

THE COMMUNIST

ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS!

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The Coming Convention of the Communist Party

APPEAL TO THE MEMBERSHIP ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Comrades:

The Central Executive Committee recognizes the necessity for a party convention in order to settle finally the differences that have been seething within the party for a long time and which came to a climax at last in the form of the present "secession movement" led by the former Executive Secretary and two members of the C. E. C.

The C. E. C. recognizes that the membership also demands a convention for the same reasons. Therefore, this being the earnest and general desire of the party, **THE PARTY CONVENTION MUST AND WILL BE CALLED.**

However, in order to make the convention a success—in order that the convention shall accomplish the necessary task of clarifying the fundamental issues at stake—**IN ORDER THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY SHALL FUNCTION FOR THE PROPAGATION OF COMMUNISM IN HARMONY WITH THE PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES LAID DOWN BY THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL**, without internal dissension paralyzing its activities—and, what is most important—in order **TO GIVE THE MEMBERSHIP — THE RANK AND FILE**—the opportunity to express their opinion on the issues before the party, this convention must be well-prepared and carefully arranged.

The time, the place, the method of electing the delegates, and, above all, **instructions to the delegates** are essential prerequisites in order to make this convention accomplish its purpose.

This means, first of all, that before the convention is called, the membership must be given the opportunity to discuss all the issues so that, when the time comes for the election of delegates, they will not elect them blindly, **BUT INTELLIGENTLY—AND ELECT ONLY THOSE DELEGATES WHO ACTUALLY REPRESENT THEIR OPINION ON THE ISSUES IN THE CONTROVERSY.**

All this requires time for preparation—preparation for the process of elections in the various stages and the technical arrangements connected with these and the convention itself, both by the membership and the Central Executive Committee. If called too soon, without the proper time for preparation as stated above, the convention would only result in failure and necessitate the calling of another convention a few months after this convention to settle the issues which a hurried convention will inevitably fail to accomplish.

Moreover, this convention should be called **only by the Central Executive Committee of the party**, as the only legally elected body which, between conventions, can speak with authority in the name of the Communist Party and its activities as a whole. This is the only meaning of revolutionary centralism and discipline upon which a real, strong Communist Party can be built.

Therefore we call upon the membership to repudiate the so-called convention called by the former Executive Secretary Damon,

To all members of the Communist Party of America.

COMRADES:

You all know that the former Executive Secretary, Damon, seized all the party funds, entrusted to him by the Central Executive Committee, amounting to more than seven thousand dollars, leaving the party without money to carry on its work. (Full account will be found on the last page of this issue.)

In order to carry on the work of agitation, propaganda and party administration **WE MUST HAVE MONEY. WE WILL BE UNABLE TO ISSUE THE PAPER AND TO CONTINUE OUR ACTIVITIES WITHOUT FUNDS.**

SURELY THE MEMBERSHIP REALIZES WHAT A CALAMITY THIS WOULD BE IN VIEW OF THE PRESENT CRISIS IN THE PARTY.

Therefore **ACT QUICKLY. GATHER FUNDS AND SEND THEM TO US IMMEDIATELY.**

ALL DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONS — ALL SUB-DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONS — ALL BRANCHES — ALL LOCAL GROUPS WHICH STAND WITH THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND REMAIN IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY ARE HEREBY CALLED UPON TO COLLECT AND RUSH ALL FUNDS THROUGH THE REGULAR PARTY CHANNELS TO

D. BUNTE,
Acting Secretary,
Communist Party of America.

which, as we will show, is nothing but a trap set for the rank and file. The date itself, as fixed in the call issued by the former Executive Secretary implies no real desire to have any convention at all.

In the first place, the former Executive Secretary had no right or mandate to call this convention. The duty of the Executive Secretary, as defined by the Convention, is to work **only under the supervision and control of, and in conjunction with, the Central Executive Committee.** He is only the executor of the decisions of that body, or where a division exists, of the majority of that body, and is responsible to the Central Executive Committee, which is, in turn, responsible to the convention.

