
The Enemy Within.

by Abraham Tuvim

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The charge that the Left Wing is bent on destroying every Socialist institution in the city which does not comply with the Left Wing “requirements” of Socialist institutions was substantiated at a meeting of the “City Committee” on Monday, June 2, 1919.

Previous issues of *The Socialist* have recorded the attempt of the “City Committee” to ride roughshod over the locals in the city especially in Manhattan, through the calling of a city convention packed by Russians and Ukrainians a la Massachusetts and Chicago to adopt the Left Wing Manifesto and Program; break up the locals in New York and form a greater local, thus “putting Local New York out of business,” and proceeding to dictate their policies in spite of locals and majorities. The above program, in essence, was adopted at a city committee meeting several weeks ago, the Left Wing voting *en masse* under instructions of the Left Wing section.

When this was brought to the attention of the NY State Executive Committee it was the consensus of opinion that the City Committee had overstepped its powers and function in calling a city convention, that it had no right to go over the heads of locals, and that its function did not include interference in local affairs.

Under instructions, the Secretary of the SEC notified the City Committee that the convention was illegal and ordered it to cancel the call for delegates.

The notification was received at the City Committee meeting and after the communication was read a motion was made that “a committee of three be chosen to notify the State Executive Committee that it superseded its power in daring to tell the City Committee what its powers are and that the sense of the letter to the SEC be a repudiation of the State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. Then the fun

began.

There were fifteen delegates present — 12 of whom were members of the Left Wing and under instruction from the “LW.”

Dunlavy, who is not a member of the Socialist Party but is recognized because of his “LW” affiliation, started the fireworks. “It’s about time, Comrades, that you showed these dirty politicians where they came off. I am sick of the Tammany bunch who control the Socialist Party, and refuse to compromise with that crowd!”

Aleinikoff, who has been wavering between the Left and the Right rose to object. He was a member of the SEC and wished to object strenuously to being called a thug and a dirty politician.

Lindgren asked to amend Dunlavy’s statement to make Aleinikoff the exception and, apparently satisfied, Aleinikoff sat down.

During the discussion of the question that which was said by Dunlavy was challenged by Aleinikoff.

He said, “After all, Comrades, we really have no right to call a city convention, just as I told you several weeks ago, but you overruled my decision. Why not do the thing in a proper manner instead of fighting the SEC, which leads to nothing but additional disruption. Let us call a joint Central Committee or even a general party meeting and decide the issues there. The constitution and the rules under which we work give us that power.”

These remarks were ruled out of order by the chairman, Pauly of Kings, on the ground that the City Committee had already decided to call a convention, and the discussion was thereby stopped and the motion to repudiate the State Executive Committee carried.

It was then decided that the Convention be held

at the Queens County Labor Lyceum and funds were appropriated to pay the expenses (the funds came from the various subdivisions of New York which were not taken into consideration in the calling of the convention).

The Queens Labor Lyceum was chosen after a communication was read from the Society of the Commonwealth Center refusing their hall to factions within the Party, or illegally held gatherings.

Zucker then reported that the *Call* Association had refused to recognize him on the same grounds.

Lindgren of Kings moved that the City Committee repudiate the *New York Call* as an organ of the Socialist Party and endorse the [*New York*] *Communist* as the official organ of the Socialist Party.

In arguing for the adoption of this motion Lindgren said, "There is no need of making any bones about this matter. *The Call* never was and is not a good Socialist paper. It has always sided with the reactionaries and petty bourgeoisie and it is about time that the "real" Socialists in the Party put an end to it. Kings County has led the way — let us follow their example. **Since Local Kings repudiated *The Call*, one-fourth of the Brooklyn membership and their friends have stopped buying that paper, and I am sure that were the City Committee to take the same action we could get many more people in Queens, Bronx, and Manhattan to stop reading *The Call* and put it out of business.**

Sipos (not a member of the SP) explained that he felt it unnecessary to recognize *The Communist* — that arrangements would be made to have the City Convention do that — but, as for *The Call* — well, the rank and file are not behind *The Call* — they thoroughly dislike it, and we must repudiate it!

