeded in straightening out their internal troubles before the revolution, and for that reason are having a much different time of it than the German Socialists. In Italy the Socialist Party has remained comparatively clear because of the wholesale expulsions that have taken place.

The different elements within the Socialist movement of Europe have fought and are fighting out their differences; all have their counterpart in the United States. We, too, have our Kerenskys, Schiedemans and Eberts. It has needed a crisis like the present to show them up in their true colors.

The United States has never possessed a real Socialist Party. True, there has been a militant minority struggling to place the party on a firm basis, but never until now have they seriously menaced the control of the muddleheads and sinister politicians in the national office. Socialism in America has failed to perform the functions of a Socialist movement; namely, the training and organizing the working class for a conquest of political power.

The cause of this failure to perform the functions that it should, is easily traceable to the lack of understanding of Socialism on the part of those who have been in control of the Socialist Party of America. Their whole policy has been based upon a bourgeois conception of things. They have not understood the material basis of Socialism, or, if they did, have refused to work in conformity with it.

Because of this bourgeois conception of things our platforms have been filled with all kinds of nonsensical reforms, old age pensions, government ownership, penal reform, etc., etc., ad nauseum. Failing to understand the functions of the state, they do not know that as long as the capitalist class is in control of it they must put into effect all legislation, and we can be certain that they are not going to legislate to benefit the working class. Their reforms have attracted to the Socialist Party many people that were not Socialists and had no conception of Socialism. Members of this character have been a weakness and a menace to the party. Any reform that might possibly secure some votes for the Socialist Party from people that were not Socialists was placed in the platform.

The class character of the movement was consciously obscured in order not to lose any votes. Flirting with the Non-Partisan League has been a favorite pastime of some of our officers. Stedman has openly stated that he was going to do all in his power to bring about an affiliation between the Socialist Party and the Non-Partisan League. This thing alone is proof of their reactionary character. The idea that the Socialist Party, which is supposed to be a revolutionary organization, could co-operate with a movement that is organized to protect the interest of the farmers (a property class) against the encroachments of "big business" is absolutely preposterous. This has been carried on in violation of the spirit and in some cases the letter of the party pledge, for the Non-Partisan League is a political organization. The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party has raised the cry of violation of the constitution in the recent expulsions, but we are reminded here of the

old saying that it makes some difference "whose ox is gored". They raise no objection when one of their own number traffic with the Non-Partisan League in violation of the party pledge. The infamous Walter Thomas Mills, one of the present members of the Executive Committee, is in the pay of the Non-Partisan League as a lecturer and organizer. But then, what is the constitution among friends. It is only to be used when someone threatens to keep one from getting his feet in the trough.

In their striving to capture "great men" from the ranks of the petty bourgeois and foisting them upon the movement as leaders, they, the national office clique, have in another way demonstrated their unfitness to be a part of a revolutionary movement. Anyone with a notorious name that they could capture and put over on the membership they have played to. It made no difference if they knew anything about Socialism or not as long as they were "great men". Forsooth, great men would make the party great. Experience has proven, however, that these great men will fail the movement when the crisis arrives. The Bensons, Wallings, Russells and Stokes are not to be trusted. Yet the party bureaucracy has learned nothing from these experiences.

In the calling of the Amnesty Convention the Executive Committee again demonstrated its lack of understanding that the Socialist Party is a working class organization. It was convenient, of course, for it furnished them with the means of taking care of their fellow politician, J. Mahlon Barnes. It is strictly in his line to draw up communications to "All organizations, political, economic or otherwise" and not so wise. All this helps to convince the workers that the Socialist Party is not "narrow". This, however, is only in line with their previous activities with "The People's Council". Sounds so much like "Workers', Soldiers' and Sailors' Council", you know—and isn't. The lining up of our party leaders with "The People's Council" was a betrayal of the Socialist position just the same as are all actions that obscure the class character of our movement.

We, the impossibilists, have always been charged by them with not being constructive. They were the "practical" Socialists. What have they done that is constructive? These Socialists who were always crying "constructive work" have performed no constructive work themselves. They can point to nothing that they have done that has been of any material benefit to the Socialist movement in America, except to receive dues and give nothing in return. As for performing any educational work or developing the members of the movement they have done nothing. They have even been unable to develop a press fit to read. A good and sound press is one of the most essential things that a Socialist Party should have, but they have never developed it because they were incapable of doing so, not understanding Socialism. Of course, they argue that the government killed their paper. It was "dead" long before the government killed it. The American Socialist and its successor, "The Eye-Closer", was never worth the trouble of reading except that one might keep track of the repulsively reactionary and muddle-headed activities of the hierarchy. A real Socialist Party should and will build up a press that will be worth the time spent by the membership in reading. Educational work will be carried on by consistent lecture work and study classes. Literature should be gotten out that deals

with current issues in a sound way. This, of course, the present control could not do. They have demonstrated their incapacity to interpret world events by their flirting with the Yellow International at Berne.

Recent world events have educated the rank and file in spite of the National Office and they have become aware of the shortcomings enumerated above. The result is that the reactionaries in office were repudiated in the last National Executive Committee election.

This menace to their position brought out their true colors. A genuine black streaked with yellow. They proceeded to expel those districts from which the adverse vote came so that they would not have to count themselves out of office. They sealed up (?) the vote and will count it at their leisure. Certainly, they will make sure that they do not count themselves out. It is well that they don't have any firing squad at their command or the whole Michigan movement would be shot. The foreign federations that have been suspended might get off with imprisonment. Expulsion will likely follow. They are mostly foreigners and "what we want is an American organization". Some idea, for men occupying the prominent positions that Stedman and Germer do, to hold. It is a tribute to their internationalism which will not be forgotten. We congratulate them upon their maintaining control at the expense of wrecking the organization. They have expelled or suspended nearly forty thousand members and will expel that many more in order to remain in the saddle of power. Already they have gained the admiration and praise of editors of capitalist papers by their act of getting rid of the Bolsheviki in the Socialist Party of America.

We are convinced by this act of the agent-provocateurs and handmaidens of capitalism within our ranks that we have reached the parting of the ways. The split in America has come. The time has arrived for the organization of a SOCIALIST Party. The middle course is intolerable and untenable. The hour has come, line up! On which side are you?

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION

The following votes for the N. E. C. election were tabulated by the Left Wing committee. It contains all States in District No. 3 except Illinois. These votes show plainer than any words why Michigan was expelled:

District No. 3—

	Iowa	Mo.	Mich.	Minn.	Wis.	Total
Dennis E. Batt	24	60	3130	502	429	*4145
J. O. Bentall	20	35	50	198	52	355
Victor L. Berger	113	147	274	146	1391	2071
Barney Berlyn	2	8	8	16	16	50
C. Henry Bloom	16	3	29	5	16	69
John M. Collins	25	43	10	11	25	116
Clarence A. Diehl	6	8	3	13	30
Daniel Elbaum	4	260	2	56	322
Carl Haessler	11	15	18	11	516	571
John Keracher	16	68	3123	520	348	*4075
Dr. S. A. Koppnagle	8	17	22	6	64	117
Wm. F. Kruse	26	48	70	32	165	341
Wm. Bross Lloyd	40	99	2862	517	555	†4075
Mary E. Marcy	9	20	234	53	53	369
Kate R. O'Hare	133	123	311	190	433	1190
Edgar Owens	46	5	3	2	9	65
George J. Peck	49	5	5	7	19	85
Karl F. M. Sandberg	6	15	20	14	33	88
Seymour Stedman	77	142	213	134	1192	1758
Maurice Sugar	2	5	320	4	15	346
Oliver C. Wilson	22	19	11	54	21	127
John M. Work	68	100	39	92	923	1221

*Expelled.

†Nearly 3,000 votes thrown out.

Music Hath Charms To Soothe the Savage Breast

In the "Physical Culture" magazine for June, Charles D. Isaacson tells us that our masters have sorely neglected our education in Art. Were it not for the worker's ignorance of music there would be no "Bolshevism." The starved soul of the dock-walloper yearns for expression, hence social unrest, strikes, riots, but worst of all, an increasing leaning toward Socialism. Lacking the spiritual peace that music brings, we turn to radicalism in all its horrible manifestations. Our untamed passions lead us to "bombs, poison, knives, revolution and the red flag."