Secondly, the date set in the call issued by the former Executive Secretary, May—for elections of intermediary units and May—for national convention, even were it technically possible, would give no chance to the membership to discuss the issues involved.

Thus, while pretending that they represent the membership and that they want to give them the opportunity to express themselves at the convention, the "minority" in fact, is deliberately arranging the convention so as to **prevent** the membership from any possibility of expressing themselves. The date

fixed by them implies that they are deliberately arranging their convention so as to **force** the membership to elect their delegates **blindly.** In other words, they are simply **deceiving the membership.**

But it is obvious that it is physically impossible to have the elections and the convention on the date set in the call of the "minority." Conventions are not called at a weeks' notice!

This is so self-evident, that even the "minority," however ignorant on party questions they may be, cannot pretend to be unfamiliar with. Most assuredly they knew it, but still they purposely fixed their impossible date as a sort of "bribe" to the membership in an attempt to swing them away from the Communist Party and its Central Executive Committee, over to their side by offering them an "earlier" date. The very fact that in their letter to the C. E. C. requesting joint action on the question of a party convention, the "minority" express a willingness to change the date and other details already fixed by them, indicates clearly that they themselves did not take their own call and its fixed date for the convention seriously.

In the meantime, the "minority" do not hesitate to use the party funds in the possession of the membership.
(Continued on last page.)

Editorials

DEBS TURNS TO THE RIGHT

As Babushka was used by the counter-revolutionary forces to combat the Proletarian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia, so Eugene V. Debs, once beloved of the American revolutionary masses, is being used against the Communist Party of America and the Communist International, by the social-patriots, opportunists and compromisers of the Socialist Party.

Eugene V. Debs, having accepted the nomination for President on the S. P. ticket, has also begun to speak from behind his prison walls and what he says shows that he has become a conscious and willing tool (not the first time, by any means) in the hands of those traitors who are manipulating his name and prestige to retrieve in some measure, the revolutionary ground lost by the S. P. since the split last year, when all revolutionary elements left the old party.

We need not dilate here on his ridiculous attempts to bring about unity between the Communist forces and the "stinking carrion" of which he is the standard-bearer. Suffice it to say, that between the Communist Party and S. P. there can be no compromise, no truce. The Communist Party is the advance-guard of the proletarian revolution—the S. P. is a bulwark of capitalism and a potentially counter-revolutionary force that will be found (like Kerensky and the Ebert-Scheidemanns) with machine-guns in hand shooting down the workers in the revolution.

Debs' sentimental whining for unity between these two contending parties, shows as nothing else can show, his complete divorce from the revolutionary movement throughout the world as represented by the Third—Communist—International. His silly echoing of the Hilquits and Bergers that there is "no Third International" places him definitely beyond the pale (his past record to the contrary notwithstanding).

Just as the Seventh Communist Congress in Moscow expelled Fritz Adler of Austria from his honorary post in the Third International, so we, the Communist Party of America, proceed to READ EUGENE V. DEBS OUT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT OF AMERICA.

He has consciously aligned himself with the social-patriots and traitors, as against the Communist Party. He has consciously returned to the fold of the miserable compromisers whom he once denounced. His statements, as printed in the Call, show him to be in agreement with them on principles and tactics. Just as there can be no compromise with the S. P. SO THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE WITH EUGENE V. DEBS, LEADER AND SPOKESMAN OF THE S. P.

Eugene V. Debs has sounded his own death-knell as a revolutionary Socialist.

The press carried a statement credited to Captain Swinburne Hale, who claims that he has been acting for the C. L. P. in the Department of Labor at Washington, that he would proceed to argue the case of the Communist Party before that same body in the near future, in an attempt to legalize the Communist Party as he had succeeded in the case of the Communist Labor Party.

The Central Executive Committee hereby announces that it has at no time authorized any attorney to speak in the name of the Communist Party before the Department of Labor in Washington, and we repudiate anyone claiming to speak in the name of the party at any such hearings.

The Third International & Centrist Reconstructionist Schemes

COMMUNICATION OF THE AMSTERDAM SUB-BUREAU OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

Editor's Note: This communication has special interest in this country in view of the attempt of the Socialist Party to "affiliate" with the Third International and the same time participate in the schemes of the reconstructionists (!).

