

The
Socialist Labor Party
and the
Third International



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Meanwhile, each succeeding winter brings up afresh the great question, "what to do with the unemployed"; but while the number of the unemployed keeps swelling from year to year, there is nobody to answer that question; and we can almost calculate the moment when the unemployed losing patience, will take their own fate into their own hands. Surely, at such a moment, the voice ought to be heard of a man [i.e., Karl Marx] whose whole theory is the result of a life-long study of the economic history and condition of England, and whom that study led to the conclusion that, at least in Europe, England is the only country *where the inevitable social revolution might be effected entirely by peaceful and legal means*. He certainly never forgot to add that he hardly expected the English ruling classes to submit, without a "pro-slavery rebellion," to this peaceful and legal revolution.—FREDERICK ENGELS, 1886. (Emphasis by publishers.)

They [the economic organizations] fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, *instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system*.—KARL MARX. (Emphasis by publishers.)

The more important leaders of the proletariat, in its councils, and the press, fall one after another victims of the courts, *and ever more questionable figures step to the front. It partly throws itself upon doctrinaire experiments, "cooperative banking" and "labor exchange" schemes; in other words, it goes into movements, in which it gives up the task of revolutionizing the old world with its own large collective weapons and, on the contrary, seeks to bring about its emancipation behind the back of society, in private ways, within the narrow bounds of its own class conditions, and, consequently, inevitably fails*.—KARL MARX. (Emphasis by publishers.)

INTRODUCTION

In the following lines the Socialist Labor Party of America addresses the revolutionary working class everywhere, and the Russian revolutionary workers in particular.

The Socialist Labor Party is the oldest and the only Marxian organization in the United States. For years it has combatted the petty bourgeois reformers masquerading as Socialists under the designation "Socialist party." With equal emphasis the Socialist Labor Party has combatted the anarcho-syndicalists known since 1908 as the "I.W.W." And it is now combatting that absurd coterie styling itself the "Workers party," otherwise known as the "burlesque bolsheviki." The latter may, in a large measure, be considered the synthetic product of the defunct S.P. and the equally defunct I.W.W. The Workers party is even more opportunistic than was the old S.P. Under the pretence of being different from the S.P. it started its petty bourgeois career to the slogan of "emergency demands" instead of the S.P.'s "immediate demands" which it had previously denounced as "petit bourgeois." Pretending to be different from the I.W.W. it advocated "mass action," instead of the I.W.W.'s "direct action," and urged the "dictatorship of the proletariat," instead of the I.W.W.'s slogan "Strike at the ballot box with an ax." Like a true hybrid it partakes of the character of both the bourgeois S.P. and the anarcho-syndicalist I.W.W.

It was, therefore, quite logical that both these caricatures of working class political parties should have

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had ambitions to become the tail to the political kite of the late Senator La Follette, and while the S.P. was accepted by that astute politician, only to be kicked all around the political arena after the 1924 campaign, the burlesque “Workers party” received La Follette’s well directed kick before that campaign, whereupon, in true burlesque fashion, the said Workers party immediately assailed La Follette for being what he had never denied being, viz.: a radical bourgeois reformer with presidential aspirations.

This silly outfit receives the support of “Moscow,” or rather the Third International. It is the purpose of this pamphlet to show in detail the monstrous situation created by the recognition and consequent support of the “Workers party” by Russia. We have applied the torchlight of Marxian science and revealed the true situation in this country in the light of that science. Events will prove the S.L.P. correct.

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OF AMERICA.

April 1926.

What Is Going on in Moscow?

OPPOSING FACTIONS IN COMMUNIST PARTY OF RUSSIA.

The Communist party of Russia has just got through with its annual convention and, judging by the press reports, it looks as though Mr. Zinovieff had been given the same dose of medicine which he and others administered to Trotzky about a year ago. On the surface of the reports it appears as though the entire controversy between the minority, represented by Zinovieff and others (chiefly the Leningrad delegation), and the majority, represented so far as well known names are concerned by Stalin, Rykoff, Bucharin, etc., had been about how to combat the influence of the Kulak, the wealthy peasant who is anti-Communist and who thwarts the Soviet Government's economic measures and plans by means of passive resistance. There was no difference of opinion between majority and minority as to the need of combating the Kulak; it was the HOW upon which they differed, the minority wanting to apply more drastic methods than have been in vogue since the introduction of the new economic policy (NEP) favored by Lenin when he saw that a new tack was imperatively needed, while the majority held that methods which have a tendency to make for an eventual civil war were not wise and not wanted. This is putting an important question rather briefly, and it is so

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put because when one reads the reports one gets the impression that this difference of opinion hardly warranted the smashing attack made by spokesmen of the majority upon Zinovieff and the Leningrad delegation. It was considered an outrage that he appeared before the convention with a minority report upon the question at issue, thereby creating the impression that the party was split on this matter, and the fact was recalled—and rubbed in—that the Zinovieff-Kameneff group had a year ago demanded the expulsion of Trotsky from the party because he stood for a greater democratization of the Communist party and that today, that same group finding itself a minority, it is asking for the very thing denied to Trotsky, namely, the right to propagate ideas in conflict with the opinion of the majority without impairment of its party status.

The congress, according to one of the latest despatches, has addressed an appeal to the Leningrad membership over the head of the Leningrad delegation, declaring that the latter has not correctly expressed the will of its constituents; and the congress also decided to dismiss the editorial staff of the Leningrad *Pravda*, appointing new men who represent the views of the majority. This looks ill for the Zinovieff-Kameneff group and the ill look was underscored by a remark of Clement Voroshiloff, the new War Commissar, who said, in a speech on Zinovieff and the Leningrad “stronghold,” that “separate Soviet ‘earldoms’ must end.” Putting one thing to another and drawing conclusions from as yet incomplete information, it would seem that the leading men in the Soviet Government are getting tired of

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Zinovieff and want to get rid of him. This is indicated in a summing-up speech by Stalin, who said that Soviet Russia was in better shape than any one had hoped for, and that the danger from “alarms” was not serious. He held that personal motives, and not issues rising from the country’s ills, moved the opposition leaders to start the party row. This makes it still clearer that the Kulak controversy only served as an apropos; the real reason for the conflict went deeper, making it swirl around Zinovieffism, i.e., the policy pursued by the romantic Zinovieff in his capacity of President of the Communist International, the “Comintern,” as it is generally referred to.

THE BLIGHT OF ZINOVIEFFISM.

If this view is correct, vistas of considerable importance to the revolutionary proletariat of the world are opening up. There is then hope that the circus-stunt policy of Zinovieff and his crowds of leaders of the Third International, hitherto pursued, may in course of time be abandoned and the Zinovieff regime eventually be ended. The Communist International never was and is not now an international organization in the true sense of the word. It is a Russian organization with all the drawbacks which the struggle of Russia against a hostile capitalist world imposes. Its “affiliated” organizations were not affiliates; they were satellites called into being by the first swing of the Russian Revolution, and then, when the social revolution tarried elsewhere and did not come to a head, they were kept alive by the pap of subsidy and other artificial means. Under such

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conditions an international congress is not and cannot be a gathering of equals held together by a common revolutionary principle but free to pursue tactics and shape policies in each country in accordance with the lay of the land and the conditions economic and political there prevailing, never losing sight of the historic background of the country and all that it implies. As it was, Moscow simply issued orders and the satellites tried to obey them, often with disastrous results to themselves, the recent history of the Communist movements in Germany, France, Italy, Bulgaria, etc., etc., furnishing eloquent examples of how NOT to conduct matters, England alone remaining comparatively free from the blight.

THE “COMINTERN’S” ROMANTICISM AND ITS 21 POINTS.

During the first years after the war, when Russia was beset on all sides by all kinds of foes, every capitalist country in the world directly or indirectly aiding armed invasions and uprisings, such a course as was then pursued by the Comintern was understandable if not excusable. It became a case of striking back at the enemy in any way possible, including that of making trouble for him in his own respective homeland. But when a period of comparative quiet supervened, when the struggle of the capitalist world against Russia ceased to be an armed struggle, when it became one of diplomacy, of economic pressure, of attempts at isolation, then the course pursued by the Comintern became more and more ridiculous. In the course of the war “points” had become quite fashionable and,

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curiously enough, their number in each case contained multiples of 7. Japan presented China with 21 of them, Woodrow Wilson contented himself with 14; but the Comintern followed the lead of the Japs and made it 21. Seven is supposed to be a magic figure having some occult meaning, but that may have nothing to do with the case. Japan's 21 points to China have fallen by the wayside, the 14 points of Woodrow Wilson have become the joke of the universe, and the 3 times 7 points of the Comintern seem to be honored more in the breach than in the observance. Such is the way of "points"; they don't seem to remain pointed long enough but have a way of blunting.