Our masters have erred. Could "statesmen" but realize the folly of force, when aesthetic mesmerism is to be had for the asking, there would undoubtedly be a happier and more peaceful working class. The flute is mightier than the copper's club. Let loose a platoon of fiddlers in the place of machine gunners against the "Reds." In a moment's time the most savage among them would be reduced to impotent tears.

"I could take any one of them and give them an hour of spiritual music and have less trouble."

You laugh? You are wrong, the thing can be done. Why, Charley himself has softened a hardened old millionaire's heart to mush with the magic of his violin.

Imagine the possibilities contained in the suggestion! Should the plan be put into operation, the resulting shortage of talent might force the government to release the interned German musicians! Picture Dr. Karl Muck, under the folds of the starry banner, leading an orchestral assault on the entrenched forces of labor!

Mr. Isaacson claims that music in the factories has not only soothed the wage worker's troubled soul, but has in consequence made him more cheerful and satisfied with "his" job. He has become more docile and his PRODUCTION is greater. He quotes employers and foremen to prove his point. He shows how Mr. Doughbags becomes "Art's" best friend when the matter is explained to him as a business, dollar-coining proposition. From astonishment at the price of a violin, the millionaire becomes eventually an opera enthusiast and a supporter of the symphony orchestra. Wondrous are the powers of Art!

Think of making garbage cans (or soap, if you prefer) to the sweet strains of "Madam Butterfly". Reminds one of the planting of rice in the Philippines. The natives perform their backbreaking, monotonous task to the doubtful music of the village orchestra. When a little more speed is desired just quicken the time a bit.

Much as we must admire and value the accelerating powers of music, we should not overlook its "uplifting" qualities.

"But music is naturally moral. It has an uplifting effect on all who learn to know it intimately. * * * the harder the man, the more of a real man he is, the more responsive he is to emotions. Why, those fellows (referring to army mule drivers) wouldn't swear in front of a woman. One man positively blushed because the soprano heard him say 'hell'."

Gosh all hemlock! That is moral uplift with a

vengeance. Think of a mule skinner afraid to swear. And what a lesson it gives us all. How much more sublime our lives, could we but be cured of saying "hell" in the presence of women. If something could be done to refine and "uplift" the Socialist movement, what a step that would be toward the winning of the revolution. There are no two ways about it, Comrades, we must improve our manners. Refine our coarse natures. Embrace Art and satisfy our thirsty souls with music (now that Gompers has failed to bring back our beer) and there will be peace and contentment "now and forever, world without end, Amen." We shall repudiate the revolution. For with the "moral uplift" assured what need will there be for a change?

"The poet says that angels play on harps, but there is not a doubt in the world that the harp can bring nearer to the angels those who listen."

One wonders if Isaacson's angels are the kind that have wings, or are they the more modern ones who only need wish themselves from place to place in the golden city above the skies?

"At the enlisting stations, when music was introduced the results were infinitely multiplied."

Possibly some of those whose "bones" were "enfevered" by the patriotic music of the enlisting station can tell us about the angels now.

Heading the article is a cut which shows "A beautiful interpretation in bas-relief of the Soul of Music by the well-known sculptor, etc., etc." After hearing so much about the allegorical lady it is a disappointment to find that her eyes are closed. The workers are already quite blind enough. We can hardly set up a blind goddess, even if it be the "Soul of Music", for them to worship. Still, it conforms with Charley's theory. He says that music puts the slaves to sleep so that the capitalist can rob them "and have less trouble".

BREIT.

Kicking According to Plan

The unfortunate position of the working class in seeking ways of social betterment, in these days of war's aftermath, is vividly brought to mind when one remembers the old fable of the wild asses and the lions.

It appears that a certain herd of wild asses in the wilderness was troubled with periodic visits from certain of the "king of beasts" whose nocturnal raids resulted in a sad loss in the ranks of wild donkeydom. A congress of the long-eared denizens of the wilderness was held, and it was decided that upon the alarm of Leo's next visit being given, each and every donkey immediately would begin to kick; kick and continue to kick until the lions were beaten off. The plan worked well, not a single one of the herd was chewed up or carried away by their carnivorous enemies when the next raid occurred. But, alas! for long-eared strategy! It was found that the herd had a greater casualty list to offer than after any previous affair. For in "kicking," be it noted, the wild asses had almost kicked each other's heads off.

They had used their heels indiscriminately; they had kicked without method—a kind of asinine Donnybrook Fair, so to speak, which faithfully carried out Paddy's plan of battle which he invariably used at that historic carnival; "every time you see a head—hit it!" But

like other asses, they learned by experience. One old patriarchal member of the herd saw the weak point in their plan of defense and proclaimed its speedy correction. "When our enemies attack again, let us form into a circle, heads inside, and with our heels to the enemy, and we will all kick together at the lions only!" This was done, and hey, presto!—the lions were beaten off without taking toll of our long-eared friends, nor was there any damage done by any "cross-fire" from friendly hoofs.

Now, amidst the braying of triumph which one can imagine blending with the triumphant shouts of asses of recent day, whose "victory" marked but the beginning of another conflict, let us consider how far the fable is instructive to us today. In the first place, we must admit that the long-eared variety had one great advantage over our present-day members of the working class. They at least knew who the enemy was!

They were under no illusions about it being some all-powerful god or gods taking vengeance because of the act of some prehistoric member of the ass tribe.

They did not lay their misfortune to the working out of any economic law such as "supply and demand" or the "iron law of wages." They did not lay the blame of their losses on other tribes of "Jerusalem ponies" but knew all along that from the lions, and the lions only, came the attacks which cost them so much.

This was considerably to their advantage, as we shall see later.

But the wretched members of the working class, in present-day capitalistic society!—what a spectacle does it present!

After years of bloody warfare it emerges from the red carnage after losing millions of its sons in the slaughter, only to find that the world of toil, suffering and poverty again stares it in the face. Once more we hear of vast "labor troubles"—strikes, riots, rumblings of revolution. The chasm between the two great classes in society has not been leveled by the war, but is more pronounced than ever—what Alpine peaks of wealth and luxury on the one hand—what deserts of unpaid labor and human suffering on the other!

And the "kicking" that is going on! Some think that the retailers are to blame, and accordingly form "consumers' leagues" and pledge themselves not to buy meat, or butter and eggs, or milk, as the case may be.

Another group, with equally hoary ideas, lays the blame on "unorganized labor." "Capital and Labor are brothers," they say. So they join an A. F. of L. union and develop a first-rate scab hatred which expresses itself in bricks and clubs when a strike is called.

Some uninformed workers, not realizing that a socialist movement must be based on the class struggle, think that all will be well if certain reforms were adopted—to take the rough edge off, as it were. They have visions of eight-hour laws, minimum wage, unemployment insurance, limitation of profits, and such like snares that entangle so many of the working class.

Then we have the type of worker represented by the I. W. W., who, ostrich like, refuses to see the importance and function of the capitalist state. He gets his head broken good and plenty in the fracas.

Gradually, however, all are learning the great lessons as outlined for us by Marx and Engels. The

object to kick at is the capitalist system, which presupposes class ownership of the means of life with its accompanying exploitation of the useful workers and their consequent degradation and misery.

The way to kick is by shearing the capitalist class of governmental powers, robbing them of their "slugging committee" the State. This means enlightenment, education, a reading of books, attending lectures, a serious consideration of problems that have unfortunately been left to the capitalist and his henchmen, the preacher, politician, and labor fakir, alone to decide for us.

And the present unhappy condition of the working class is a result of our folly in not attending to these matters ourselves. For to the extent that we take part in the proletarian crusade for emancipation intelligently and consciously, to that extent will the day of our delivery from the bondage of wage-slavery approach.

JOHN DAVIS.

Science A La Clergy

When science is served to the public by the clergy it is scarcely recognizable to scientific students. The Rev. Dr. Atkins serves up an indigestible mess for public consumption, extracts from which have been reported in the press. He finds science an aid to faith. He says:

"Modern science in its disclosure of an ascending development of all life, in its revelations of inexhaustible energies, in what it conveys to us of difficulties overcome and the boundless resource of creative power, does not forbid a belief in immortality; it rather helps it."