Dear Comrades:

Comrade Johnson, Secretary of the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain has kindly sent us the copy of a letter addressed by the I. L. P. to the Swiss Socialist Party (P. S. S.). In this letter the P. S. S. is invited to take the initiation for the organizing in Switzerland of a conference of the several Socialist Parties, where the basis would be laid of the so-called "reconstruction" of the International.

As the Labor Leader of March 4th observes, the majority obtained at the Strassburg Congress by the Longuet resolution necessitates such a conference. Now that most of the parties of Central and Western Europe have left the Second International without deciding for Moscow, it seems that the formation of a new organism of a bloc of the parties—hesitating between the old and the new tendencies the formulas of the past and those of the future—is no longer to be avoided.

What is the character of this bloc likely to be? What, from a Communist point of view is to be hoped for from the principal parties interested in its formations? The utter political weakness, the absolute lack of revolutionary firmness displayed by the majority of the leaders of the German Independent Socialist Party, Longuet's violent attacks on the Communist International at the Strassburg Congress, together with the inability or the disinclination of the French Centrists to understand the world revolution as the unavoidable consequence of the world war, and at the same time as a process which may be more or less directed and hastened by the conscious will of a proletarian vanguard,—these are, to mention only the three principal parties destined to form the nucleus of a "reconstructed" International, so many signs that the organism expected to be born from the conference which the I. L. P. proposes to the P. S. S., would only serve to sanction in a general way the feeble ambiguous and vacillating policy pursued by men like Crispin. Hilferding, Longuet, Pressemane, MacDonald and Snowdon after the war as before. The attempts of these parties, either to demand from Moscow "guarantees" for the admission of compromised leaders, and of deeds essentially hostile to Communist methods, or to form a new intermediary bloc between the Second and the Third International, can have no other result but to weaken, to clag and to hinder revolutionary action in the proletarian masses and thus to hold back the formation of the Soviet system, and the establishing of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Europe and in America.

The very terms of Comrade Johnson's letter to the P. S. S. are evidence that the bases of International Socialist unity as contemplated by the I. L. P. have nothing whatever in common with the principles of unity laid down by the First Congress of The Communist International held at Moscow in 1919.

The letter mentions the possibility of constituting anew one single International "whilst allowing the most complete autonomy in the matter of liberty of action and of tactics for every individual country." This, evidently, means that the double dealings which have led to the disaster in which the Second International was wrecked, will be consistently, advisedly adopted as a new starting point, and that the terrific catastrophe of the world war would have been of no benefit whatever to the proletariat. Each and every national party would be free to wage the war against "its" capitalism and "its" ruling class in its own way, or even to substitute to this war the collaboration of the classes; the disciplined and centralized action of the workers of all countries, the international unity tactics absolutely necessary in the Imperialist era would, from the beginning, be repudiated by the charter of the reconstructed International, and it is supposed that the Communist Parties will fall into this trap.

Comrade Johnson's letter says further, that the new International will be able to embrace all the parties accepting as the principal basis of Socialism the collective ownership and use of the land and of the principal instruments of labor in such a way the exploitation of the public

services as of industry in general and of all that concerns the public wealth, falls to the state or to the municipality, in order to increase the prosperity and the happiness of all citizens." This definition of the basis of Socialism is, evidently, absolutely insufficient from a Communist point of view; on the other hand not only the reformist and social patriot parties, but many simple bourgeois reformists can straightway accept it. It seems to absolutely ignore the fact that the capitalist ownership of the means of production can only be abolished after the downfall of the bourgeois state and the revolutionary organs of the proletariat will have to be the means of transforming it into collective ownership. Comrade Johnson's definition is apparently contented with a state and municipal Socialism, which would change nothing or very little in the social misery and in the degradation of the workers, and which would even aggravate their dependency.