The 21 points of the Comintern contained among other things such precepts as secret political organization (underground), side by side with open political organization (above ground), the former to control the latter; also a mandatory obligation to carry revolutionary propaganda among the troops, plus a lot of other stuff that aimed at the creation of a military organization of the labor movement with the ultimate end in view to smash up things in general and to tell the enemy all about it beforehand. These points were not framed for particular conditions, which is what made them so, well, so unique. If simultaneously with the Russian Revolution the social revolution had appeared on the world stage, made its bow and then proceeded to clean up, these romanticisms would not have seemed so incongruous, but even then it would have been more to the point to take steps to organize the working class in each country with a view of carrying on production and

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escaping chaos. But, as was quite obvious in America, and as later on it turned out in Europe, the time for social revolution had not yet arrived. The social system known as capitalism had not yet run its course and, although considerably shaken by the war in Europe and showing all kinds of rifts, is still maintaining a precarious existence; in America the situation is entirely different, for the very war that shook the European countries gave added, however temporary, vitality to the capitalist system of this country.

ZINOVIEFFISM TRIES ITS HAND IN AMERICA.

Under such circumstances to talk and to act as though the revolution were imminent, "just around the corner" so to speak, and could be coaxed to turn that corner if properly induced by some kind of artifice, that is not comic, it is criminal, and that is just what the Comintern did under the leadership of the indefatigable Zinovieff. That gentleman had an uncanny capacity to spin out theses by the mile and to coin slogans by the bushel. He talked so much that nobody could remember what he had said before, but while it was easy to forget what he had said it was not so easy to forget him. He was too much in evidence for that. Which brings us to the influence of Zinovieffism upon America and its product, American comesoonism.

At the very outset, Moscow having evidently been told that the Chicago Bummery was the simon-pure, ultra-revolutionary body of America, and none better, attempts were made to line up with that element, and at about the same time the news went through the press

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that a Moscow courier had been caught in one of the Baltic statelets en route to America with instructions in his pocket to break up the S.L.P. and the S.P. of America. The Anarcho-Syndicalist Chicago Bummery proved to be a hollow tooth—as any one knowing America could have told Moscow beforehand—and then came the break-up of the S.P., which seemed quite easy. But it was not easy to break up the S.L.P. The attempt was made in New York but was quickly disposed of, the attempters being promptly taken by the scruff of the neck and yanked out—which ended the breaking-up process for good.

THE TRAGI-COMIC ENDING.

Melodrama of a highly chromatic type followed. There was a Communist party and a Communist Labor party, both underground and both largely officered by agents of the Department of Justice who wrote their blood-curdling pronouncements and in many other ways kept up the fiction that in America, too, the revolution was “just around the corner.” When this had gone to the limit of the ridiculous—it had never been sublime—Moscow ordered *finis* to that chapter and ordered the so-called Workers party to be born. This was supposed to be entirely above ground, and, if it is, one of the 21 points, the one about underground political organization, went by the board, at least in these United States of America.

Zinovieff, by virtue of all these stunts, had been a regular Santa Claus to stool pigeons of the Department of Justice, all kinds of private detective agencies and such like worthies, who got a chance to make an honest

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living by scaring our possessing classes good and plenty and making them feel that they need protection. With the formation of the “open” Workers party that kind of graft probably came to an end, that is, it may have, we are not quite sure about it; but comesoonist tomfoolery continued to flourish. Then came the clownish performances of the Workers party on the political field, the Farmer-Labor party, the Federated Farmer-Labor party, the unsuccessful attempt to clamp itself to the coat-tail of La Follette, etc., all of which is quite fresh in the memory of the reader and requires no reiteration. Since then the chief occupation of the Workers party has been to play the game of majority and minority, in which the minority becomes the majority and vice versa and, incidentally, to reorganize its reorganized organization in the course of which reorganization it is said to have slid down from 65,000 members to less than 10,000 with the slide still on.

HOW NOT TO ORGANIZE A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY.

Experience having proved—if proof were needed—that to start and seek to maintain revolutionary organizations of labor by means of subsidies is not successful at all, it would be a blessing if this sort of thing were to come to an end. Self-respecting men won't join such an organization, not if they are posted as to what such an organization should be. The leadership of such an organization is bound to be more or less crooked, mere place hunters out for the job and for what there is in it, sincerely envied by those “not in it,” which gives rise to no end of internal wrangling. The membership in

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such an organization that is being run from above like a military company necessarily is reduced to the role of a herd of geese, capable of doing a lot of squawking, perhaps, but incapable, unlike Paddy's owl, of doing "a powerful lot of thinking," unfit to hold their own in an argument with an opponent, and reduced to a parrot-like repetition of undigested phrases and slogans pumped into them by main force.

THE HOPE IN THE PRESENT RUSSIAN SITUATION.

If the news from Russia portends that the leaders of the movement there have come to the conclusion that an end must be put to romanticism, that the movement must be conducted on the sane basis of actualities, that each country must be given the standing it must have and the freedom of action it needs within the general common principle that binds all together, then there is hope that an International may be rebuilt in time comprising all the truly revolutionary forces of the working class. Such an International would be a power, the more so if its chief weight were placed on the economic rather than the political field, all political action having for a final aim the economic, industrial, revolutionary organization of the working class. Such an organization can crowd that treacherous so-called Second International to the wall, and it can undermine its supporting pillars, the bourgeois Social Democracies, by winning from them the masses of workers still held in their train; it can prepare the working class of the world for the revolution that is bound to come by organizing its vast potential power in such a manner as to checkmate

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most effectually all attempts at counter-revolution that a dying social order may attempt to essay.

It will take time to accomplish this and it is well that it should. As matters stand today, confidence now thoroughly shaken must be restored, suspicion thoroughly aroused must simmer down. The task ahead of us seems tremendous and has been made to look more formidable by reason of the confusion introduced by the events herein set forth. Above all things, an end must be made of the childish conception that revolutions can be pulled up by the hair whether they want to come or not, regardless of economic development and political constellations, and that a social system can be abolished because some enthusiasts are in a hurry about abolishing it.

FACTS, NOT FICTION, AS REGARDS AMERICA.

In America the field is relatively clear. The so-called Socialist party is defunct and can no longer play the role the Social Democracies of Europe are still able to play to the detriment of the European working class; the so-called Workers party is an alien excrescence, alien in outlook and alien in composition, about which the average American worker knows nothing and cares less, and which would vanish the moment the supporting hand of Moscow were withdrawn. We have here a vast and unpenetrated working class to deal with, one that is not today to any appreciable degree susceptible to revolutionary propaganda. That excludes mass organization of a revolutionary character for some time to come until the development of conditions, coupled

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with the incessant, tireless propaganda, such as the S.L.P. is carrying on, begins to permeate and move that mass. Hysterics and slogans won't do it, plenty of time and still more of hard work will. In regard to America, the first thing Moscow will have to get rid of is illusions; and the first thing to acquire is the soberest of sober outlooks.

To the Third International and to Russian Communists

THE S.L.P. AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

For over eight years the Socialist Labor Party of America has watched carefully and with intense interest and concern the development of events in Russia, first as to the national development and secondly and even more concernedly Russia's relation to the rest of the world, particularly to the Socialist Movement. In relation to the internal events of Russia we have felt neither the wild, almost insane enthusiasm, nor the eventual disappointment of most so-called revolutionists and Socialists. We realize the tremendous, incalculably tremendous, importance of the Russian Revolution in the progress of the proletarian world revolution, but we knew and stated from the first, to the utter disgust of the over-enthusiasts, that there was no hope, not even the remotest, of Russia's stepping directly from a semi-feudal, almost totally undeveloped capitalist stage into a full-fledged Socialist republic. We noted with concern that Russia was not an industrial but economically a peasant state. We knew that the peasant problem would be a difficult one, that it might perhaps in time, as it is actually now doing, rise to face the proletarian revolution and threaten it with serious dangers. We realized in such a country, historic events having

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brought about a premature proletarian revolution, the inevitability of a period of industrial development to bridge over the capitalist historic stage of other nations. So far from feeling discouraged and disappointed when the Soviet Government had to retrace its steps in the New Economic Policy, the partial concession to capitalism, we knew that such a course was inevitable and that the best to be hoped was that the proletariat might retain its power while the “capitalist” industrial stage was consciously labored through as a transition stage. That this transition stage in Russia, in its low status of industrial development, should be long and difficult we knew, and that it could not take any other shape than a dictatorship of the proletariat. We realized all this to be a historic necessity and consequently the Socialist Labor Party has never joined the sentimentalists who have shed tears over the “arbitrary” reign of the Soviet Government and certain inevitable acts of “suppression.” Realizing all this, however, did not say that we did not at all times know that a dictatorship of the proletariat was not a Socialist society, not the ideal and final goal for which Socialists are striving. We knew that the success of the Russian Revolution will do much to hasten the Social Revolution in other countries, yet that the full fruit, the Socialist Cooperative Commonwealth, will not be possible in Russia, first until it has internally completed the industrial revolution and secondly until the rest of the world is about ready for the Socialist revolution. This brings us to the second and even more important reason for our having anxiously followed the events and activities of Soviet Russia.