It is interesting to hear from a preacher that faith needs help from outside sources, as faith is supposed to rest upon an inner consciousness of the existence of a supreme being and to require no other support. Students who follow the matter closely, however, know that faith has to be propped up on all sides these days. This is due to the attacks of science on religious dogma.

But now science is to become the friend of religion instead of its foe. How does Dr. Atkins accomplish this? Simply by giving science a religious twist, by explaining science from a religious, instead of scientific standpoint. Dr. Atkins does not see in science an explanation of the laws of the universe. He sees it only as an adjunct to religion.

To the scientist and the scientific student, however, science is independent and stands on its own foundation of demonstrable fact. Science was not built up to support any pre-existing belief, but to furnish man with knowledge. The only way it can be alleged to support religion is by contorting it until it is no longer science.

For example, Dr. Atkins speaks of an "ascending development of all life." This statement is seriously faulty as a result of trying to make the law of evolution serve religion. The idea involved is that there is a plan which the Creator is working out through evolution.

But does all life tend to ascend? Positively no. In the organic field the forms which we regard as high

in the scale of evolution are those which have survived and developed, out of countless other forms which have either perished in the struggle for existence or have reached only a low point of development. There is no evidence of an "ascending development" in the case of species of animals which have gone out of existence because they could not adjust themselves to changed conditions of life, nor is there any evidence in the case of species which have branched off from the main stem of organic evolution and remain in existence because they are well adjusted to their surroundings. Neither the results nor the merciless struggle of existence which is part of the process of organic evolution is a support to the idea of a benevolent Creator working out His plan.

As for immortality being evidence by evolution, let us look ahead and see what we are coming to. It is well known that in due course this earth will become cold and lifeless and organic life upon it, including man, will disappear. Finally the globe will collide with some other body and become absorbed or dissolved into nebulous matter. What will happen to this "ascending development of life" then?

Dr. Atkins goes into science not for the sake of

truth, but for the sake of religion, which is clearly shown by his further remarks. He says: "Justice demands immortality," and "Love demands immortality and reason demands it." What he should say is that religion demands it. But he can scarcely look to science to meet this demand, insofar as life is concerned. Science has discovered the persistence of force and the indestructibility of matter, but no other form of immortality. All organic beings die; all organic species, including man, die; worlds come into existence and go out of existence. Matter and force alone remain. Even man-made gods come and go, but matter and force go on forever. Matter and force in one form or another constitute the entire universe, and it is the universe in its entirety which is the only permanent thing, the only immortal thing. Life everlasting has no real existence, except as a pious wish.

But the religionists goes forth, not to seek truth, but to seek excuses for perpetuating his mummery. If anyone wants to know the truths which modern science has discovered he will find them in scientific books; he will not hear them from the pulpit. Science is an aid, not to faith, but to the elimination of faith and the substitution of knowledge. L. B.

The Socialist Forum

Our information desk is covered with enquiries from readers asking us to solve their difficulties and settle their doubts on matters of social interest. The points brought up chiefly relate to economics and arise in the course of study. The Editor has very generously handed all the enquiries over to me, as he thinks plenty of work is good for a willing horse. A page will therefore be devoted to answer questions of general interest. Readers are invited to send in their "problems" and queries and they will be dealt with to the best of my ability and as far as space will allow. All enquiries must bear the sender's name and address and be written on one side of the paper only.

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM.

A correspondent from Boston wants to know if there is any difference between Socialism and Communism. Socialism properly defined has the same meaning as Communism. The abolition of the wages system and its replacement by a system wherein the producers possess and operate the tools and materials of wealth making in common, and enjoy the products according to their needs. The founders of modern Socialism preferred the term Communism in the early years of the 19th century because those who called themselves Socialists then were not scientific but used the name to cover every kind of a new ideal they could invent. Communism has also suffered as a name of the new society by being used by anarchists as the title of their impossible utopia. Socialism today is misunderstood to mean many things opposed to Socialism, from government ownership to profit sharing. Any name can be misrepresented and therefore no good object could be served by giving up the title of Socialism for that of Communism. It is not the name that is important but what we really mean by the terms we use.

CAN A CAPITALIST BE A SOCIALIST?

A genial subscriber has been attending I. W. W. and similar meetings and often hears that only a worker can be a Socialist or a member of a Socialist organization. She wants to know if this is true. A Socialist is

one who understands the nature of capitalist exploitation and the meaning of Socialism and who works consciously for the overthrow of capitalism and the institution of Socialism. Obviously Socialists make appeal to the working class alone as their interests will be served by the coming change. Capitalists profit by this system and hence cannot be expected to consciously help their own funeral. To take up the attitude however that no member of the capitalist class can take up the same position as a worker and be a valuable ally of the Socialist movement is wrong. If such ideas were held in the past we would have lost the services of such men as Marx, Engels, Lafargue, Lenin and many others who did not strictly belong to the wage earning class. Nevertheless as capitalists in general remain enemies of Socialism; special care should be taken that any non-workers in our ranks keep unswervingly to the working class position.

WHAT IS REFORM?

"W. J. T." asks whether a reform is always useless to the working class. He wants a definition of a reform and claims that to refuse to advocate reforms is to neglect the immediate interests of labor.

Here we have three questions which while commonplace are timely. A reform is a change in the detailed workings of the present social system. In general use the word reform has come to mean a legislative act which provides for a better way to operate this system and therefore make it last longer. The distinction between social reform and social revolution is fundamental. Social revolution provides for a new basis of social relations, common possession instead of private ownership of social necessities. Reform is the policy of effecting petty alterations in the robbing methods of capitalists whilst assuring the actual robbery of the producers.

Reforms enacted under the present system must be granted by our enemies—the capitalists, for they are the class in power and will always remain so while the system lasts. To expect our opponents in the class

fight to benefit us is to expect figs from thistles. Socialists therefore do not advocate reforms. They do not lead the workers to look for help from their masters. They do not seek election to get reforms. They do not want the support of any worker unless that worker wants socialism. To argue that we are against all improvements is idiotic. We hold the only improvement worth while and lasting is socialism. We live in a system which makes all real reform impossible. We teach socialism, and when we recruit the workers in steadily increasing numbers for the revolutionary fight, our masters will be the biggest social reformers ever known. They will try to decoy the toilers from their socialist journey. Socialists however will take all they can get in the struggle without deviating from their destination—Socialism.

STRIKES AND PRICES.

A student living in the desolation called Toledo, Ohio, overheard some local workers say that strikes defeat their object because as soon as a rise in wages is granted the manufacturers call up the Chamber of Commerce and they arrange for a rise in prices sufficient to cover the increase in wages. If this is a sample of Toledo economics there is a "long felt want" of study classes and teachers there. Prices are not fixed by Chambers of Commerce or any other body of capitalists. If the capitalists can regulate prices as they like they would grant the demands of all strikers and automatically raise prices. Prices are regulated by the relations between supply and demand and are based upon the cost of production, measured by the time necessary to produce the articles under modern conditions. Even if the capitalists could raise prices at their own sweet will, it would not affect the workers in many cases as the chief consumers are capitalists, not workers. If the Overland manufacturers granted a rise in wages and then increased the price of their cars the price boost would not interest their employees. The workers in general do not buy Overlands. Keeping however to the question it must be said that the capitalists can and do get the highest prices the market will bear. Under favorable conditions the merchants will use every excuse to demand a rise in prices but unless the market conditions allow, the attempts to seize an opportunity to get higher prices will fail. Higher prices may reduce demand or attract further capital into the industry with the consequent increase of supply and falling of prices to their former levels. The world wide general rise in prices since 1914 was due to the war cutting down supplies for the world markets. We are still enduring the results of disorganized industry. At bottom however the universal rise in prices for many years is due to the falling value of gold compared with all other articles. The fall in value of gold is caused largely by improvements in the gold industry.

THE MYSTERY OF MONEY.

The last question brings us to another from the Holy City of Philadelphia. A comrade in the study class on Marx's Capital says several members have been mystified by the fact that whilst the value of gold falls and prices of commodities rise, a five dollar gold piece still contains the same amount of gold. He says "a twenty dollar gold piece contains one ounce of gold, which is worth five dollars this year. The same piece will be worth twenty dollars next year containing the same amount of gold although the ounce be worth ten dollars." He further states that gold is not a commodity.