It seems to us that for the Communist groups and parties to participate in a conference of this kind, would be a waste of energy, time and money, that it would be a real betrayal on their part of our principles and of the grand work of construction pursued by Soviet Russia. The old fetish of "Socialist unity" (that worthy pendant of the equally dangerous and no less fatal Class Truce)—will be made use of, for an attempt to induce all more or less hesitating spirits to capitulate before double heartedness and lies. Phrase-mongering demagoguery, the pathetic appeals of able leaders will only serve to cover the absence of ideals, of revolutionary faith (that is, of faith in the masses), of class-consciousness and of firmness.

It seems to us that the Communist groups and parties would commit an exceedingly grave fault by taking part in the conference of the "reconstructionists". They would aggravate the confusion still obtaining amongst the masses, they would render it more difficult for them to free themselves of the old formulas and the old fetishes (democracy, peaceful evolution, Socialist unity, etc.) and consciously orientate themselves toward the Communist theory and tactics.

That is why we are of opinion that the British Socialist Party in Great Britain and the Committee for the Third International in France have done well and acted as communists should, by absolutely refusing to participate in any conference of reconstruction, as the new International which answers to the needs and the aspirations of the working class in the era of the world revolution, already exists. And we ardently hope that the example of these British and French comrades will be followed by all Communist groups and parties.

We in no wise wish to dictate rules of conduct to the advanced groups of countries where a Communist Party does not yet exist or is only in a nascent state. Evidently these groups are themselves the sole judges in the question of the exact moment when they will think it necessary either to leave the old parties to which they now belong, in order to constitute a Communist Party and affiliate to Moscow, or to prevail upon the majority of these parties, the necessary process of cleaning having been effected, to follow them. But we would feel we failed in the fulfilling of the mandate entrusted to us by the Amsterdam Conference, if we neglected to warn our Communist friends against the very real neo-confusionist danger constituted by the founding of an International lacking a precise conception and a definite character. The attempt at re-establishing the so-called "Socialist unity" is a dangerous snare in which the spirit of criticism and the spirit of truth may equally be deceived. The only real living and efficacious unity is the one which has for its base not only the formal acceptance of the Communist principles and theory, but above all the revolutionary practice arising out of this theory. And in order to constitute on the national as on the international scale this real and living unity, we must also have the courage to reject nationally the traditional plea for unity, as to refuse on the international field to lend a hand towards the formation of an organism built on the sands of lies and illusions, and fatally destined to confusion and to impotency.

The Executive of The Amsterdam Sub-Bureau of the Third International.

D. J. Wynkoop.
Henriette Roland Holst.
S. J. Rotgers.

The „Minority“ Has Been Smoked Out

The „minority“ has been smoked out of their hole, and forced to come out in the open. Their first statement, confined mainly to personalities and devoted to abuse and slander, having fallen flat—the landslide of the membership, which they had so confidently counted upon, having proved to be a landslide in the opposite direction—they have now issued a second „statement“ in a vain attempt to retrieve their waning fortunes.

In this second statement, the „minority group“ attempts to answer some of the fundamental questions of principles and policies which lie at the bottom of the whole „secession“ movement and upon which the vital disagreement exists. The second statement proves, what we have all along contended, that the „minority group“ are casting about like typical Centrists, to evade the real issues. If fundamental differences exist—AND THEY DO EXIST—then the question of personalities and personal slanders and abuse are of no importance in the issue.

The only justification for a split before a convention is on the question of principles and policies—not on the question whether one or more members of the „majority“ of the C. E. C. are capable or incapable of carrying on the work allotted to them, or, are charged (but no means have those charges been proved) with certain acts of commission or omission. Differences on the latter question do not justify a split before a convention. Such delinquent comrades can be very well taken care of at a convention.

It is the recognition by the rank and file of this fact which has forced the „minority“ to issue another statement, in which, much against their will, they expose their position on the fundamental issues.

We shall take up the issues in the order in which the „minority group“ presents them in their second statement and PROVE how deep the cleavage on fundamentals really is.

Introduction.