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At the moment of the Russian Revolution the fate of the world hung in the balance. The Socialist Revolution seemed imminent in a number of European countries. A revolution might conceivably even have swept the world. That the Russian Revolution should for the moment be looked upon as the forerunner of such an event was only natural. But before long it was evident that the revolutionary wave was subsiding and that the reaction had regained the saddle. Whether from that moment onward the Russian attempt to control and direct the revolutionary movement of Europe has been for the better or for the worse we leave for the European revolutionists to decide, whether these call themselves Socialists or Communists. We are able to speak and intend to speak for the United States of America only.

RUSSIA'S INFLUENCE ON THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT—GOOD AND BAD.

From 1900 to the time of the World War and the collapse of the Second International, the reformistic, compromising, log-rolling, anti-Marxian Socialist party had held the public eye in this country. It was boosted by the capitalist press as the only Socialist party and hence it drew into its folds the most of the so-called Socialistic element of this country. It contained a horrible conglomeration of all kinds of notions, from "atheist socialists" to "Christian socialists," from ultra-politicals to avowed anarchists. Its crazy-quilt propaganda advocating all sorts of ideas without any sound economic basis was demoralizing in the extreme. De Leon tersely put it: "The capital crime of the S.P. is that it is gouging

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out the brains of the young and enthusiastic men and women of this country, who become attracted toward the Socialist Movement.” The jumbling and softening of brains it did efficiently and to the ultimate result of this we shall return later.

The War and the collapse of the Second International weakened the Socialist party. The Russian Revolution split it in two, leaving less than a half, and a rotten half at that, to carry on in the name of the S.P. The hammering from Russia by Lenin in particular on reform “socialists” and social patriots did a good deal of the rest. The S.P. lost all influence and to save itself from demonstrating its total failure it hid in 1924 in the skirts of La Follette. For a quarter of a century the S.L.P. had hammered at the S.P., showing up its corruption and treason to Socialism. The structure was weakened when the catastrophe came. For what aid the Russian Bolshevik party and the Third International gave us in kicking the nuisance out of the way we have ever been thankful; but with that also ends all the acknowledgment we can give to the Russian revolutionary groups for aid and comfort given to the revolutionary movement of America. Whatever else attention has been given to this side of the Atlantic (or the Pacific) we are sorry to have to state frankly has done infinitely more harm than good. Without knowledge, without investigation, without understanding of American conditions, of its working class, of its Socialist movement, the Communist International and Russian leaders in general have proceeded to judge the situation here and to aid or direct

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revolutionary currents. We have bided our time in speaking. We have given ample time for matters to get moving fairly smoothly in Russia. But what we have to say now had to be said some time and the longer we delay in speaking out the greater will be the harm done to OUR movement.

THIRD INTERNATIONAL'S FIRST BLUNDER.

When the Russian Revolution had gotten under way the first result as far as America was concerned was that a mass of dilettante revolutionists and revolutionary adventurers, most of them looking for salable “copy,” rushed into Russia. Most of these were simply chattering magpies, chockful of “information” no matter how incoherent, and they were ready to pour this information into any ear. The S.P. had already been discredited but the I.W.W., which for some years had outdone the S.P. as a newspaper sensation, still held a thrill for the capitalist sensation-hungry fraternity. It was therefore—though very disgusting to anyone who knew the ground—not very surprising that the Third International at its inception should select, of all American organizations, the I.W.W. as the “most revolutionary” in America, and that at the moment when the Soviet Government was straining every effort to curb anarchy and its evil influences within Russia. But the “indorsement” of the Third International had small effect. The I.W.W. was already a corpse and nothing could have blown life into it. The gesture of the Third International only served to demonstrate to us how utterly unfamiliar even the most clear-headed Russian

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leaders were with American conditions. But there was worse to follow.

“COMMUNIST” ADDLEHEADEDNESS ENCOURAGED.

With the upheaval in the S.P. a “left wing” was forming which eventually dropped off from the corrupt old bird. It was of course in the main the younger and more vigorous elements that rebelled. But it was also inevitably, coming as it did from the S.P., an element whose brains the S.P. had addled in the years past and had educated in sentimental hysteria, even if they had escaped corruption to some extent at least and were rebelling against it. There were some signs at first that part of this element might gravitate toward the S.L.P. and left entirely to themselves to make their own experience these elements, having youth in their favor, might have clarified their position. But these signs were only temporary. Soon other things became evident. The Russian Revolution had started the Bolshevik scare; in a trice the left wing Communist party was honeycombed with detectives. A crazy sensational propaganda was started advocating mass action and a forceful immediate overthrow of the Government of the United States. The craziness of this propaganda made it evident that it was provocatively inspired and the results, the arrest, prosecution and deportation of thousands, with the utter discredit in the public mind of the revolutionary movement of the United States that followed, showed its aim and object and also that it was well done. A sound revolutionary party would of course never have fallen for such idiocy but it is to be remembered that the

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“communists” consisted for the most part of youths whose brains had been gouged out by the S.P., who had received their education in this corrupt and utterly anarchistic organization. They fell for provocative propaganda and they fell hard; but there was something else that aided them to fall. Steadied by calm counsel from the Third International even these rattle-brained elements might have hesitated and, having youth in their favor, rallied and started to study Marxism and learn. But what did they get from Russia, from the Third International? Counsel that for the moment played directly into the hands of the provocative agents of the Government. The “21 points” with their order to form secret organizations, military organizations, and agitation in the army, etc., points which under the circumstances in this country where the revolution was neither actual nor near at hand, there was no difficulty in declaring treasonable.

THE “BURLESQUE BOLSHEVIKI.”

Of course, the “Communist” party or parties—we think there were four of them at one time or another—went up like rockets and came down like sticks. They became a laughing stock. The WEEKLY PEOPLE claims the honor of having named these would-be Communist imitators of Russian revolutionists the “burlesque bolsheviki,” a name that has stuck to them and received common favor. This of course was done with no idea of disrespect to the real Bolsheviki but simply to emphasize the vaudeville character of our own. The “secret” organization farce ended at Bridgeman, Mich., a meeting

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so carefully planned and so thoroughly betrayed that there could be no doubt about this “secret” party being honeycombed with detectives.

SILLY ANTICS AND EVIL DEEDS OF “LEGAL” WORKERS PARTY.

Out of the hiding places of the Communist party crawled the “legal” Workers party—after years of slanderous campaigning against the “legality” of the S.L.P., slanderous nonsense which we have showed up a hundred times. The silly antics of the Workers party with its attempts at united fronts with the corrupt and disappearing Socialist party, the American Labor party, the Farmer Labor party, the Federated Farmer Labor party, the La Follette Progressives, are too numerous and too foolish to enumerate. Suffice it to say that as far as the American working class is concerned this party, which is no party at all, is totally discredited. It may succeed in holding a few foreign groups who know neither the language nor the institutions of this country. Outside of these it is a mere empty shell. Its propaganda is bluff and blarney and, what is more, it would never have succeeded in holding what it has if it were not for the fact of the indorsement and undoubtedly a subsidy from Russia and the Third International. With the stamp of approval from Soviet Russia thousands of sincere foreigners will hold on to this shadow of a party for dear life and give it a semblance of vitality which it does not possess and as long as the subsidy from Russia continues crooks and fakers who are ever ready to graft on the revolutionary movement will stick to it to the

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detriment of sound revolutionary organization in America.

THE S.L.P. ATTACKED BLINDLY.