Aleinikoff felt called upon to take sides with *The Call*, explaining that he was somewhat connected with it, but was leading the fight in the *Call* Association. He told of the many years of suffering and privation on the part of the rank and file to make *The Call* possible.

"If you take the action that Lindgren proposes, you are playing into the hands of Burleson and the reactionary *Tribune* and *Times*. *The Call* is the only English daily that is waging relentless war on these oppressors of labor, and your action means that labor is to have its one voice, its only expression, killed." He

further explained that labor and the rank and file of the Party were back of *The Call* and told of the \$160,000 that these elements had pledged to *The Call* printing plant in order that *The Call* may continue its fight on the predatory interests.

Dunlavy at this point insisted that the Amalgamated and International Garment Workers and other unions of its kind were not the rank and file, adding "these are reactionary AF of L unions."

The disruptionists won. Calling himself a revolutionary Socialist and a "representative" of the "rank and file," Lindgren said, "You can't put any of this bull over on me. Let me tell you, Aleinikoff, the people who have given money to *The Call* are wise to the trickery and camouflage by which the money was obtained, and at least one-third of those who pledged the money will refuse to pay it. They have been told and have realized that the whole damn thing is a money-making capitalist proposition, and with this realization the 'rank and file' will refuse to support *The Call*."

Of course Aleinikoff again felt called upon to explain — this time the legal workings of *The Call* printing plant, how the entire thing was in the hands of representative Socialist Party members in an association, that Lindgren was wrong — most of the money pledged having already been paid — proving the masses believed in *The Call*.

To people with open minds, willing to discuss and argue the issues involved, Aleinikoff's argument would have been convincing. He literally tore Lindgren's charges to pieces and proved conclusively that Lindgren either knowingly or otherwise was not telling the truth — but this was a gathering of "Left Wingers" bent on a certain mission — *The Call* must be killed and the speeches of abuse and calumny went on unchecked.

Lindgren insisted that even though he stood corrected by Aleinikoff, he still had no faith or trust in either *The Call*, the *Call* printing plant, or those who were at the head of both, and demanded that they be repudiated forthwith.

Dunlavy called *The Call* a reform sheet and the people behind it a bunch of reformers. This culminated in an emphatic demand for repudiation. Brodsky agreed. During the course of his speech, in response to a question, he admitted that the delegates were acting under instructions of the "Left Wing" section and

challenged the questioner with "What are you going to do about it?" He insisted that *The Call* was not a Socialist paper and he would therefore refuse to support it under any circumstances. The only way to carry out the wishes of the rank and file was, according to Brodsky, to repudiate "that labor reform sheet."

Mrs. Jacobs of Kings then proceeded to shed tears over the rank and file, and of her great love for *The Call*. Her closing remark was "*The Call* is not a Socialist paper, it means nothing to the rank and file, and I refuse to read it."

The motion was then modified to leave the matter of recognition of *The Communist* to the City Convention, but that *The Call* be repudiated and the minutes of the City Committee printed in *The Communist*.

An amendment to protest against the *Call* Association's refusal to grant Zucker the floor was offered as a substitute for the original, but the twelve "Left Wingers" obeyed "Left Wing" instructions and the amendment was voted down 12 to 3. The motion was then carried.

Twelve men, under instructions from a counter-revolutionary and disruptive group within the Socialist Party, attempted to break down something which

thousands of hard-working and conscientious Socialists have given years of toil and energy to build. They are endeavoring, with all the venom of the Left Wing, to destroy that which innumerable sacrifices have created. They have embarked on a ruthless and relentless voyage of destruction. They carry their agitation outside of the movement to the general public and the capitalist press. It is a challenge to every true Socialist. This challenge must not go unanswered. The ranks of our movement must be cleansed of all the trickery and disruption which the "Left Wing" has brought in its wake. At the hands of a revolutionary tribunal any attempt to disrupt the organization of the workers would meet with no uncertain action; yet there are individuals who believe in compromising with a group who are making a like attempt in the American movement.

There must be no quarter. The struggle is a bitter one, but the road is clear, and our action must be just as clear and definite. Only in this manner can we retain our power and usefulness as a revolutionary organization. Let us definitely decide that there is no room in the Socialist Party for individuals bent on destroying our Party and its institutions.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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