The charge of the „minority“ that the „majority“ „has neither the capability of applying Communist principles in action nor the organization ability to entitle it to such leadership“ is obviously another attempt at mud-slinging to lend credibility to their own course of action, but which can easily be recognized as a part of their campaign of slander and has nothing to do either with the „secession“ itself, or the reasons for such „secession.“ The only answer to this charge is the present activities of the C. E. C., which, though deprived of all funds withheld from it by the former Executive Secretary (who does not intend to make restitution but spending this money in building up rival organizations within the party) is able to function better than before the „split.“

Unity with the C. L. P.

The „minority“ say, „the policy of the majority group toward the Communist Labor Party, both during the Chicago convention and since, was not determined by the widely heralded difference in principles. The „majority“ group has been frequently challenged to show these differences by analysis of the program of the two parties, but never has done so.“

Of course, the members will recognize that this charge is one of the two main reasons why the „minority group“ accused us of „packing“ the convention, seven months after that convention. We have smoked the „minority“ out already. Let us analyse the charge, and see if they are not evading the real issue of unity with the C. L. P., upon which a fundamental disagreement exists.

The reasons of the „majority“ for not effecting immediate amalgamation with the C. L. P. Executive Committee has been dealt with in our statement. Not daring to refute the position expounded there, the „minority“ attempts to bring in the issue on another and altogether inconsequential and hypocritical plane.

The present „minority“ not only acquiesced in the decision of the convention at that time and later, but applauded the stand taken by the convention on unity. We quote from an article in the September 27th issue of the Communist written by one of the „minority“ (Comrade Isaacs); we may also add that the former Executive Secretary was one of the committee elected to draft the reply of which the following quotation is a part:

„It is apprant that this Communist Labor Party adventure has no significance beyond the per-

sonal ability of a few dozens to give their membership representation in either of the two real conventions, that of the old party or that of the new Communist Party. IT WILL STAND AS A GRAPHIC PORTRAYAL OF THE VICIOUSNESS OF CENTRISM. WITH ITS PLAY ON REVOLUTIONARY PHRASES AND ITS NEGATION OF DECISIVE ACTION...“

Mark you, the „minority,“ who now have the unmitigated effrontery to talk about what the convention did or failed to do to unite both conventions, subscribed and endorsed the above statement!

Now as to the two programs.

Was there any doubt in anybody mind as to what the C. L. P. program really represented? Up to the January raids, the „minority“ fully recognized the heterogeneous mixture of Syndicalism, Centrism and confused Communism which that program contained. In the „minority“ motion for unity sometime in October or November (expressed at that time, in an attempt to liquidate financially the C. L. P.), they so characterized it themselves. To-day they charge that we, the „majority,“ did not discuss both programs! What monumental hypocrisy!

During, and immediately after the convention, the present „minority“ sang hymns of praise to the convention and to the Communist lessons they learnt. We quote again from an article which appeared in the September 27th issue of the Communist as an example of the inconsistency of this Centrist aggregation. We need not add that we entirely disapprove of the eulogies and praise, nor the manner of its expression (characteristically Centrist) in which it is written. We quote it merely to point out their hypocrisy and inconsistency:

„There are many other respects in which this convention stands out from all other Socialist gatherings in America. For one thing, the fact that the Federation delegates were largely Slavic emphasized the close union between the organization of the Communist Party here and the parent organization which came into being at Moscow in March of this year—The Communist International. It was the Russian expression of Marxism which predominated this convention, the Marxism of Lenine, and the party traditions of the Bolsheviki.

„One delegate after another expressed amazement at the lessons thus brought before him. Many years of most valuable experience were compacted into one week; and there is no question but that the students ran the teachers a merry pace“.

To-day, this convention was „packed“ and the „majority“ did not discuss programs! The writer of this article Comrade Isaacs (which expressed the „minority“ point of view at that time) who thought he had learnt so much then, has now renounced Communism altogether like a Harold Lord Varney. Compare the above with the treacherous article from his pen printed elsewhere in this issue.

It seems that the United States Department of Labor is better able to judge of the differences between the two programs than our own „minority group“!

Why don't the „minority“ come out with the truth and state squarely that they agree more with the C. L. P. than they do with the Communist Party, instead of hiding behind seven months' old excuses which they themselves suddenly resurrect when it helps them to hide the real issue?