In the meantime the Socialist Labor Party, which has throughout all these years stood soundly on Marxian Socialism, which has never flinched in its advocacy of uncompromising revolutionary Socialism and Socialist reconstruction of society, which battered down S.P. reformism and I.W.W. anarchism, which has never receded even during the hardest struggle, has been systematically ignored by the Bolshevik party of Russia, which judging from its position and utterances, particularly by Lenin, we had a right to consider—allowing for conditions—as our nearest revolutionary ally. No, we have not really been ignored. We might have excused that during the years of tumult and strife in Russia. We have reason to believe that a certain attention has been paid to the S.L.P., attention to get it out of the way. Facts at hand and certain vicious activity in certain quarters convince us of this, and we have reason to believe that this is done not only with the sanction but by the order of the Third International. If this is so, comrades of the Communist party of Russia, we say frankly that it is the most scandalous and treacherous action that has ever taken place in the International Socialist Movement. The Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Labor Party alone in this country for nearly half a century has, against tremendous odds, held aloft the banner of Revolutionary Socialism. This is worthy of serious consideration, and from now on if there

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is a desire to meddle in the affairs of the American labor movement it is worth while first to get a few facts straight. And above all should be realized the highly developed industrial conditions of America, which lift this country from a revolutionary Socialist standpoint high above every other country, even Soviet Russia. It is necessary to understand that we have things here to cope with which in the simple peasant state of Russia cannot even be dreamed of or imagined.

HANDS OFF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT.

Taking all the foregoing facts into consideration we can only say to the comrades of Russia and the Communist International:

Keep your hands off the revolutionary movement of America. You know less than nothing of American industrial conditions under which we have to work and organize. You are totally ignorant of American history and what this has done to shape the psychology of America's working class. For this we do not blame you. We simply state facts and the facts conspire to make you enormous blunderers whenever you touch upon matters American. And what aggravates this condition is that circumstances have conspired to furnish you with information on America that is unreliable, known to be shallow, inspired by ignorance only, when it is not utterly dishonest. So we repeat, comrades of Russia, hands off the American revolutionary movement. You may show genius at

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home and in your diplomatic relations with international capitalism but in matters that concern the labor movement abroad, America in particular, you are babes in the woods.

We speak strongly for we feel strongly. We feel that the injury the above-related meddlesomeness has done to the movement in America will take long years and much labor to repair.

FACTS ABOUT AMERICAN WORKING CLASS.

The American working class, the genuine American or Americanized proletariat, in numerous respects is the most intelligent in the world. It is widely read though perhaps not well read. It forms a marvellously effective and efficient industrial machine. It is alert, wide-awake, quick of apprehension, eager for economic and social advancement, and rather determined in its demands, at least it is strong in its desires. At the present it accepts existing conditions, at least apparently so, because it still retains faith in American opportunity and American political democracy and believes that further progress is possible and can be gotten for this generation and future generations under the system which has made past achievements possible. Conditions have not ripened so as to startle the American working class out of its pretty dream and little or nothing can be done to organize the American mass of workers until conditions have ripened. In the meantime we can only agitate, show up conditions as they are ripening, call attention to facts as they culminate, and maintain a nucleus of a sound

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organization ready for future emergency. In other words, sow the seeds of revolutionary Socialism and bide the time of the harvest.

But the situation is far from discouraging. We who know the American temperament have every faith in the American working class. We know that while it will never be knocked off its feet or rushed into revolutions by rant, slogans, or wild phraseology it will act, act vigorously, quickly and thoroughly, if once conditions compel it to move. When the American workers once see the necessity of revolutionary activity the revolution will be done and over with one clean sweep. Social, economic and industrial conditions and organization have prepared the ground for the next stage in history, the Socialist Industrial Republic.

The working class of America is quite capable of accomplishing its emancipation without aid from the outside, and if a working class in general so well equipped in numerous respects as is the American working class—ininitely better equipped than the proletariat of any other nation—is not able to accomplish its own emancipation then it is not worth the powder to blow it to Kingdom Come.

THE JOB IS OURS.

Certainly the antics of the silly friends and proteges of the Communist International, our burlesque bolsheviki, only make the revolutionary education of the American working class the more difficult and arduous. The only service, therefore, which Russia can render the American revolutionary movement at the present time is

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to retain an open mind, to watch our activities, to attempt to comprehend our political, economic and social conditions. The actual work of revolutionary agitation and organization we of America, in the last analysis the American workers, must do and are quite capable of doing for ourselves. Those who find it necessary to go abroad—to Germany before the War, to Russia now—for the inspiration and substance for American revolutionary activity are nothing more than sentimentalists, frauds or fakers whom the movement will eventually push out of the way.

To the Revolutionary Workers of the World

IS THE SITUATION AS DARK AS IT APPEARS?

Much water has run over the mill-race since the outbreak of the World War and the collapse of the so-called Second International, since the Russian Revolution which inspired the workers the world over with great new hopes, since the Armistice, which has been called the close of the World War. It is high time for the working class in every capitalist country to pause, take stock of its gains and losses, and cast up a possible prospectus for the future.

At first glance this appears to be easily done. The actual gains outside of Russia are nil, the losses appear tremendous. Labor and Socialist organizations, upon which the European workers had built their hopes for more than a quarter of a century, smashed to pieces, whole countries, Finland, Bulgaria, Bavaria, Hungary, Italy, hopelessly in the hands of the reaction, Germany still groaning under autocracy and the horror of Social Democratic betrayal, France disorganized, England wobbly, America "not on the map," and the working class everywhere disheartened and apathetic. In this situation it is scarcely encouraging to look into the future, but as "it is ever darkest just before dawn," we have at least the encouragement that for the workers it cannot become

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much darker than it is just now. It is therefore well worth while to pause and take stock, for by so doing we may find that what at first appears like utter rout is merely a clearing off of the underbrush preparatory for the final revolution.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

That this proposed stock-taking should come from America, which the workers of Europe have gotten into the habit of considering as “not on the map” as far as the labor movement is concerned, may at first glance appear a bit curious; that it should come from a party so “small and insignificant” as the Socialist Labor Party may appear even more curious. Perhaps it will not be amiss to remember that the Russian Bolshevik group previous to 1917 numerically was one of the most “insignificant” revolutionary groups in Europe and that history has often emphasized that numbers count for little if the principles are unsound whereas a small group on the side of correct principles in the fullness of time is quite certain to serve as the revolutionary vanguard. The masses which always appear sluggish or attracted by sentimentalism and reform, in secret absorb the correct principle and somehow instinctively act up to it in a revolutionary upheaval.

WHY AMERICA IS IMPORTANT.

That the stock-taking proposal should come from America is indeed eminently fitting—from the point of

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view of the “materialist conception of history.” Lenin in 1921 said:

Is it possible to realize a direct transition from this state of pro-capitalist relations prevailing in Russia to Socialism? Yes, it is possible to a certain degree, but only on one condition, which we know thanks to the completion of a tremendous scientific labor. That condition is electrification. But we know very well that this “one” condition demands at least tens of years of work, and we can only reduce this period if there has been a victory of the proletarian revolution in such countries as England, Germany and America.

In 1919 he said:

For the present—naturally only for a short period—the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat and the International has passed to the Russians, just as it was held during the nineteenth century now by the English, now by the French, and finally by the Germans.

It has often come to my mind to say: From the point of view of the developed countries it was easiest for the Russians to COMMENCE the great proletarian revolution, but it will be HARDER for them to bring it to a victorious conclusion, from the point of view of a Socialist society. . . .

The Soviet or proletarian democracy arose in Russia. In line with the Paris Commune a second historic step had been taken. The Workers’ and Peasants’ Government proved to be the first tenable Socialist republic in the world. It can no longer pass away into a new form of state. It no longer stands alone.

In order to establish real Socialism, the carrying of it to its logical conclusion, much is still required, very much. For Soviet Republics, in higher cultural stages, whose proletariat has far higher working possibilities, there exists every possibility for shoving Russia aside when they once establish a working class government.

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For our part we have never doubted that the next, at least the final, leader of the proletarian world revolution has to be America. Trotzky in his *Whither England?* makes his bow to America as the great industrial leader of the world. That is the first great result of the World War. And it is not Utopian dreams but sound Marxism to insist that where the world industrial leadership arises there will rise the world proletarian leadership of the revolution. Backward nations are bound to experience breakdowns but several such breakdowns have shown that they lead away from rather than toward Socialism. In America and in America only are the workers organized and drilled from the point of view of industry to take hold, control and operate the great industrial machines. Here only the capitalist industrial revolution is so complete that the industrial proletariat is actually managing, controlling, directing and operating industry—of course for the benefit and profit of the capitalist class. Events have not yet conspired to imbue this highly equipped industrial working class with revolutionary psychology and revolutionary training, but the conditions that will inevitably produce these are approaching apace. It is high time that the revolutionary workers of Europe should stop sneering at America and keep in close touch with events on this side of the ocean.