Taking the last point first, our correspondent is wrong. The reason that gold functions as money is that it is a commodity. Like all other commodities its value rises and falls directly with the changes in the socially necessary labor time embodied in it. If we wish to appreciate the falling value of gold we must compare it with other commodities, as only at the point of exchange can we see the changes in the magnitude of value. It takes less time to produce an ounce of gold than it did twenty years ago and so we must give more gold for all other articles. An ounce of gold costs nearly twenty dollars and this price is practically unchanging. What do we mean by the price of gold being twenty dollars. It is just like saying one ounce of gold is worth an ounce of gold. Price is the money name of a commodity and all commodities express their value in the money commodity—gold. But we must reverse the equation to express the value of gold which then expresses its value in all other articles.

We say one ounce of gold is worth twenty dollars because one ounce can be coined into a twenty dollar gold piece (actually a twenty dollar gold piece contains a little more than an ounce but we assume a round figure to simplify the argument). The twenty dollar mark on a gold piece is not a guarantee of its value but a government guarantee of its weight and fineness. Our correspondent cannot understand why it is that during all the reduction of the value of an ounce of gold through mining and assaying improvements—a twenty dollar gold piece still contains the same amount of gold. A twenty dollar gold piece will always be equal to a twenty dollar gold piece. The point is made clear by looking at the functions of the money commodity.

Gold is a commodity which may be used for an artistic or commercial purpose. Gold coins are often melted down by jewelers when gold bullion is scarce. Gold acts as a medium of exchange owing to its convenience as a commodity containing much labor in a small compass. Money acts as a measure of value because it converts the values of all commodities into quantities of gold—into prices. As a measure of value gold (money) measures all commodities considered as values. As a standard of price, money measures quantities of gold by a unit quantity of gold. Our questioner has confused the two functions of money as measure of value and standard of price. It is not true that an ounce of gold at one time is priced at five dollars and another time at ten dollars.

The fact that the value of gold changes does not change the relations between aliquot parts of the precious metal. The changing value of gold can only be seen by the gold value of other commodities. If a table and an ounce of gold embody ten hours labor, the table will be priced at one ounce of gold—that is about twenty dollars. If by a mining improvement it only takes five hours labor to produce an ounce of gold but still takes ten hours to make the table the price of the table will now be 2 ounces of gold or about forty dollars. In other words two twenty dollar gold pieces will contain the same value as one did previously but they will still be called twenty dollar gold pieces as you cannot express the value of a commodity in the thing itself. An ounce of gold will still coin into a twenty dollar gold piece but twenty dollars will only purchase what ten did before.

International Notes

By John Keracher

Russia The adage that "there is honor among thieves" might be brought up to date if supplemented by a Socialist dictum—"provided their economic interests are in harmony." This economic interest, while often of a temporary nature, is the bond of union between those who would otherwise be bitter rivals.

Admiral Kolchak, the allies' new "Man-Friday" in Russia, is now looked to as the prospective servant of Western Democracy. He is an imperialist and a monarchist of the worst type, who has lately taken to lispng democratic phrases in a clumsy un-Wilson-like manner, and no doubt at heart despises the circumstances that compel him to do so. Yet he is just as "honest" as his friends at Paris.

The League-of-Democratic-Nations proposition having been written into the peace terms, it is necessary for the nations responsible to insist upon a "democratic" form, at least, of government for those countries that are allowed, or forced, to come inside the league. The recognition of the Kolchak government necessarily entails its adoption as a junior member of the new family of nations. But the inauguration ceremony requires a renouncement of imperialistic designs, vows of fidelity and a pledge to keep the peace within.

Russia's new saviour little relishes this curtailment of his Napoleon-like program. His ambitious mind had conceived not only victory over the Bolsheviki, but the conquest of all the former territories of the Russian empire and the reunion once more of a mighty world power. Such has been the scheme of the "noble" admiral of the former Czar's navy, and it has only been after a full realization of his hopeless position, without the economic aid of the industrial powers, that he has submitted to the allies' demands upon him, in exchange for the means of carrying on the war.

These demands were that upon recognition by the allies, his government would "join the League of Nations", and recognize the independence of the former Russian provinces, Finland and Poland, and the semi-independent autonomy of Lithuania, Esthonia, Latvia, Caucasia and the Trans-Caspian district.

This last mentioned district contains the great oil fields; therefore it must be "independent", small and weak, so that some "disinterested" great power will act as a guardian over it. The Baltic states already mentioned are necessary as buffer states to shut off Russia from the sea as much as possible.

This program of "helping Russia" would be a very smooth running proposition if it were not for the fact that the Bolshevik statesmen are wise to all such moves. They have the facilities and means of conveying this intelligence to the great masses of the people, so that they may understand what is going on, and why.

Extensive propaganda through the American press has been carried on lately, to impress the people of this country with the idea that the Bolshevik power is about to topple over. Petrograd is about to fall, Moscow and the rest of Russia is in the grip of a reign of "red terror", which the people would be glad to get

rid of and so forth. This has been the soothing syrup with which the American population is lulled to sleep while this slick piece of imperialism is pulled off.

Very little real news has been coming out of Russia lately. It appears that the Bolsheviki have been more than holding their own with the Kolchak army on the east, steadily advancing through Bessarabia on the south, and getting closer all the time to a junction with Hungary.

Canada For several weeks Canada has been in the throes of an industrial revolt; so extensive and deep-rooted in its nature that the employing classes are filled with fear and anger. They are combatting with might and main what they regard as an attempt at Social Revolution. The nightmare of the capitalist class, the specter that haunts them continuously, is the possibility of waking up some fine morning and find the revolution a reality.

It is this fear that has aroused the ruling class of Canada, and compelled them to fight back "Bolshevism." The center of this strife is the city of Winnipeg. Thirty thousand workers have tied up the industrial life of the most important city of Western Canada. Nor is it confined to Winnipeg. The strike has spread with alarming rapidity to Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver.

A peculiarity of this strike is its comparatively peaceful nature, so different from the average strike in that respect. This peacefulness is largely due to the able leadership of the Socialists, who are playing a leading part in this affair. Some time ago, during the period of the war, when bone-headed patriotism dominated and dictated social policies, many blind thrusts were made at working class organizations. Tyrannical and oppressive measures usually react on those who have recourse to them, and this seems to have been the case in Canada.

When the Socialist press was abolished and a ban laid on the standard Socialist literature, such as still freely circulates in this country, those engaged in such channels of Socialist activity had to turn their desire and capacity for action into other fields. The Canadian labor movement, to which many of these Socialists had belonged for years, then had the benefit of their full activities. The result was a more vigorous struggle on the part of organized labor, and finally a new form of organization, the "One Big Union." Agents provocateurs, the first to get busy in such crises, have failed completely to stir up trouble and create chaos in the ranks of the workers. In negotiating with the representatives of the men, and the submitting of evidence before the Industrial Relations Commission, the employers have been compelled to admit that they were up against superior minds.

The Canadian parliament, in a groping manner, has tried to assert itself, with little results. Minister of Labor Robertson has made frantic appeals to the servants of capitalism in the American labor movement, Samuel Gompers and Company, to stop the spread of radical ideas. The Trades and Labor Coun-

cils, the central bodies of Canadian labor unions, are affiliated with the A. F. of L., and their rapidly dwindling support is one more proof of the hopeless position the A. F. of L. Canadian officialdom occupies. Labor in Canada is not likely to forget the reactionary position which Gompers and his crew are taking in this crisis.

In Winnipeg the "Citizens' Committee of One Thousand" has fought bitterly against the strikers. Without newspaper service, except the "Western Labor News," with the garbage to collect or suffer its stench, the committee was forced to undertake all kinds of menial tasks which usually falls to the lot of the "common people". It has been a bitter experience for the bourgeois councils.

One other feature of the struggle worthy of mention is the attitude of the returned soldiers. The Great War Veterans' Association, the kind of organization which is usually controlled from the top, failed to get its members to go on record condemning the strike. They refused to join the militia and organized a parade of protest to the parliament building instead.