* * *

In introducing their discussion of principles the „minority“ say: „analysis of these differences in principles“ is only necessary to show the hypocrisy and demagogic character of this majority group.“

The inference made is, of course, that there is no difference of principles worth mentioning (Centrists always try to prove that they do not disagree in principles with the Extreme Left) but, no sooner do they open their mouth than they put their foot in it, to use a colloquism.

The Third International.

The „minority“ claim that through some twisting of facts an issue has been created where no real issue exists. And then naively expose that difference themselves. They say: „the „minority“ did not at any time oppose on principle the establishment of relations with the Third International.“ (Italics ours.)

This is a typical way of confusing the issue. The issue is not the establishment of relations but—THE KIND OF RELATIONS TO BE ESTABLISHED, which is an entirely different matter.

As to the kind of relations to be established the „minority“ boast that the former Executive Secretary took steps to fully acquaint the Third International with the facts about the organization and the principles of the Communist Party. What were those steps? MERE CORRESPONDENCE.

Certain documents, such as the Manifesto, Program, Constitution and the International Secretary's report were enclosed in a packet and smuggled to Europe from where it was transmitted to Moscow.

This is the extent and kind of international relations the „minority“ believes is sufficient. We need not repeat the C. E. C. position on this question. It was dealt with fully and reveals unquestionably an entirely different conception of establishment of relations with the Third International. At this time we merely wish to bring additional proof that the „minority“ at all times opposed the sending of any delegates to establish connections and attend meetings of The Third International, of which sufficient knowledge was in our possession.

The „minority statement“ says that „the controversy over sending the International Secretary to Europe was not over the question whether we should be represented in The Third International. It was because underhanded methods were resorted to and over the question of time and party resources.“

What tommyrot! What sheer hypocrisy!

The „minority“ refused to obey the decisions of the convention, refused to send the International Secretary upon presentation of a letter from Comrade Rutgers urging that delegates be sent, and attempted to postpone his going until it would be too late for the meeting Rutgers mentioned.

The Chicago Executive Council (controlled by the „minority“) made a motion to postpone the next regular meeting of the C. E. C. from November 1st to December 20th, BECAUSE THEY FEARED THAT THE C. E. C. WOULD OVERRULE THEIR DECISION. One of the arguments made by the „minority“ in postponing that meeting was the following: „This work (building up the party) is SECRETARIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PURELY. Comrade Fraina appears to be in the mood of throwing the whole question of sensible party administration into the issue of his immediate departure for Europe.“

And to prove that the „minority“ used the same arguments then as they do now, we shall quote Comrade Fraina's answer on this point raised by the „minority“: „The international relations of the party, our contact with the Communist International, is not something that can be postponed for six months or one year, or decided by correspondence; but requires immediate discussion and action by the full Central Committee.“

So it is quite evident that the „minority“ LIE when they say that they were not opposed to the sending of Fraina to Europe. They tried by every trick (and the former Executive Secretary, having been a secretary of a Socialist local for ten or twelve years, is a past master at such tricks) to delay and postpone his going until it would be too late for him to go in time to attend the Conference.

Later on, when by the initiative of the „majority“ Fraina did go, and he had borrowed \$200.00 more on the eve of his departure, the „minority“ refused to pay the money so borrowed, even though the conditions of his going had changed and the borrowed money was necessary for him to accomplish his mission.

Still later, (February 7th) at a Council meeting in New York, when a communication from Fraina was received that the conference at Amsterdam was over and asking whether he should proceed to Moscow and if so, to cable him \$300.00 more for this purpose (and a letter from Comrade Rutgers corroborating this was also read) the „minority“ introduced a motion, not that he should not proceed (Centrists never act straightforwardly but in a roundabout way) but „that no money should be advanced to the International Secretary until an accounting is made.“ Do the

comrades realize now what they mean by the excuse of "time and money and party resources"?

Shall the Communist Party send a delegate or delegates to Europe? Certainly, say the "minority," but the time is premature. Some other time. Now is too soon.

Shall the Communist Party send a delegate or delegates to Europe? Certainly, say the "minority," but we must use our money for building up the party which work is secretarial and administrative purely. Some other time when we have lots of money.