AMERICA BOUND TO LEAD.

Therefore at this serious moment in history it is eminently fitting that we should revert to Daniel De

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Leon's sound social-economic analysis that *America will be the first country where the Social Revolution will obtain its full fruition in a Socialist Industrial Republic.* We do not dream of this, we are sure of it, sure from our application of Marxism.

For half a century past the Socialist Labor Party has been the one and only revolutionary organization in the United States. We do not hesitate for a moment to say: It is the ONLY sound revolutionary organization in this country today. It is therefore to the S.L.P. and the S.L.P. only that the International Socialist Movement will have to look for revolutionary agitation and organization in America—second in importance to no country in the International Socialist Movement.

SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY'S STRUGGLE AGAINST "REFORM SOCIALISM."

Before proceeding, however, it is necessary to look backward. During the period from 1900 to the outbreak of the World War the Socialist Labor Party was decidedly the black sheep of the so-called Second International; the pet American child was the Social Democratic party, later the Socialist party. Our S.P. in those days did its best or worst to take on the "protective coloring" of the German Social Democracy on whose pattern it attempted to mold itself. The reform and parliamentary log-rolling in this period of the German and other Social Democracies was bad enough but at least in their attempts at "reforming society" they set their teeth in the rudiments of feudal conditions and there might exist the excuse that reformatory measures

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aided in bringing capitalism to its full development. America has never been troubled with feudal conditions and our capitalism is exceedingly pure and up to the minute. Hence the S.P.'s reform propositions become propositions to reform highly developed capitalism, to make it tolerable, livable, more acceptable to the workers to whom this would-be Socialist party pretended to preach Socialist revolution. Since this would naturally make capitalism more durable the ideas of reform were ludicrous if they could have been carried out and were more ludicrous since they were impossible. Capitalism went on its way perfecting itself and if ever the S.P. reform propositions became pestering some brilliant politician, Bryan, Roosevelt, La Follette, would steal an armful of the S.P. platform planks—so innocent were they—and a few thousands of S.P. voters would immediately go with them.

ECHOES OF THE STRUGGLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL.

The Socialist Labor Party battled hard at this fake Socialist party. It never gave it any peace at home and at every successive International Congress—Paris, Amsterdam, Stuttgart, Copenhagen—we laid before the Congress, and through it the world proletariat, reports of the reform and capitalist character of the S.P., and particularly emphasized this party's servility to the A.F. of L., the so-called labor organization which the *Wall Street Journal*, the highest spokesman of American capitalism, has designated as the strongest bulwark against Socialism, an appellation which Mr. William Green, the present president of the Federation, proudly

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accepts. As a consequence of the S.L.P.'s exposure, the S.P. at each successive session of the International Socialist Bureau attempted to have the S.L.P. cast out from the folds of the International and would probably have succeeded, for the S.L.P.'s scourging of our own S.P. perpetually singed the whiskers of the leaders of the European Social Democracies, had it not been for some more far-seeing leaders, notably Rosa Luxemburg, who on more than one occasion rose to the defense of the S.L.P. and administered smarting lashes at its American "rival."

COLLAPSE OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACIES FORESEEN.

It was not that the Socialist Labor Party was overanxious to hang on to the Second International, though it refused to be shoved out by the Socialist party. It more than once considered withdrawal, for which action there was an ever growing sentiment within the Party. The reason for this was that for more than a decade the S.L.P. perceived all too plainly, and did not hesitate to say so, where the Second International was drifting—into the tangle and brushwood of capitalist politics so deeply that it would eventually not be able to extricate itself. The S.L.P. persistently and soundly refrained from interfering by word or deed in national European Social Democratic parties, but in the larger sense of the International Revolutionary Movement it constantly spoke its mind as it behooved it to do. With the key of Marxism it was not difficult for the S.L.P. to perceive the trend of events. The high industrial

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capitalist development of America inevitably raises this country to a higher plane and from these heights we could easily look down into the morass of European politics, while it remained difficult for Europeans (in the lowlands of half feudalistic conditions) to analyze the situation in America.

The events of 1914, the flunk of the German Social Democracy and the development of the species social patriot everywhere, was therefore neither a surprise nor a shock to us nor were we shocked by the subsequent roles played by Scheidemann, Millerand, Vandervelde, Branting, MacDonald and others. Not even Mussolini's metamorphosis from a "radical socialist" to—to Mussolini the dictator was a shock to us. All these things we saw more or less plainly "in the stars" for more than a decade—that is we saw them as a natural outcome of the political roles the Social Democrats were playing and as plainly as was possible we pointed out that in a crisis the capitalists of Europe would have no safer catspaw than the Social Democracies and their leaders.

No wonder then that the Socialist Labor Party was the black sheep of the Second International. We never blushed for the distinction then; we have reason to feel particularly proud of it now.

THE WORK OF THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY.

However, aside from its destructive criticism of the Socialist party, the Social Democracies and "reform Socialism" in general during that period of fourteen years, the Socialist Labor Party gave its best energies to constructive propaganda. This constructive propaganda

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may be summed up in the philosophy of industrial unionism as the sine qua non of the industrial democracy of labor, which is the distinct and particular contribution of Daniel De Leon of the S.L.P. of America. This constitutes a constructive program of the Socialist movement which carries to its full conclusion a program which could only be conceived in broad outlines by Marx and Engels and hinted at in general terms.

WORLD REVOLUTIONARY WAVE A DEBACLE BECAUSE OF UNPREPAREDNESS OF WORKERS.

Came the War, the collapse of the Second International, the betrayal of the working class by the Social Democratic leaders. The collapse of the S.P. in America ended ignobly in 1924 when its last remaining rag was used as a patch for the tattered reform garments of La Follette. Came the Russian Revolution which completed the fall of the Second International by driving the social patriots completely into the arms of capitalism.

Then followed a series of revolutionary abortions—Finland, a political Socialist upheaval easily drenched in the blood of the White terror; Hungary, an attempt at political “Communism” to manage a political Socialist state, resulting in a magnificent tangle of hunger, hardship and ultimate White terror; Bavaria, a political revolution, very vague in conception, and spasmodic attempts at seizing industry; Germany, the wiping out of the imperialist throne and other vestiges of the Middle Ages, the betrayal of the Socialist revolutionary workers by their former leaders, strikes and attempts at seizing

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industry, spasmodic and unsuccessful since they were unorganized and without a clearly defined object in the minds of the workers; Italy, again, a complete flunk of political Socialism, and the spasmodic attempts at seizing industry showing that large groups of Italian workers had sensed the true current of proletarian revolution, all winding up in the Fascist dictatorship and terror; France, an undefined revolutionary feeling which the reaction has so far succeeded in keeping under and of which, because of the censorship of the press and other causes, it is difficult for us to judge the actual strength; English capitalism entrenched and higher developed, having therefore a firmer hold on the reins until these finally snap.

The same is true to even a greater degree of the U.S.A. which the War and its aftermath have unquestionably made into the leading capitalist nation of the world, so firmly placing capitalism in the saddle, holding the reins of its working class so taut that there is absolutely no chance for rearing or balking. There remains only one chance, namely, to ditch the rider, and for that the moment has not yet arrived. American capitalism, though unquestionably in a state of decadence, is still too strong and too alert.

SOVIETISM AND INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM.

In Russia the November Revolution brought into power the so-called Bolshevik party, which in pre-revolutionary days did not stand much higher than the American S.L.P. in the estimates of the "great" "socialist" politicians of Europe. The Soviet State is a

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hybrid political economic creation arising out of the industrial and agricultural units controlled by the Communist party of Russia through what is known as the dictatorship of the proletariat. That foremost of Bolsheviks, Nicolai Lenin, had the genius to recognize the close affinity between this transition Socialist State and its final aims and the American S.L.P. doctrine of Industrial Unionism.

From Arthur Ransome's *Russia in 1919* we quote from the chapter, "Notes on Conversations with Lenin":

"He [Lenin] said he had read in an English Socialist paper a comparison of his own theories with those of an American, Daniel De Leon. He had then borrowed some of De Leon's pamphlets from Reinstein, . . . read them for the first time, and was amazed to see how far and how early De Leon had pursued the same train of thought as the Russians. His theory that representation should be by industries, not by areas, was already the germ of the Soviet system."