There has been much careless talk of the Winnipeg strike being an attempt at revolution; the workers introducing the soviet state, taking control of the local administration, and similar stories. Writing on this subject, the B. C. Federationist says: "Neither the Seattle nor the Winnipeg strikes were revolutionary upheavals. They were strikes in the one instance for higher wages, and in the latter case for the recognition of the right to collective bargaining. Is that a revolutionary strike? Is the demand for the recognition of the officers of the unions a revolutionary demand? To those with the slightest knowledge of industrial warfare the question answers itself in the negative. A soviet government would not be a passive one. It would not stop the wheels of industry, but would operate them, and the first step of such a government would be to take over and put into operation the machinery of production. If this had been done in Winnipeg, then it would have been correct to say that a soviet government had been proclaimed. The strike in Winnipeg, however, will go down in history as one of the greatest working class protests against the autocracy of the employers in this country. It will be recorded as the most orderly and carefully managed protest that the workers have ever made on this continent, and demonstrates that the workers have a greater degree of intelligence than has the ruling class.

"The first step in any revolution would be towards getting control of the means of coercion, 'the powers behind the state'. No such step has been taken and there has been no attempt to do so."

France While the war was on, the French working class proved to be exceedingly nationalistic, Labor and Parliamentary Socialists alike supporting the government. But since the close of the war a great deal of dissatisfaction with conditions in general has manifested itself in working class circles, which tends to take on aggressive political activities.

There have just been returned to France from Russian waters, French sailors of the Black Sea fleet who revolted against their officers at Odessa. In most of

the revolutionary uprisings that have taken place in Europe the navy seems to have been the starting point.

These rebellious sailors were brought into Brest on the warship "Justice", thrown into the naval prison at Pontanoir. Since then several sympathetic sailors tried to rush the prison and release their comrades, but without success.

Although it is some time since the outbreak at Odessa, the news has been withheld until a Bordeaux paper published it, and was suppressed as a result. One of the Paris papers was threatened with the same fate. It appears that during the advance of the Bolsheviki on the port of Odessa, four French warships, the "Jean Bart" and three others, were engaged in bombarding the soviet forces, when they received a message from the Socialists on shore, asking them not to fire upon their Comrades. As many Socialists were amongst the crews of the ships, they soon rose against their officers and imprisoned them in the cabins. They hoisted the red flag and sailed away. The officers finally came to an understanding with the men, but the ships' crews have been recalled and thrown into prison in the manner described.

These incidents have caused quite a stir, and Socialists in the Chamber of Deputies are demanding explanations. Strikes are beginning to break out in the industrial centers, and much agitation for the demobilization of the troops and the withdrawal of the forces from Russia, is now being carried on. What effect the final signing of the peace treaty will have upon French labor is hard to tell at this time. Very likely the capitalist class will be hard pressed by the French workers, especially if the Reds get control of Germany.

Germany The peace terms accepted within a few hours of the time allowed for the Germans to sign has precipitated another uprising. As we go to press little information is available as to the extent of the struggle. It is quite evident, however, that the Ebert-Schiedemann Government has fallen and the new Chancellor Bauer has taken the responsibility of signing the peace terms, although he characterizes it as a "peace of violence."

Rioting in Hamburg was finally settled in such a manner as to leave the city in control of a council of twelve Communists and Independent Socialists. In Berlin the streets are again barricaded, the government troops clashing with the workers who are reinforced by deserters from Noske's forces.

From Basle comes news that the strike situation is growing more serious all over Germany. Railroad and telegraph troubles are becoming general. Raids on food stores have been reported. Spartacan uprisings have occurred in several cities, where, however, forces of government troops were ready to suppress them. The threatened tie-up of transportation, which might lead to famine in districts dependent on outside sources for their food supply, has caused much alarm.

Von Hindenburg, according to reports, has resigned his command. He states that they might be able to hold their Eastern front but it would be impossible to do so in the West. The Field Marshal is quoted as saying: "A favorable issue to our operations is therefore very doubtful, but as a soldier I must prefer an honorable fall to an ignominious peace." It looks now as though the Moderate Government will neither have the power nor the enthusiasm to crush again the Proletarian Revolution if it gets good headway.

Revolutionary Political Action

The Road to Socialism

(Second Instalment)

This is the second of a series of articles dealing with the various proposed methods of working class activity toward emancipation. Each of the many panaceas offered as substitutes for revolutionary socialism will be examined and discussed in detail. The subject will be dealt with under the following headings:

1. *Why This Discussion?* 2. *The Purpose of Politics.* 3. *Socialist Political Action.* 4. *Education and Political Action.* 5. *Political Action and Its Opponents.* 6. *Political and Economic Action.* 7. *Our Revolutionary Reformers.* 8. *The General Strike.* 9. *Is Industrial Unionism the Better Way?* 10. *The Value of Mass Action.* 11. *The Lessons of Russia.* 12. *Dictatorship and the State.* 13. *The Situation Summed Up.*

THE EDITORS.

Political Action and Its Opponents.

"The state is not an end in itself. It is, however, the greatest means for organizing, disorganizing and reorganizing social relations.

"According to who is directing the machine of the state, it can be an instrument of a profoundest transformations, or a means of organized stagnation.

"Each political party worthy of its name strives to get hold of political powers and thus to make the state serve the interests of the class represented by the party. Social Democracy as the party of the proletariat, naturally strives at political supremacy of the working class."—(Leon Trotzky in *Our Revolution*, page 83.)

We are often told that political action is a waste of time. There are better and quicker ways of getting what we want, according to some workers. Opposition to political action is not a new thing. Anarchists led by Bakunin for many years opposed Socialists on that point. General strikes, mass action in the streets and conspiracy for insurrection were the methods proposed.

Karl Marx, one of the founders of modern Socialism, is recognized by all Socialists as a worthy teacher as much by the Bolsheviki in Russia as the least known student. Let us quote Marx on this matter. Writing to his friend Bolte, a member of the central committee of the International in November, 1871, he says of Bakunin:

"His main dogma was Proudhonism or abstention from political activity.

"This primer for children found some support (and still has a certain hold) in Italy and Spain, where the conditions for a real labor movement have but little developed, and among a few conceited, ambitious, shallow doctrinaires in Romanic Switzerland and Belgium.

"The political movement of the working class has for its natural and ultimate aim the conquest of political power and this requires of course that a previous organization of the working class, arising out of its economic struggles, should have reached a certain maturity."—(The International Socialist Review, March 1908.)

It is quite natural, therefore, to find anti-political views where organization is weak, as among the French Syndicats and in those countries where small and short-lived associations appear and advocate violence as a substitute for good organization. Many of the most forceful opponents of politics showed they

understood the class struggle so little that they became super-patriots just like the reform politicians of the pseudo-Socialist school. Kropotkin, Reclus, Herve, Austin Lewis, Bohn, Grave, Cornelissen, etc., are a few examples of this action.

Direct actionists often say that Marx does not include parliamentary action when he refers to politics. So far is this incorrect that Marx took a special interest in the question of the suffrage. In his letter to Doctor Kugelmann of Jan. 15, 1866, printed in the *Neue Zeit* (see the *Social Democrat*, London, May, 1902) he wrote: "We have been very busy organizing a large meeting in favor of universal suffrage and at this meeting only workingmen spoke. The effect was very great and the 'Times' in two consecutive numbers discussed the question in a leader." Writing again on October the 9th, 1866 (see *Social Democrat*, London, August, 1902), he wrote: "The agitation for universal suffrage here, in which I have had a large share, is growing more and more."

Our critics say that political leaders sell out and always will. While it is true that political leaders have sold out, one must not forget that more economic leaders have betrayed the workers than political ones. From Gompers, Mitchell and Moyer we can come down to a vast number of lesser known men who have sold out. In England and France there are numbers of union leaders who have been given jobs by the governments for their treachery during strikes. Legien, the German trade unionist, was as much a traitor as Scheidemann. In fact, there is a wider incentive and more opportunity to sell out to the capitalists while acting as strike leaders than in any other field. The cause of this betrayal and the remedy for it is the same in both cases. It is not due to the special nature of politics that politicians have sold the workers. The cause of it lies in the ignorance and sheep-like character of the workers who rely upon a leader to shepherd them. He knows they are ignorant and therefore has an easy time taking them into the capitalist fold. The bosses know that the leader and politician carries the votes and support of the workers in his pocket. The remedy for this state of affairs is the education of the workers in a knowledge of their class interests. Then no one dares betray them.

