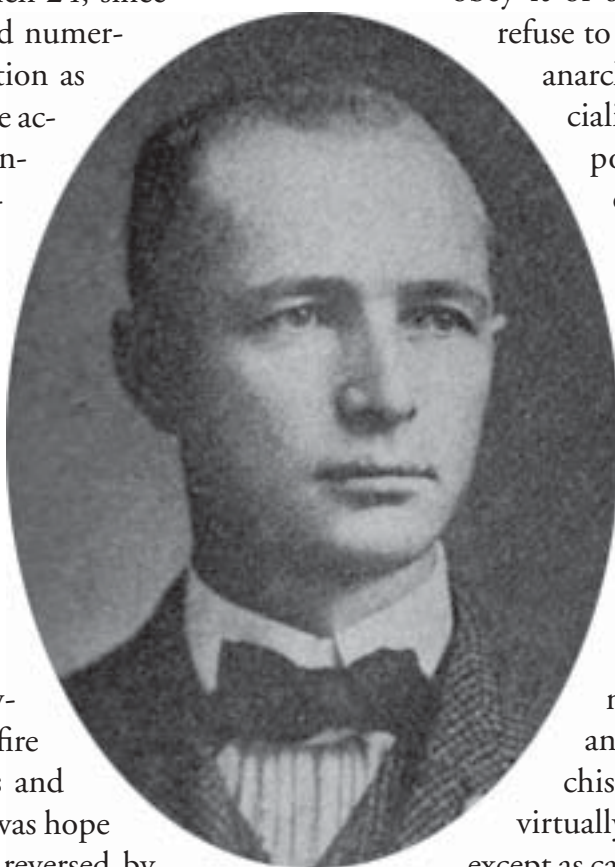

A Statement

by Max S. Hayes †

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Last week Thursday night [May 8, 1919] I submitted my resignation as a member of the Socialist Party to Ward Branch 24, since which time I have received numerous requests for a declaration as to my reasons for taking the action that I did, as well as considerable favorable criticism and some that was unfavorable. My reasons for resigning from the SP may be summarized as follows:

1. I was at variance with the St. Louis declaration on the war, which I announced in a speech on the Public Square shortly after the convention, but deemed it cowardly to withdraw under fire from the capitalistic press and impolitic so long as there was hope that the action might be reversed by another convention or referendum, which were



widely demanded for some time. When Congress, the people's representations, enacts a law we must obey it or suffer the consequences. To refuse to observe the law is to take an anarchistic position. When the Socialists obtain control their opponents will be expected to obey the laws that may be enacted or be punished. Either we uphold democratic principles and majority rule or we don't.

2. I am opposed to the so-called Left Wing program that was foisted upon Local Cleveland largely by an element who were in the party organization less than 3 months and many of whom are not voters and who are admittedly anarchistic in their tactics. They have virtually repudiated political action, except as camouflage and a means of obstruction, and have challenged the right of trade

†- **Max S. Hayes** (1866-1945) was a printer by trade and an active member of the Typographical Union. Hayes was founder and editor of the *Cleveland Citizen*, 1891. Hayes served as Secretary of Local Cleveland SLP in 1890s and was on the Board of Appeals during the bitter 1899 split of the so-called "Kangaroos," actively supporting the anti-DeLeon insurgency. Hayes was an arch opponent of Samuel Gompers in the AFL. In 1900, Hayes was nominated for Vice President of the United States by the Rochester SDP, but he withdrew in favor of Job Harriman, who ran with Eugene V. Debs on a SDP unity ticket. Hayes was a vehement opponent of IWW from its founding in 1905. In 1911 Hayes challenged Gompers for AFL presidency, polling 30 percent of the convention vote in a losing effort. Hayes resigned from the SPA on May 7, 1919. In 1920 he was nominated by the new Labor Party for Vice President of the United States, running on a ticket headed by Parley Parker Christensen. Hayes was active in the Conference for Progressive Political Action, 1922-24 and he continued as editor of the *Cleveland Citizen* until stepping down in 1939. Max S. Hayes died in Cleveland at the age of 79.

unions to control their sphere of influence by declaring it to be their aim to dominate the industrial field through mass action. The Left Wingers have endorsed the physical force methods of the Bolshevik-Spartacan factionalists, who refused to abide by the will of the majority in the Socialist movements in Russia and Germany, who repudiated political action and are now endeavoring to form a dual International.

3. I do not approve of the foolish tactics that were displayed in arranging the May Day celebration, although that episode is a minor one. While Organizer Ruthenberg denies that he promised police officials that red flags would not be carried in the parade, he and his advisors should have used common sense and deferred their flag-flapping just at a time when the loan excitement was at its height, when thousands of soldiers who know little about politics had returned from overseas, and when certain anti-labor elements, in and out of politics, were awaiting the opportunity to display their superpatriotism. The SP officials seem to have deliberately invited trouble that might have been avoided by the use of ordinary tact. Now parades, free assemblage, and free speech are to be “regulated” and popular rights circumscribed, thanks to the smart blustering and bluffing of a few alleged leaders of the proletariat.

I am not an apostate and have not recanted

my principles and ideals. The Socialist Party, and certainly not the Left Wingers, control no patent or copyright on socialism, which philosophy I shall continue to advocate most sincerely. About a million people in this country have registered in the voting booth as desiring the inauguration of socialism. Of that number, 9/10ths are not enrolled members in the SP, and my withdrawal means one more outsider. For the present I pay no dues and have no voice, vote, and responsibility in party affairs.

In answer to a charge that I am leading a secession group, let me say that I carefully refrained from being placed in a position to be suspected or accused of heading a bolt, and but one person besides the writer knew of my intentions last week Thursday night. It is further claimed that I have advocated the formation of a Labor Party in this city. That statement is also untrue. Neither with tongue or pen did I urge the starting of a Labor Party and did not vote on the question when it came before the Typographical Union. Whether I shall join that party (to reply to several queries) will depend upon circumstances — will depend upon whether the Labor Party is formed in good faith and espouses principles that I believe to be right and worth struggling for.

Max S. Hayes.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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