THE VIPEROUS BURLESQUE BOLSHEVIKI.

Now let us return for a moment to events on this continent. The I.W.W., which had started promisingly as a revolutionary industrial organization in 1905, had run amuck on anarchism in 1908 and practically curled up and died with the World War. The S.P. wasted away. But then there appeared a cross between the two, a curious mongrel known variously as Left Wing, Communist, Communist Labor or Workers party, better

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known as the Burlesque Bolsheviki of America. With this we have dealt in a previous article; it remains only to relate its insidious methods in trying to get rid of the S.L.P., a course which we have reason to believe was sanctioned and perhaps even ordered by the Third International which knew not what it did and was blind to all sense when it came to the movement in America. The loud-mouthed and rattle-brained Burlesque Bolsheviki have prated more nonsense about the S.L.P. than it is possible to relate. We have been called parliamentarians and politicians and 51 per cent majority Socialists because we, like the Socialists all over the world, were organized into a political party. We have been called "legal Socialists" because we did not offhand obey the Third International's mandate to dissolve our organization and hide ourselves underground when absolutely no reason existed why we could not carry on our propaganda in the open. We have been called cowards, social patriots and crawlers to the capitalist government because we refused to take steps to organize a red army under capitalism or perfect an organization for propaganda among the United States troops. That the Workers party itself by the order of Moscow is now a "legal" party and that we see no signs of a red communist army, of course, only goes to emphasize the silliness of all this inspired propaganda which once upon a time was the basis of endless theses, statements, platforms and declarations. All this nonsense has been repeatedly refuted by the S.L.P. From one of our recent statements we quote:

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S.L.P. PARRIES NONSENSE AND SLANDER.

“First let us settle once and for all—if that were possible—that the S.L.P. is not an anti-force organization, a Quaker meeting, or a turn the left cheek if the right is slapped. It is utter nonsense to say that the S.L.P. does not ‘believe’ in force. It is ridiculous, laughable, stupid, to say or insinuate that the S.L.P. believes that a revolution will be a midsummer day picnic and that ‘under the Constitution’ capital and labor will be able to settle accounts like a pair of cooing doves. The S.L.P. does not and never has held such nonsense. We know that the class struggle will be bitter and more so the nearer we approach the revolutionary goal.

“But what we do hold, and let this sink in, is that FORCE, CONFLICT, BLOODSHED—even if the streets run blood like rivers—are not revolution, and that force as force, war as war, murder as murder, settle nothing. Force serves the reaction just as much as it does the revolution and is no more ‘revolutionary’ than it is counter-revolutionary. It all depends how and when force is used. If the revolutionary class is able to use it intelligently and if it is the greatest and best organization, then force has served as the ‘midwife’ of revolution. But ignorant and unskilled midwives are often the cause of the death of both child and mother. If the workers have not a thoroughly organized force at their command they had better not try to use it, for there is no surer way than an untimely conflict to have the revolutionists killed off and the revolution set back indefinitely.”

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S.L.P. ATTACKS THE A.F. OF L.

For our advocacy of Industrial Unionism we have been termed dual unionists by the would-be ultra-revolutionists, and dual unionism was supposed to be a great crime and a tactical error since it could only aim at the destruction of that capitalist bulwark, the A.F. of L., which, however, we have never considered as a working class organization. We have demonstrated in answer to this that if the Communists or anyone else would ever successfully “bore from within” they would soon bore themselves out, which would eventually result in “dual unionism,” that is, a new form of unionism, if the workers were not going to accept a total rout from the Civic Federation’s capitalist ally, the A.F. of L.

THE REVOLUTIONARY AND SOCIAL FUNCTION OF INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM.

Now let us sum up. The S.L.P. says that political Socialist activity, no matter how honest, is but one part of the necessary Socialist agitation and organization. Political Socialist action is mainly destructive; its aim is to capture the political robber burg of capitalism for the purpose of dismantling it or aiding it, as Engels put it, “to die out.” A political government, even if “Socialist,” is incapable of running industry. An attempt at this could only result in chaos at the center and starvation at the extremities. The Political State is to be taken only to be destroyed—ultimately and the quicker the safer. The new social organization must arise not from territorial

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units but from industrial units, will be based on occupations instead of sleeping quarters, and the vote will be industrial, emanating from the industrial units and concerning itself with the administration of industry and the conduct of men as producers and not the government of men as social beings and appendages to private property. We of a highly organized country like America can plainly see the future industrial society outlined in the present. The workers today are gathered into great industrial units and it is as industrial workers that they come into contact; as neighbors, social beings and political voters the inhabitants of our great cities are total strangers. In a revolutionary upheaval it is the workers' industrial organization alone that will be able to rescue the aborning society from starvation and the nation from chaos. The greater and more perfect the capitalist organization is the more sensitive it is and the more easily can it be thrown out of gear. Small units, small workshops, can be managed and made to go somehow but the Standard Oil, the Steel Trust, the network of national railroads, require organization. If one wheel is destroyed the whole industry comes to a stop and with the few basic industries disorganized by their capitalist owners before they went to Egypt or some other safe place for a vacation, the whole of American life would be thrown out of gear and the workers into confusion, starvation and misery, the revolution would be made difficult or at least very costly. The organization of at least a nucleus of the industrial workers into industrial unions and so much agitation and education among the masses as to give them an

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understanding of their industrial power and their ability to control industry, the S.L.P. considers as an absolute prerequisite for the success of the social revolution in this country.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM A PREREQUISITE OF SOCIALIST RECONSTRUCTION.

And not only in this country. The terrific struggle with peasant and industrial problems in Russia and the easy defeat of revolutionary attempts in other countries, the spasmodic attempts of the workers to seize industries during the revolutionary upheavals, demonstrate more than theoretically the necessity of an industrial organization of the workers as a prerequisite for the Socialist revolution.

Comrades of the world, stop for a moment and consider these facts. Why have you refused to listen up to this time, why do you now persistently shut your ears to the clarion call of industrial organization? Sooner or later you will have to retrace your steps and correct this error and by doing so now much valuable time and suffering to the working class will be saved.

MARXISTS AND REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS, TAKE HEED!

We realize why even the sincere thinkers of the revolutionary movement in Europe have failed to grasp this problem. The highest developed European states are still industrial pigmies; industrialism does not stand up and hit the revolutionists in the face as it does in

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America. But the Socialist should be and is, if he is a real Socialist, a Marxist and a Marxist possesses instruments with which to analyze social conditions. If facts are plainly pointed out to them, Marxists should be able to lift themselves partly out of their condition and look into future necessities of the revolution; if they cannot do this they are not worthy of the name of revolutionist and are but blind leaders of the blind, criminally guilty of leading the trusting workers into future disaster.

The Socialist Labor Party of America, being placed on the heights of social and industrial development and equipped with the instrument of Marxian economics and De Leon's industrial interpretation of the revolution, is able to take a sweeping view of the entire Socialist revolutionary field. We perceive chaos and distress everywhere among the ranks of the workers; a new inspiration is needed to stir them. Russia, knee deep in problems that it will take decades to solve, lacks the facility for leadership; it is obliged to plod along and learn to expect, as Lenin expected, that the more highly developed and better equipped industrial states will swing ahead of it and take the lead in the revolution. We say in full realization of the tremendous responsibility that rests upon our highly developed nation that the vanguard of the social revolution must come from America. We know that the direction of the future development of the revolutionary forces, revolutionary organization and revolutionary tactics is contained in the contributions to revolutionary Socialism given by Daniel De Leon of the Socialist Labor Party. At this dark

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hour of the movement we say and say emphatically to the Socialist revolutionary leaders of the world in particular and to the workers in general, we expect, we demand, that you will give serious thought and study to the tactics and problems of revolutionary organization as outlined by the American Daniel De Leon, who according to Lenin was “the only one who has added anything to Socialist thought since Marx.”

The Third International

Wonderment has sometimes been expressed, and has more often been in the minds of sincere revolutionary Socialists the world over, why it is that the Russian Soviet Government tolerates the peculiar, circus-stunt antics of what is known as the Third International. The subject presents itself under two aspects: one, the interests of Soviet Russia herself; the other, the interests of the Socialist Movement of the world. Let us consider the first of these.

A GLANCE AT INTERNAL RUSSIA.