A common objection to political action is the one urged by De Leon at the first convention of the I. W. W. Political action was scorned in these words:

"The situation in America . . . establishes the fact that the 'taking and holding' of the things that labor needs to be free can never depend upon a political party. If anything is clear in the American situation it is this: That if any individual is elected to office upon a revolutionary ballot, that individual is a suspicious character. Whoever is returned elected upon a program of labor emancipation; whoever is allowed to be filtered through by the political inspectors of the capitalist class; that man is a carefully selected tool, a traitor to the working people, selected by the capitalist class." (Report, p. 226.)

This very argument establishes the value of political action. If the capitalists want to keep out revo-

lutionists, parliaments must be instruments of power. Evidently they are afraid of its revolutionary use by Socialists. If, however, it is imagined that capitalists can do what they like, then it is as easy to suppose that they can forbid and prevent the widespread economic organization of the working class—as in Russia for generations and in modern Europe up until seventy years ago. The policy of shutting us out would be an immense danger to them, as they would find. It would fan the flames of opposition and attract the workers to our side in greater numbers. Whilst it may be tried in the first few cases, the repeated election of the same Socialists and additional ones would be a rude awakening to our masters. Even in backward Germany they did not prevent Karl Leibknecht and similar opponents sitting in the Reichstag. The continual refusal by the Czar and the first provisional government in Russia to provide for a democratically elected assembly was due to their hatred and dread of the revolutionary control of it by Socialists, proving that the vote and ballot, though merely instruments of political opinion, can be powerful levers of action if used intelligently by a revolutionary working class. S. J. Rutgers, the ablest exponent of the "mass action" school, says: "It certainly is an advantage that present-day 'democratic' forms enable Socialists to demonstrate effectively the class differences and class antagonisms. Congress can be a valuable platform for Socialist propaganda, as for instance is shown by the activities of Karl Liebknecht, in the Prussian Diet." (International Socialist Review, August, 1916.)

Another "objection" to political action is that the masters will remove the suffrage when the workers become Socialists. We do not deny that the capitalists want to do so. If the vote is a toy or a rattle, however, why would the capitalists want to stop us playing with it? This very argument of the direct actionist shows that he realizes the power of parliament. It is not a plaything for those who understand their class interests. The capitalists cannot conduct their system by disfranchising the increasing number of awakening workers, and if they try they will only arouse greater feeling against them from a larger body of workers. This was demonstrated by Bismarck's manipulation of the franchise in the German Empire.

In America we have the efforts by the mushroom millionaires in power to blatantly meddle with election results. But it is done because they know the abysmal ignorance of the wage workers. With an informed mass of workers this backwoods policy will decrease. Just as the Idaho governor could declare "To hell with the constitution" when he illegally deported and imprisoned men in the great conflict there, so we will continue to have open violations of established procedure while the mass of the workers are asleep. If the workers wake up these methods will recoil on their perpetrators. The general body of capitalists do not wish to drive the workers to the guerilla warfare resorted to when workers lose faith in politics. If some capitalists openly violate democratic forms of government the inevitable physical force policy of the workers in those localities will make the capitalist class defend their institution against the capitalist anarchists. The abolition of the suffrage in western Europe, like the Czar's abolition of the Duma in Russia, would paralyze the system and bury the capitalists with it. It would be the greatest moral force to bring the armed forces over to the side of labor. In

the event of the disfranchisement of the workers, the new circumstances will breed new politics. The best guarantee for sound action then, will be the Socialist knowledge of the class-conscious wage slaves.

"Wherever the workers strike they are brutally clubbed, stabbed and shot by police and soldiers. Whenever they declare a boycott, they may be put in jail. Injunctions prevent them from picketing a struck shop talking to the strikebreakers. The courts seize the funds of the union and turn them over to the capitalists."

So wrote William D. Haywood and Frank Bohn in "Industrial Socialism," and they therefore argued:

"To win the demands made on the industrial field it is absolutely necessary to control the government, as experience shows strikes to have been lost through the interference of courts and militia. The same functions of government, controlled by a class-conscious working class, will be used to inspire confidence and compel the wheels of industry to move in spite of the devices and stumbling blocks of the capitalists."

Haywood and Bohn expected the use of the vote by the Socialist workers to stop the attacks on striking workmen. This is expecting too much even with a number of Socialists in Congress and State Legislatures. The real duty of Socialists in parliaments is to expose the capitalist system and use their opposition against all phases of capitalism to point the Socialist lesson, until the Socialists control the political powers in their entirety.

Louis Fraina says (Revolutionary Socialism):

"It is not through ownership of industry alone that the capitalist maintains his rule; the simple fact of ownership is itself maintained by a large number of means, a large number of issues, social, political, international,—all of which are centralized in State Capitalism. The proletariat must interest itself in all these issues, engage in the parliamentary struggle through which Capitalist Society as a whole stands forth naked and unashamed."

"Socialists," says Engels, "have transformed the ballot from a means of juggling, which it has been heretofore, into an instrument of emancipation."

"It gave us in election campaigns an unequalled opportunity to come in contact with the masses where they still stood aloof from us, and to force all parties to defend their views and actions before all the people against our attacks; and it also opened to our representatives in parliament, a forum from which they could talk to their opponents in parliament as well as to the masses outside with an entirely different tone of authority and freedom from what they could use in the press and in meetings. What good did the anti-Socialist law do the government and the bourgeois so long as the election campaigns and the Socialist speeches in parliament were continually nullifying it?"

"Moreover, with this successful use of the ballot, a wholly new method of proletarian warfare had gone into effect, which was rapidly extended. It was found that the political institutions by means of which the supremacy of the bourgeois is organized affords further landholds by which the working class can attack these very institutions.

"The irony of history turns everything upside down. We, the 'revolutionists', the 'revolters', prosper far better by lawful measures than by unlawful measures and violence. The law and order parties, as they call

themselves, go to ruin under the legal conditions which they themselves have established. They cry out in despair with Odillon Barrot, 'lawfulness is killing us,' while we under this lawfulness are getting firm muscles and rosy cheeks and are the picture of eternal life. And if we do not so completely lose our wits as to let ourselves be drawn into a street fight just to please them, then there remains nothing else for them to do finally except to break down this lawfulness themselves, which has proved so disadvantageous to them." (Introduction to Marx's *Class Struggles in France*, 1895.)

Anton Pannekoek, the best known writer on mass action, writing in the *New Review* (July, 1913), says:

"In all capitalist countries the political power is chiefly in the hands of parliaments. In them the parliamentary majority can, if not entirely, to a large degree, rule the state and control legislation. Every political struggle between the classes must become a parliamentary struggle. In those countries the working classes must also be constituted as a political party, force its way into parliament by participation in elections, and take part in the parliamentary struggles."

The answer to those who say that politics is a waste of time is contained in Pannekoek's further remarks showing that the work of education and organization will be just as valuable and essential for any extra parliamentary action.

"If universal suffrage is abolished and the Socialist deputies vanish from parliament, the result of the earlier work is not lost thereby. The real result is the Socialist thought of the popular masses, and that does not disappear. The basis of our strength, the real power of the proletariat, is not affected, but must now exert its activity in new ways, according to new methods.

"The value of parliamentarism does not lie in the fact that it is a means of winning political power peaceably and without further revolutionary struggles, but in the fact that it has proved itself to be the most advantageous means for developing and increasing the power of the proletariat."

Political and Economic Action.

Political is distinguished from economic action not merely by the ground on which we fight, but also by the objects of our struggle. Marx makes the distinction in the Bolte letter above quoted as follows: "For instance, the attempts to force from individual capitalists a reduction of the labor time in some individual factory or in some line of occupation is a purely economic movement; but a movement trying to obtain an eight-hour law, or something similar, is a political movement."

Economic action is action taken on the field of industry and mostly concerns itself with changes in condition of employment. Political action is action taken through public channels and concerns itself with the institutions and machinery of social control and government. There is a field where the two actions meet, such as in Belgium in the general strike for universal suffrage. The control and use of armed force for maintaining general social power is a part of politics because armies are controlled by those who dominate and hold the reins of government. The use of arms such as that of the anarchists whom Marx criticized for their anti-political agitation, is called non-political because the workers do not meet the capitalists as a class, but in petty local groups and without affecting the class as a whole. They wish to

ignore the state, believing that it is a mere shadow reflecting economic power. They do not understand that we have to wrest control of the state from the masters.

