
South Slavic Federations Withdraw From Socialist Party; May Combine with Social Democratic League

by Emanuel Haldeman-Julius

Published in *The New Appeal* [Girard, KS], whole no. 1,193 (Oct. 12, 1918), pg. 2.

Unsigned news article attributed to managing editor Emanuel Haldeman-Julius.

The Slovenian and Serbian sections of the Socialist Party, which comprise the South Slavic Socialist Federation, have withdrawn from the Socialist Party. We had previously reported that action was pending in this matter and that withdrawal was likely to take place. It has now been definitely decided. It is possible that this influential body will come into the Social Democratic League of America.†

The decision to withdraw from the Socialist Party was reached at a conference of the Slovenian section of the South Slavic Federation which was held at Springfield, Ill., September 20 [1918], at which the representatives of practically all the locals belonging to the sections were represented. The question of the attitude of the Socialist Party towards the war and the proper tactics to be pursued by the South Slavic Socialists were thoroughly discussed.

It will be remembered that these two organizations [i.e. the Slovene and Serb components of the South Slavic Federation], together with the Bohemian [Czech] section of the Socialist Party, had from the first been opposed to the position of the American Socialist Party with reference to the war. In recent months this opposition became more pronounced and especially so after the outbreak of the Russian revolution and the definite and clear statement of peace terms and war aims by President Wilson. All of these Socialist Federations have declared themselves most emphatically in favor of President Wilson's war aims and particularly in support of the Inter-Allied Socialist and

Labor Conference of London.

At the recent meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party held in Chicago in the middle of August [1918], these several federations joined in a most earnest and emphatic appeal to the representatives of the Socialist Party to renounce its stand on the war as expressed in the St. Louis platform and to restate its position in conformity with recent developments. This appeal, as we have previously reported, was swept aside and every attempt to secure a restatement of the party position was overwhelmingly defeated. This action was taken by the Socialists who favored the support of President Wilson's war aims and peace terms and the adoption of the Inter-Allied Socialist program as definite and final. It became evident to these Socialists that the regular Socialist Party organization here in America had committed itself irrevocably to the St. Louis platform so far as the war is concerned.

In stating the reasons that have led to this action the South Slavic Federations have passed resolutions in the course of which they say:

The Socialist Party with its anti-war program, adopted at the St. Louis convention, and its unwillingness to change it even after historical events proved that the program is in contradiction to the spirit of Socialism, and after a strong but unavailing demand for the change had been repeatedly made by its members, the party became useless as an instrument for the cause of Socialism and democracy.

By stubbornly sticking to that bombastic and impossible program, the party departed from the tactics pursued by

†- Haldeman-Julius was the "Acting Assistant Secretary" of the Social Democratic League of America, headquarters of which were conveniently located in Girard, Kansas. The group was a stillborn attempt to replace the Socialist Party with a new Social-Patriotic political organization. Annual dues were \$1, payable to "Acting Assistant Secretary" Haldeman-Julius.

scientific Socialism. These tactics of the party estranged the American toiling masses, thus making itself impossible of representing them politically or otherwise; and furthermore, the party excluded herself from all actual participation in the peace conference, and also from cooperation in reconstruction after the war. So constituted, the Socialist Party will remain merely a pacifistic sect, which will be interpreted by a great majority of American people as a means by which the cause of the Junkers of the Central Powers may be most effectively upheld.

The South Slavic Socialist Federation, believing in scientific Socialism and its evolution; and furthermore, believing that the question whether Democracy or Autocracy shall triumph in this war, is a great concern of the workers, sees that under such conditions the Federation can best serve Socialism by leaving the Socialist Party, which became through its inadequate tactics an obstacle to American — and hence to World — Socialism itself.

In accordance with this decision, the office of the South Slavic Socialist Federation will be vacated from your premises October 1, 1918.

In discussing the possibilities and plans for future action the South Slavic Federations mention decidedly that in case other organizations should withdraw from the Socialist Party for the same reasons, the Executive Committee will take steps to bring about a union and cooperate with them. To this end the committee was instructed to investigate the program of the Social Democratic League. At all events it was decided that the section should be enrolled in the So-

cialist International. The conference definitely adopted the resolutions published by the Inter-Allied Socialist and Labor Conference held in London in February 1918, which, as they say, are in conformity with the principles laid down by President Wilson.

In closing the resolutions say:

The Conference solemnly declares that the Slovenian section remains in every respect true to the principles of scientific Socialism and will work for its realization with all its might; and the Federation will work in the future as heretofore for its organization and will maintain its Executive Secretary, who will give all explanations and information for the work of the future.

The above is additional proof that *The New Appeal* was entirely justified in its policy against the party's treasonable stand against the government and against the democratic ideals of the Entente. It is our earnest wish that the Executive Committee will look carefully into the program and stand of the League and join the League if it finds the oft-stated principles in accord with its own. Meanwhile, we again urge our readers to join themselves, or if they have already enrolled, to get their friends to do likewise. Things are coming our way.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2006. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.