The Union of Soviet Republics, the structure which has arisen as the result of the Russian Revolution, controls about one-sixth of the land surface of the earth and is peopled by about 130 million human beings. The country is governed by one political party, the Communist party of Russia, an insignificant minority in that vast sea of population, and the form of government is that of a dictatorship of the working class, the only form possible under the conditions there prevailing. This implies the continuance of the Political State, the universal instrument of class rule, which is also unavoidable. All this imposes a very grave responsibility upon the governing class, the working class. In order to safeguard the fruits of the revolution, in order to proceed

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progressively along the lines mapped out by the revolution, the paramount task of that working class is to develop and expand Russian industry to a point where it can satisfy domestic wants, thereby adding to its numbers, and thereby diminishing step by step, inch by inch if need be, the perilous disproportion now existing between the agricultural and the industrial populations.

RUSSIA'S RELATION TO THE CAPITALIST WORLD.

In order to hasten this process the cooperation of the rest of the world, capitalist-controlled though it is, is needed. There must be trade, importation of machinery and other commodities in exchange for Russian exports; there must also be, if possible to obtain, long credits for the reason that Russia, however rich potentially, will be greatly retarded in her industrial and agricultural development if obliged always to pay "on the nail." If the situation were such that the capitalist world surrounding Soviet Russia had no need of either the natural resources of the country or of its vast potential market, then such cooperation would not be obtainable. But that is not the case; the very reverse is. This situation imposes upon the diplomatic service of the Soviet Union the task of establishing such contacts with the outside world as to make possible all that is here barely indicated. During the first years of the revolution, with the World War still on or barely over, with a determined effort on the part of the capitalist world to subdue Russia by means of blockade, armed invasions, stimulated counter-revolutionary risings, etc., no such efforts could be made. It was then a matter of fighting

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for existence and all means to that end were not only necessary but perfectly justifiable. But that stage of development has passed. The capitalist world has come to the reluctant conclusion that Soviet Russia cannot be conquered by force; that the old regime has gone forever and that the new is too firmly established to be overthrown from without, the less so since every such effort from "without" means trouble for the "withouters" in their own domains.

IS THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL AN INCUBUS ON RUSSIA?

Thus a new situation now exists. The imperative need of the industrial upbuilding of Russia demands that all other considerations which interfere with this purpose be set aside. Is this being done? The activity of the so-called Third International is the best answer to that question. It is not its activity when first formed we have in mind, when, under the stress of circumstances, to make all the trouble possible for an encircling foe, no matter at what cost, was the only policy to pursue. We have in mind its policy of the last few years when it had become obvious even to the most hysterical "revolutionist" that the time for world revolution, for the fall of the existing and the ushering in of a new social system, had not yet arrived.

George Bernard Shaw, the noted British playwright, is reported to have written a letter to the Leningrad *Pravda* asserting that it is about time for the Russian Soviet Government to disband the Third International and abandon the practice of proselytizing the world through it. Shaw is said to have ascribed the failure of

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the Soviet's foreign policy to "the antics of this quasi-official Third International," and he traces the recent conviction of a dozen British Communists to the absurdities of that organization. As reported at the time of the trial and reiterated by Shaw, these men had received advice and money from Moscow; he calls the advice silly and as for the money he thinks it would have been much better if it were still in the pocket of the Russian taxpayer, better for Russia and better for Communism. Shaw makes other points which do not here concern us, but a brief examination of the activity of the Communist International, so far as England is concerned, will bring out the points applying to other countries.

WHAT HAPPENED IN ENGLAND?

The convicted British Communists were charged with having sought to undermine discipline in the British army and navy by a subversive propaganda. Just why the Third International should essay so hopeless and foolish a task is not easy to understand. It was perfectly proper to make such an effort when England invaded Russia, because anything to weaken her was justified. It might also be proper to make such an effort when a revolutionary situation exists and a clash with the armed forces of the Political State is imminent, although a thoroughgoing industrial organization of the British proletariat is of infinitely greater importance. But to do so now, today, in a period of comparative quiet, can only play into the hands of the foe, arm him with greater powers, add to his prestige. Indeed, it has been reported

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that, since the incarceration of the twelve Communists, leaflets of a revolutionary character have been distributed among the British land and sea forces, leaflets that were then ordered by the War Office to be read to assembled troops, which are said by their language to have excited the indignation of these troops, and which one might safely assume to have been printed and ordered distributed by the military authorities themselves if it were not for the fact that the comesoonist is everywhere capable of just such stupidities.

HOW ENGLISH TORIES “USED” ZINOVIEFF.

Let us go back a bit in point of time. Not so long ago, due to the political division of the British ruling class into Tories and Liberals, the MacDonald so-called Labor Government came into power. By no stretch of the imagination could it be called a Socialist Government, except by S.P.ites and Social Democrats who in their anxiety to prove Socialist victories call any sham that has the remotest connection with “labor,” Socialist, even when its connection is only to lead labor into the capitalist shambles. The so-called Labor Government was distinctly a bourgeois expression that came into being to save the British Government in its serious dilemma in foreign affairs, particularly in relation to Germany and Russia. Its work being done, the Tory class was done with it and wanted it out of the way. Well, there was an election in England, and during that election the Tories published what purported to be a letter by Zinovieff, president of the Third International,

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giving advice as to what was to be done by the British Communists during that election. That letter was denounced as a forgery, but so cleverly did it imitate the language generally used by the alleged author, that it did its work and helped the Tories to get into power. The questions arise: Was the Foreign Office of Soviet Russia elated because of the change? Were the interests of Soviet Russia and of the Russian people served thereby? The next question is: Did not the general policy of the Third International make possible that forgery?

GENERAL RESULTS OF FOOLISH POLICIES.

Proceeding from the romantic theory that revolutions can be made to order anywhere and everywhere regardless of conditions, political, economic, historical; that theses and slogans and points and phrases about setting up a dictatorship of the proletariat are about all that is needed to get the working class of any country ready for the revolution, all that was to some degree understandable in the first flush of the Russian Revolution. Many people had been swept off their feet, capitalist governments often knew not where they were at, hysteria was rampant and the cool heads were few. But that is not the situation today and has not been for some years past. Imagine what it means to come to America and urge upon the American working class the need of establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat! To advocate such a thing takes either a consummate and hopeless fool or a designing knave; no sane revolutionary Socialist can give that sort of thing countenance for the fraction of a second. Yet such a policy as that has been

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pursued by that so-called Third International and it has made the task of the diplomatic service of Soviet Russia infinitely harder than otherwise it would have been, has helped to delay the industrial upbuilding of Russia, has stood in the way of Russian trade, of credits for Russia, has helped to sustain the treacherous so-called Second International, has given new life to the equally treacherous Social Democratic parties in different countries by repelling the masses from the newly set-up Communist parties, spread confusion everywhere and made infinitely harder the work of the truly revolutionary Socialist bodies the world over.

PARTICULAR INJURIES TO THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT OF OTHER LANDS.

This brings us to the second aspect of the subject: the interests of the Socialist Movement of the world. When the Russian Revolution first broke upon the world, a thrill of hope and expectation ran through the revolutionary Socialist forces in every country; and that thrill was repeated and became more intense when the second, the November Revolution, mounted the stage. Everywhere it was felt that this meant new inspiration, a new chapter in revolutionary activity, greater receptiveness among the working class everywhere for Socialist propaganda because of what had been and would be accomplished in Russia. But, alas and alack, what a disappointment there has been! Instead of greater receptiveness among the working class, there is greater apathy. Instead of an accretion of strength to the revolutionary Socialist movement, there is greater

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weakness, a splitting up of its forces into all kinds of fragments. Why is this?

The answer to this question is that this is so for one thing and to a great extent because the policy pursued by the so-called Third International has everywhere been based upon fiction rather than fact, upon unreality rather than reality, upon the assumption that proletarian revolutions can artificially be created from Moscow and that every such and all revolutionary activity in any country must be ordered, dominated and regulated in every detail from Moscow by means of organizations set up and financed from the same place. That so preposterous a policy failed, had to fail, goes without saying. Had it ONLY failed, the harm would not be great. But it did more than fail. It sowed suspicion, distrust, apprehension, which it will take a saner policy years to overcome. Moreover, the Moscow policy, by resting its last and final appeal upon physical force regardless of the country where it was applied and regardless of the stage of revolutionary agitation and organization, added strength to the hands of the capitalist foes, turned away from Russia the hopeful sympathy of millions of workers the world over, a sympathy which Russia needs and should have, and made more difficult, aye, often disrupted the agitational and organizational work of revolutionary Socialist bodies which, had they had the moral support of Soviet Russia instead of having to face her disintegrating influence, would have been able to make some headway in the struggle against the so-called Second International and its satellites, the corrupt Social Democracies.