Economic or industrial action is not able alone to seize and hold the powers of government. It operates in local, sectional and national strikes to force some concessions. Against the armed forces of capitalist government economic action finds itself impotent for lasting success. A further weakness of economic action is the material with which it is forced to fight. A strike calls out men for a simple plan of action, to win some advance in their conditions. Socialist and non-Socialist, enlightened or ignorant, they are compelled to prosecute the struggle together. When a crisis comes and the whole system is threatened with paralysis, the great body of workers are thrown into the struggle. They are not mentally prepared for it and any permanent social change is beyond their capacity. They are forced to rely upon leaders for good or ill. The capitalists play upon the ignorance of the mass and try to seduce them from our side. The only safeguard is knowledge spread amongst all the workers, and not reserved to a few intellectual leaders. The mass action idealists object to this. Fraina in "Revolutionary Socialism" says:

"The revolution is an act of a minority at first; of the most class-conscious section of the industrial proletariat which, in a test of electoral strength, would be a minority, but which, being a solid, industrially indispensable class, can disperse and defeat all the classes through the annihilation of the fraudulent democracy of the parliamentary system implied in the dictatorship of the proletariat, imposed upon society by means of revolutionary mass action."

This policy involves disaster. In modern capitalist countries we must have the aroused and intelligent interest of the great mass of the workers. This method of conspiracy to emancipate the workers in spite of themselves belongs to the Utopias of the past. All the founders of Socialism have pointed out its dangers and weaknesses. The minority whom Fraina expects to impose dictatorship on society would find their following enticed away by the powerful press and labor leaders paid to do our masters' work. The sluggish ignorance of the majority would make them victims to every scheme. Their little knowledge would prevent agreement on common plans. Their strength could paralyze industry, but the serious work of conducting society in their own interests would be hampered by their mental unpreparedness.

The Communist Manifesto stresses the importance of class, not sectional action: "All previous historical movements were movements of the minority or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interest of the immense majority."

Leon Trotzky affirms the truth of our position in these words:

"It would be folly to deny the necessity for the preparation of the proletariat, only the old Blanquists could stake their hopes in the salutary initiative of an organization of conspirators formed independently of the masses. Only their antipodes, the anarchists could build their system on a spontaneous elemental outburst of the masses whose results nobody can foresee.

"When social democracy speaks of seizing power it thinks of a deliberate action of a revolutionary class." (Our Revolution, Page 125.)

—John o' London.

Michigan State Emergency Convention

The expulsion of the Socialist Party of Michigan from the S. P. of A. by the National Executive Committee forced upon the State Executive Committee the necessity of calling immediately a State Emergency Convention. Consequently, on Sunday morning, June 15th, the convention was called to order by the State Secretary, John Keracher, in the House of the Masses, Detroit, Mich.

The large hall was well filled. All the important locals were represented and the majority of the smaller ones had one delegate each. The more remote locals, particularly those of the Upper Peninsula, sent a surprisingly large delegation, mostly Finnish; in fact, the largest representation in years from that part of the state.

With Comrade Albert Renner of Detroit in the chair and Comrade Loren B. Teal of Grand Rapids as secretary, the convention was soon under way and maintained a harmonious but interesting character all through the proceedings.

Both arguments and speeches from the floor by the delegates showed spirit, and determination to seize the occasion this expulsion offered, to hurl into the teeth of the Party Splitters a Red Gauntlet for the Yellow one they had thrown down.

When the Committee on Resolutions reported with several spirited statements of challenge and condemnation of the N. E. C. tyranny, they were endorsed and carried unanimously. These resolutions were brought in by locals throughout the state.

One small group of delegates, representing the Finnish locals, whose only spokesman was their translator secretary, Askeli, seemed to desire to return like wayward sheep to the fold by repudiating the action taken at the Grand Rapids Convention in February. Askeli argued that if the Michigan Comrades would do so, he felt sure that they would be reinstated by the National Executive Committee, and so forth. This argument provoked laughter from the delegates, and a motion was made "that the resolution to that effect, which they introduced, be referred to the National Executive Committee!" The Finnish secretary participated in the discussions throughout the ensuing proceedings until the adjournment on Sunday night.

The chief work of the convention, around which most of the discussions revolved, was the adoption of a call for a national convention at Chicago, Illinois, on September 1st, for the purpose of organizing a new Socialist Party. A draft of the call was submitted to the convention and, as it was taken up clause by clause, much discussion ensued. The chief aspects of the discussion pertained to the question of parliamentarism. Many of the delegates were anxious to see that it did not savor of pure and simple parliamentary action; while others were anxious to see that it did not fall into the other form of reaction by taking the anti-parliamentary position.

Upon the adoption of the call, a motion was made that the Committee on Ways and Means be instructed not to circulate the same until the Left Wing Conference, meeting in New York a week hence, be given an opportunity to act upon the call.

At the close of the convention, The Proletarian Publishing Company, through Delegate Batt, offered to turn over to the party in Michigan "The Proletarian". In the future this paper will be controlled by the State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of Michigan.

Some readers may ask why such action was taken by the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of America against the movement in Michigan. We would say that this division has been brewing for some time and is part of the world-wide split in Socialist ranks. The excuse of violating the Socialist Party Constitution deceives no one. The voting down of the present National Executive Committee by the membership was the signal for action on their part.

The Socialist Party of Michigan has long been different from the Socialist Party of other states. As early as July, 1914, before the outbreak of the European war, the movement of this state adopted at its Lansing Convention, a platform free from reforms, that is, one without any immediate demands. This has sometimes been called by the Comrades the "One-Plank Platform", insofar as it had but the one aim: The Abolition of Capitalism.

No expulsion followed the adoption of this platform, although the National Executive Committee, since it suits their purpose, now claims that the same kind of a program is a violation of Article 2, Section 5 of the Constitution, which reads: "In all my political actions while a member of the Socialist Party, I agree to be guided by the constitution and platform of that party."

At several state conventions since 1914 non-reform platforms have been drafted and adopted. This was well known by the members of the National Executive Committee, some of whom have commented upon the same in the past. No one ever charged that it was a violation of the constitution.

Another excuse for their actions was a proposed change in the State Constitution threatening to expel those who advocate reforms and who join with other bodies which are organized for that purpose.

At the session of the National Executive Committee which expelled the Socialist Party of Michigan, Seymour Stedman argued that according to this proposed amendment members of labor unions could be expelled from the party. He is a bright lawyer, is "Steady", but in his rage against the Michigan movement he did not notice that the amendment expressly states: "Organizations formed for the purpose of advocating legislative reforms." We ourselves had taken care of that part. Unions are not organized for that purpose.

The whole aim of this clause was to get at such habitual constitution-breakers as Stedman, Hilquit, Germer and Company, who flagrantly violate the national constitution whenever it suits their purpose to do so.

The application for membership to the Socialist Party, which also is a part of the constitution, provides a severance from all political organizations. The People's Council was just such a political organization, which Germer, Hilquit and Stedman tied up to in violation of the constitution.

So it was in defense of the national constitution that we adopted this amendment, to give us the means of ridding ourselves of non-Socialists and anti-Socialists who continually use the Socialist Party for their various pet purposes. It was done to keep propaganda clear and clean. Defense of party, the constitution and Socialist principles was our aim.

Pogroms and Socialism

The atrocities of the negro lynchers in the Southern States pale into insignificance in comparison with the horrors of the Jewish pogroms in Poland. Women are tortured, children killed, old men burned alive and babies torn into pieces. Terrible things—they make the blood boil, they call forth the wildest passions and blind the brains of the poor workers who do not realize that pogroms are but one of the bloody expressions of the class struggle. Years ago nationalistic outrages had their causes. Today they also have a purpose. This purpose is to force the workers to forget their class position and rally to the banners of their avowed enemies.

Feudalism had a longer life in Poland than in its neighboring states. Poland was divided into two classes, nobility (shlachta) and the serfs. In no other country were the sufferings of the serfs so great and the power of the nobility over them so unlimited. Custom did not allow the proud "shlachta" to disgrace itself by work. It lived on the labor of the serfs, spending its time in military and other adventures. There was no Polish middle class. Development of industry was cared for by the Jewish tradesmen, who as early as the tenth century began to seek refuge here from religious persecution in Western Europe.

