
Our “Party Killers.”

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It is lucky for the Socialist Party and unlucky for its enemies that there is no secrecy of any kind in the Socialist movement. All of our aims and principles, our fears and ambitions, are openly expressed in our meetings and in our papers. Anybody who reads *The American Socialist*, the *Milwaukee Leader*, and the *New York Call* can find out all — or practically all — that is going on within the Socialist Party.

The spy or the secret service agent simply wastes his time if he looks for secrets. Even the “worst” is always known, in fact we do all in our power to give it as much publicity as we can.

And what the American Socialists say and preach and propagate in the United States, the European Socialists also say and preach and propagate in France, in Germany, in Austria, and in England, and even in Russia. There may be some differences in tactics here and there — but the main principles are the same.

Of course there are some hotheads and ill-balanced persons in every Socialist movement, including the United States. There are occasionally also some traitors in every Socialist movement, including the United States.

The Emergency Convention, held in St. Louis a few weeks ago [April 7-14, 1917], formulated a declaration and a program for the Socialist Party of America. The proclamation was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the delegates present.

There was a minority in the convention

clamoring for a more radical phrasing of the declaration. And there was a still smaller minority consisting of 5 — among them Mr. W.R. Gaylord of Milwaukee — that voted for the so-called Spargo resolution, which was not a Socialist proclamation at all, but a decidedly pro-Ally war manifesto.

As for our proclamation — it may be said that the preamble is absolutely Marxian and must be subscribed to by every International Socialist in the world. It defines our position toward this war very much in the same manner as did the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain 3 years ago at the beginning of the war — a position to which the English Socialist party held ever since. And so does the Socialist Party of Italy hold the same view — and all other Socialist parties as far as we know, except the Social Democracies of Germany, France, and Belgium, whose countries were actually invaded by armed forces.

The program is not quite satisfactory in its details, but since these contained nothing un-socialistic, it was accepted. Its language is frank and outspoken — but most of these things have been said in the Congress of the United States — especially in the Senate in much stronger language.

However, there are in Milwaukee just now two men who are bound to show the capitalists they can “kill” the Socialist Party.

One of them is Mr. A.M. Simons, who until about 5 months ago [i.e., c. Nov. 1, 1916] held a job on the *Milwaukee Leader*. Mr. Simons started

out as a pacifist at the beginning of the war, which pacifism turned into violent jingoism when he lost his position on *The Leader*. Mr. Simons being of English descent, any reasonable pro-Ally sentiments would be understood and to some extent excused on the pretext of "nationalism." Mr. Simons, however, has developed the most virulent case of Germanophobia (German-baiting) known in this part of the country. He just would love to see the Germans exterminated — he is even holding the German Social Democracy responsible for the submarine warfare.

Simons purposely overlooks that the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain, led by Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Phillip Snowden, M.P., and others, practically holds the same view as the Socialist Party of America.

Nobody in the world, outside of the Northcliffe papers and the Tories in England, has ever accused the Socialists of so many kinds of treason as A.M. Simons accuses the Socialist Party of America. MacDonald and Snowden have been called traitors and "pro-Germans" and "pro-Huns" by the English Tories, but never by Socialists.

It is clear that if Mr. Simons wants to be consistent and remain the good patriot he pretends to be, he ought as soon as possible to leave a party "controlled by German traitors." The Socialist Party did not gain much when Simons joined — much against the will of its founders and leaders — it will lose nothing by his leaving.

Mr. Simons now has a job working for the Patriotic Defense League as an organizer for the state of Wisconsin. And he has also been killing our party for months in regular contributions to

the ultra-patriotic and ultra-reactionary *Milwaukee Journal* — the worst foe of Socialism in Wisconsin. What business does he still have in our party?

But there is Mr. W.R. Gaylord, who is trying to second Mr. Simons' denunciation and "information" as to the "treason" of the Socialists. When Mr. Gaylord was running for Congress [as a Socialist] in 1914 and 1916 he made opposition to all wars the main topic of his speeches — in fact he made an "anti-war" speech this spring. He has suddenly changed front — why, we know not. He is entitled to all the advantages that this "turn-about" will bring him in "patriotic" circles.

These gentlemen have not come to the Central Committee with their grievances — they have gone straight to the capitalist papers.

They have — especially Mr. Simons — consistently acted with the enemies of the Socialist movement. Mr. Simons has even darkly hinted at a connection of the Socialists with the "German-American Alliance," although he knew his accusation to be a lie, but he hoped thereby to make a hue and cry after the party. He has conspired and advised with the United States District Attorney's office against the Socialist movement and acted the part of an "informer" and instigator against the party. And our party is only doing what the English and the German Socialist parties are doing — i.e., working for peace.

There is no precedent for such perfidy in the history of the Socialist movement of any Western European country — at least not in England or Germany. We should have to look to Russia for a prototype.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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