Shall we send delegates to Europe? Certainly, say the "minority," but, we have such few writers and organizers we really cannot spare them at this time. We must wait until, etc. Perhaps when we have established the Dictatorship of the Proletariat they may decide to send some delegates over to Moscow to shake hands with Lenine and give him a few pointers on Communism and its application!

But opposed on principle to the sending of delegates to meetings of the Third International, NEVER! We agree on principle but certain practical considerations keep us back from sending them now.

That is the position of the "minority" on International Relations.

Or, take another incident on this question. When Andrew presented another letter from Comrade Rutgers and a letter from Chabrow to the effect that a meeting of some kind would be held in the near future and requesting us again to send delegates, the "minority" passed a motion in the Chicago Executive Council to the following effect: "That no notification of a meeting of the Communist International be considered valid unless it comes from the Bureau of The International." And since the Amsterdam Bureau was not yet in existence, they could only have referred to one Bureau—the Moscow Bureau!

Think of it! The "minority" expected an embossed credential from Moscow, with the seal of the Third International and signed by Lenine, Trotsky, Bucharin and Zinoviev, calling upon us officially to send delegates to a certain meeting, at a certain time at a certain place!

The former Executive Secretary is quoted in the "minority statement" as having voted for sending Fraina to Europe in November. In going over the minutes of that C. E. C. meeting we find the following motion and votes on it, which seems to disprove the former Executive Secretary quite effectually: "That the Communist Party send a representative or representatives to Europe to make contact with the movement there and to attend the meeting of the Communist International."

Voting yes—Bittelman, Cohen, Birba, Elbaum, Hourwich, Kaross, Tywerowsky and Fraina.

Voting no—Ferguson, Ruthenberg and Schwartz.

So much for International Relations. The "minority" has been smoked out on this issue and stand in no favorable light before the membership.

The "minority" then go on to show that its policy is in harmony with the Third International's and that the policy of the "majority" is not. We are called "super-Bolsheviks who look down with contempt upon the policies of the Third International." How do they show this? By tearing a sentence in an editorial, from its context, and then triumphantly exclaiming, "See! They are opposed to the Third International!"

Unable to distinguish between the spirit and letter of the recommendations of the Third International, the "minority" quickly jump to the conclusion that The Third International recommends mere acceptance of Communist fundamentals as the basis of Communist unity. This is another and crushing example of the Centrist character of the "minority."

The Executive of the Amsterdam Bureau, in its thesis published elsewhere in this issue state the following on unity: "The only, real, living and efficacious unity is the one which has for its base not only the formal acceptance of the Communist principles and theory, but above all the revolutionary practice arising out of this theory."

Does this look as if the "majority" disagrees with The Third International?

Or, let us quote from Fraina's report, published in the last issue of the Communist on Communist unity: The Communist International "rejects the concept of Communist unity in general, urging that unity must be based not upon formal acceptance of general principles but agreement upon fundamental action."

Does this look as if the "majority" disagrees with The Third International?

As a matter of fact, the whole gigantic struggle between the Centrist "reconstructionist" bloc which is attempting to join The Third International (see thesis from Amsterdam Bureau) and the Communist forces of The Third International, is exactly on this question of whether mere acceptance of Communist principles is sufficient to effect Communist unity! The Communist International rejects unity based on words without deeds. The Communist International insists that there must be not only acceptable but revolutionary practice as well.

It is the "minority" who play with words without understanding their meaning, who use Communist phrases without being able to distinguish between the spirit and letter contained in them. In their ignorance and opportunism, they would drag Communist principles and policies down to a plane where the undesirable elements of the Second International and politically immature workers can accept them and join the party, thus destroying whatever effectiveness it may possess. That is at the bottom of the "minority's" distortion of the recommendations of The Third International.

Mass Action.

It is amusing to note that every question of principle is introduced by the "minority" with a mass of irrelevant matter which can have no other purpose than to confuse the real issue. On this question of Mass Action, they bring in the Michiganites and an unwarranted assertion that the "majority" attempted to organize a "legal" party at the convention.