Abnormal life made a deep impression on the wandering Jews. Denied the opportunity to cultivate land and driven from one country to another, they became international tradesmen. As such they were very valuable to the shlachta. They could become managers of the vast dominions of the nobility and do the work, which the serf could not and nobleman did not care to do. Bitter was the life of the Jew; between two fires, the wilfulness of the master on the one hand, and the blind hatred of the oppressed serf on the other, who saw in him the cause of his sufferings. But in general the position of the Jew in Poland was safer than in other places.

Even in the middle ages, when the power of the Holy Church in the Catholic world was supreme, and heretics were burned alive for the glory of God, the Jew was protected by the shlachta.

As the years passed by, the serfs became free and the frivolous shlachta began to worry about their in-

Even in capitalist courts it is the custom to give a hearing and to endeavor to prove intent, but we were not given even the semblance of a trial.

Of course we were not disappointed. What we would naturally expect of a capitalist court we did not expect of the National Executive Committee. It will be remembered by the delegates to the St. Louis Convention that this same "Gang" talked much about an ELASTIC CONSTITUTION, bewailing the strictness of the present constitution and trying to amend it to let them in with the Non-Partisan Political League, and so forth. This "Elastic Constitution" which they had in mind was no doubt intended for stretching towards the Dakotas, but not in the direction of Michigan.

But, after all, what does it matter, about the soundness or unsoundness of their excuse? Their defeat was the real reason.

comes. They turned to industry and found it in control of the Jewish merchant and craftsmen. The Polish nobility proved too weak to wrest the control of industry from the hands of the Jews. The former useful servant of the shlachta was now a dangerous competitor. Knowing no better means, the nobility time and again employed physical violence against their opponents.

The Russian absolutism also became a strong factor in the development of racial antagonisms. Since the third division of Poland in 1795 dreams of freedom engrossed the minds of the Poles. Small revolts occurred in different places, and it often happened that the Jews and Poles forgot their own controversies and united to fight the Tsar. Such was the case during the "November Insurrection" of 1830, which supplied the Tsar with a good pretext for crushing the last Polish liberties. A unified Poland was as dangerous to Russian autocracy as a unified Russia. Propagation of national discord was the best means of diverting the popular wrath from the source of the evils and directing it astray. Money was spent by the Russian government for inciting the Russians against the Poles, organizing massacres of Jews by Poles, setting Tartars and Turks in the Caucasus against the Armenians, and Mongolians in Siberia against small nomadic tribes.

Meanwhile capitalism made steady progress, crushing as it advanced, old forms and customs. Individual Poles and Jews became rich capitalists while the mass of the people filled the ranks of the wage slaves. Where the Polish and Jewish petit bourgeois formerly quarreled among themselves, now large capital established its iron yoke, defiant of national and racial prejudices. Life became unbearable for labor, discontent began to raise its threatening head. In the face of labor unrest it did not take long for the Polish and Jewish capitalists to realize that by provoking the old nationalistic feelings common advantage could be drawn. A common event in Poland the last few years has been strikes by Polish workers demanding expulsion from factories of Jewish workers. On the other hand, the Jews considered it their national duty to scab on all other workers. The capitalists shook hands and congratulated themselves.

There are no tactics too mean or no method too despicable for capitalism—if profits are at stake. When the throne of the bloody Tsar began to tremble under the blows of the rising proletariat in 1905, and he needed money for suppressing the revolt and organizing new pogroms, loans were readily granted by the French bankers, headed by the well-known charitable Jew—Rothschild. The Jewish banker knew, what many workers are still unconscious of, he knew his class position. His profits and the interests of the Tsarist capitalists were nearer to his heart than the sufferings of “his own” people. But neither pogroms nor the support of foreign capital could uphold the Tsar forever. At last the mighty hand of the proletariat put an end to Tsardom and to the horrors of capitalism in Russia.

The world’s exploiters became alarmed. Terrified by the growth of the revolutionary movement, they began to shut themselves off from barbarous Russia. “Buffer states” were formed, one of which is now the “liberated” Poland. Its purpose is to arrest the rapidly spreading revolutionary ideas, and to prevent the union of countries already revolutionized. But four years of war agony have taught the Polish workers a lesson—they themselves were on the verge of revolution. It was clear that Poland was not to save western civilization from Bolshevism, but it was up to the “civilized” world to save Poland. The “civilized” world began to “save,” all that was backward and reactionary was brought to life; “Black Hundreds” and legions now famous for pogroms were organized through the efforts and material support of capitalists of all races and nationalities. As in 1905, Rothschild saved the reaction in Russia; so now many Jewish bankers did their bit to make possible the victory of reaction. It is not the Polish workers who are responsible for what is now going on in Poland; it is the capitalist class which is master there. An idealistic dreamer, Ignace Paderewski, ready to obey its orders, was appointed commander of reactionary forces. A farcical election was attempted, but as the Polish workers refused to elect Paderewski, his few votes were supplemented by foreign bayonets. Next came the renewal of the old Tsaristic policy—this policy kept Tsarism alive for a time, so now the rest of the exploiters hoped to save themselves in the same way. Capitalists, who among themselves have no national or religious controversies, are very eager to make their workers understand that there can be no common interest between the English workers and the Irish, the Japanese and Chinese, the son of the land of the free and the dirty foreigner. Only in Poland, because of the old economic competition, chauvinistic preachings easier misled the ignorant masses, and resulted in the bloody pogroms. The economic causes of the pogroms hardly exist today; no matter how the Jewish question is solved, Polish industry could not be controlled by any one nationality. Capitalism internationalized industry long ago and the imperialistic struggle of the last few years destroyed all that was left in Poland of the petit bourgeois system.

Liberated from the Tsar’s claws, Poland has been transformed into a vassal of the economically supe-

rior, victorious Allied States. Not the Pole or the Jew will control Poland from now on, but a gang of exploiters composed of many nationalities and races. Polish and Jewish capitalists know this. Not for their respective nationalistic interests, but for their common class interest they now foment the fires of racial prejudices. It cannot be estimated yet how much the minds of the Polish workers have been demoralized, and how much they are to blame for the deeds of Paderewski’s legions. No doubt the capitalists have succeeded in sidetracking them.

The grave mistake of the Polish workers was painfully echoed here in this country when the Jewish workers united in a “protest” with their exploiters. “Our mothers and fathers are being murdered,” they claim; “shall we refrain from protesting because the bourgeois joined us?” No! The bourgeois did not join them. It was they who joined the bourgeois. Just one glimpse at the “protest” meetings would convince the most prejudiced observer that the chauvinists and not the Socialists controlled the proceedings. They, the Jewish Socialists, took part in those meetings to “accuse the capitalist of those atrocities,” and they joined in pleading with those capitalists for help. They went there to “expose the ugly nature of the rulers of the world,” and they applauded a declaration that “not all Jews are Bolsheviki,” hence the pogroms are unjust.

“The most prominent of the American politicians, and the richest of the Jews, they came together with the laboring masses to protest.” So speaks the “Forward” (New York, May 22), about these meetings. Is not this triumph of a Socialist paper over “the coming together” of prominent politicians with the laboring masses peculiar? Can you picture to yourself these impressive “coming together” gatherings of workers, supposed to be class-conscious Socialists, applauding the newly discovered labor friends—Charles E. Hughes, Jacob Schiff, Stephen Wise and others? Who are they, these prominent defenders of the poor Jewish people? They are members of the capitalist class, who for the sake of profits and to defend their class interest, massacre the workers at home, and whose sanction and material support is responsible for the pogroms in Poland.

We Socialists feel deeply the pains of the pogrom victims; it is the workers and the poverty-stricken masses who are being murdered. Every such nationalistic outrage is a severe blow to the workers’ solidarity and hampers them in their struggle for emancipation. Only the abolition of the capitalist system can eliminate nationalistic outrages. Pleading to the ruling class will not stop the pogroms, for national antagonism is the last hope of the bourgeois in its final fight with the proletariat. Such pleadings only support that class, giving it a chance to assume a false role as the defender of the poor victims. Workers must act, not plead, act in building up class consciousness and solidarity. They must understand that they belong to a class, not to a nation. The only “coming together” which will emancipate all suffering humanity is the coming together of the WORKERS OF THE WORLD. EARNEST REEN.