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THE FARCICAL EFFECTS IN AMERICA.

Let us now confine the argument to the United States. To begin with, it must be said that subsidized organizations have no place in the struggle of the revolutionary proletariat. Such organizations cannot but exert a corrupting influence. They will attract a leadership none too clean and a rank and file none too wise; they will be honeycombed with factional fights for place and pelf; they will seek to foist upon the Socialist movement here policies hatched out in some foreign center, in utter ignorance of the lay of the land in this country but applied regardless of adverse conditions by men on the payroll of such foreign centers to whom orders are orders. The utterly ludicrous and shameful history of what parades in this country as the Communist movement proves every one of the above contentions to the hilt. We have had a Left Wing, a Communist party, a Communist Labor party, both underground and in no small measure run by agents of the Department of Justice; and we have now a so-called Workers party, lineal successor of the other departed freaks, which essayed in American politics the role of a merry-andrew, treating the world to the harlequinades of Farmer-Labor, Federated Farmer-Labor and what-not parties, attempts to form a "united front" with the "American peasant" marching at the head of the said "front" and the industrial workers bringing up the rear.

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THEN TRAGI-COMEDY.

The climax of absurdity was thereafter reached by an attempt, professedly undertaken for propaganda purposes, to tack the Workers party to the coat-tails of the La Follette movement, which attempt was rendered unsuccessful by the vigorous shake La Follette gave to that coat-tail, and propaganda of a kind was all the Workers party got out of it, so much of it that even Moscow had to call a halt. Hired men often overdo things.

SUMMARY.

To sum up: From no conceivable angle of vision can the course pursued by the Third International in England, Germany, France, Italy, to say nothing of the smaller European countries, be considered as having been helpful to Soviet Russia in the sense of aiding in her first and foremost task, the upbuilding of Russian industry; on the contrary, that course has all along made more difficult and often frustrated the constructive efforts of Soviet diplomacy to that end. And from no conceivable angle of vision have the activities of the Third International been helpful to the revolutionary Socialist movement of the world; on the contrary, they have created confusion, disappointment, disintegration, apathy, alienated the spontaneous sympathy of millions, created doubt of the sanity if not the good will of those who directed these activities, and brought about a situation it will take years of hard work to overcome.

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The revolutionary Socialist movement cannot in any country be conducted in disregard of the economic, political and historic conditions prevailing in such country; on the contrary, the movement in each country must be shaped in consonance therewith and will be so shaped if unhampered by dictatorial influences from without.

This being so, the question comes: How long must this affliction yet be endured?

Appendix

I.

Requirements of the Socialist Revolution.

Let the political temperature rise to the point of danger, then, all monkeying with the thermometer notwithstanding, your capitalist will quake in his stolen boots; he will not dare to fight; he will flee. But, indeed, he will not unless, back of the ballot that has raised the political temperature to fever heat, is the Might of the Industrial Organization, in full possession of the industrial establishments of the land, organized integrally, and, consequently, CAPABLE OF ASSUMING THE CONDUCT OF THE NATION'S PRODUCTION.

But let the capitalist attempt, under the pressure of the political temperature raised by the ballot of Labor—let him attempt to strike. In possession of the Might Conferred and implied by the industrial organization of their class, the working class would forthwith LOCK OUT THE CAPITALIST CLASS. Without political organization, the Labor Movement cannot triumph; without economic organization, the day of its political triumph would be the day of its defeat.

—DANIEL DE LEON.

The Proletarian Revolution marches by its own light;

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its acts are to be judged by the Code of Legality that itself carries in its folds, not by the standard of the existing Law, which is but the reflex of existing usurpation. Indeed, in that respect, the Proletarian Revolution shares a feature of all previous revolutions, the Capitalist Revolution included. A new Social System brings along a new Code of Morals.

—DANIEL DE LEON.

The trades unions fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system.

They ought to understand that, with the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economic reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, “*A fair day’s wages for a fair day’s work!*” they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, “ABOLITION OF THE WAGES SYSTEM!”

—KARL MARX.

The fundamental law of revolution confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions of the twentieth century, is as follows: It is not sufficient for the revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses understand the impossibility of living

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in the old way and demand changes; for the revolution it is necessary that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule as of old. Only when the masses *do not want* the old regime, and when the rulers *are unable* to govern as of old, then only can the revolution succeed. This truth may be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without an all-national crisis, affecting both the exploited and the exploiters. It follows that for the revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand the necessity for a revolution, and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; second, that the ruling class be in a state of governmental crisis which attracts even the most backward masses into politics.

—NICOLAI LENIN.

II.

Platform of the Socialist Labor Party.

(Adopted at the National Convention, May 1924.)

The world stands upon the threshold of a new social order. The capitalist system of production and distribution is doomed; capitalist appropriation of labor's product forces the bulk of mankind into wage slavery, throws society into the convulsions of the class struggle, and momentarily threatens to engulf humanity in chaos and disaster. At this crucial period in history the Socialist Labor Party of America, in 16th National Convention assembled, reaffirming its former platform

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declarations, calls upon the workers to rally around the banner of the Socialist Labor Party, the only party in this country that blazes the trail to the Workers' Industrial Republic.

Since the advent of civilization human society has been divided into classes. Each new form of society has come into being with a definite purpose to fulfill in the progress of the human race. Each has been born, has grown, developed, prospered, become old, outworn, and has finally been overthrown. Each society has developed within itself the germs of its own destruction as well as the germs which went to make up the society of the future.

The capitalist system rose during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the overthrow of feudalism. Its great and all-important mission in the development of man was to improve, develop and concentrate the means of production and distribution, thus creating a system of cooperative production. This work was completed in advanced capitalist countries about the beginning of the 20th century. That moment capitalism had fulfilled its historic mission, and from that moment the capitalist class became a class of parasites.

In the course of human progress mankind has passed, through class rule, private property and individualism in production and exchange, from the enforced and inevitable want, misery, poverty and ignorance of savagery and barbarism to the affluence and high productive capacity of civilization. For all practical purposes, cooperative production has now superseded

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individual production.

Capitalism no longer promotes the greatest good of the greatest number. It no longer spells progress, but reaction. Private production carries with it private ownership of the products. Production is carried on, not to supply the needs of humanity, but for the profit of the individual owner, the company, or the trust. The worker, not receiving the full product of his labor, cannot buy back all he produces. The capitalist wastes part in riotous living; the rest must find a foreign market. By the opening of the twentieth century the capitalist world—England, America, Germany, France, Japan, China, etc.—was producing at a mad rate for the world market. A capitalist deadlock of markets brought on in 1914 the capitalist collapse popularly known as the World War. The capitalist world cannot extricate itself out of the debris. America today is choking under the weight of her own gold and products.

This situation has brought on the present stage of human misery—starvation, want, cold, disease, pestilence and war. This state is brought about in the midst of plenty, when the earth can be made to yield hundred-fold, when the machinery of production is made to multiply human energy and ingenuity by the hundred. The present state of misery exists solely because the mode of production rebels against the mode of exchange. Private property in the means of life has become a social crime. The land was made by no man; the modern machines are the result of the combined ingenuity of the human race from time immemorial; the land can be made to yield and the machines can be set in

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motion only by the collective effort of the workers. Progress demands the collective ownership of the land on and the tools with which to produce the necessities of life. The owner of the means of life today partakes of the nature of a highwayman; he stands with his gun before society's temple; it depends upon him whether the million mass may work, earn, eat and live. The capitalist system of production and exchange must be supplanted if progress is to continue.

In place of the capitalist system the Socialist Labor Party aims to substitute a system of social ownership of the means of production, industrially administered by the workers, who assume control and direction as well as operation of their industrial affairs.

We therefore call upon the wage workers to organize themselves into a revolutionary political organization under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party; and to organize themselves likewise upon the industrial field into a Socialist Industrial Union, in order to consolidate the material power necessary for the establishment of the Socialist Industrial Republic.

We also call upon all intelligent citizens to place themselves squarely upon the ground of working class interests, and join us in this mighty and noble work of human emancipation, so that we may put summary end to the existing barbarous class conflict by placing the land and all the means of production, transportation and distribution into the hands of the people as a collective body, and substituting Industrial Self-Government for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder—a government in which every

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worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.