The "minority" forget that the Michiganites were answered in a masterly fashion at the convention on the question of Mass Action. We challenge the former Executive Secretary to produce the records of the conventions on this point. As to why the discussion was not more general, the answer is, that one of the "minority" (Comrade Isaacs) made an unauthorized motion (which the convention discovered later) to proceed to the election of party officials BEFORE THE DISCUSSION OF PROGRAMS. This motion prevented general discussion, which might have benefited the "minority" a great deal, as it now appears.

But we may ask in return, why did not the "minority" (who seem to have had some mental reservations with respect to Mass Action) enter the discussion? Why were they silent? Or, did they prefer to keep silent until after the convention, knowing full well that if they exposed their position on Mass Action and other vital principles and policies, THEY WOULD SURELY HAVE BEEN DEFEATED FOR ANY POSITION OF TRUST IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY?

As to the organization of a "legal party," it looks as if that question was injected to give some semblance of justification for their repudiation of the idea of propagating Mass Action to the workers systematically. They ask, "if this was a good reason (organizing a "legal party") for silence at that time, can we now bind those of our members who have been arrested and indicted for their activities during this period of "legality" not to take the same position?"

But what is the truth in this case? First of all, the "majority" even suggested before the convention opened, that the convention be held behind closed doors. The "minority" were opposed to this. Secondly, if the "minority" mean that the convention adapted Communist principles to the "legal" party existence, we emphatically deny such a charge. The convention adopted the principles of the Manifesto of The Third International in its program—which is sufficient refutation in itself.

If we take their miserable apology at its face value,—that they wish to save some of the arrested and indicted comrades,—isn't that in itself sufficient proof of their Centrist character? And what kind of Communism is it, that judges the correctness or incorrectness of basic principles from the point of view of "saving" a few individuals from persecution by the capitalist state?

Indeed, if the vast majority of the arrested and indicted members could speak for themselves, THEY WOULD INDIGNANTLY REPUDIATE SUCH TEMPORIZING TACTICS EMPLOYED IN THEIR NAME.

As for the few who came in under false colors, and have been arrested and indicted, we feel sorry for them. BUT THE COMMUNIST PARTY CANNOT AND WILL NOT ADOPT ITS POLITICIES AND PROPAGANDA

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THEIR SAFETY.

Our enemies in the opportunist camps (S. L. P., S. P., C. L. P. and I. W. W. together with the liberals and radicals) make the charge that "agent-provocateurs" wrote those planks in our program which has brought the Department of Justice down upon the heads of thousands of unsuspecting comrades. The "minority" echoes this cry by trying to prove that we aimed to establish a "legal" party. There seems to be a striking similarity between the opportunists outside of the party and the "minority" who now talk "legalism."

The "minority statement" then goes on to say in characteristic fashion, that the foregoing was the only way in which the question of Mass Action came before the Central Executive Committee. The "minority" does not like "the smoking out process" and would like to go back under cover. They are very uncomfortable discussing principles and policies. They are more at home when they can confuse the issues. But having been "smoked out" we'll keep them out in the open discussing principles.

The fact is, that the first leaflet, entitled "What Communism Means" precipitated the controversy on Mass Action, and the "minority" used the very same arguments here presented in an effort to KEEP OUT ALL REFERENCE TO MASS ACTION AND THE USE OF FORCE IN THAT LEAFLET.

The "minority" state in bold type that "they are ready to put into the program of the party, a definite statement that Mass Action culminates in open insurrection and armed conflict with the capitalist state." The "minority" word-juggles are willing to put it into the program, but... Like the S. P. that would like to ally itself with The Third International, BUT...

As we have had to point out in innumerable occasions, the "minority" subscribe to words but are OPPOSED TO REVOLUTIONARY PRACTICE.

They themselves point out that there is a vital difference as to "when the idea of arming themselves and armed revolt shall be projected to the masses of the workers."

They are right. Here is the very crux of the difference between the "majority" and the "minority."

The "minority" attempt to harmonize their position with that of the Third International, by quoting from its Manifesto a statement that bears no relation to the controversy and incidentally are guilty of deliberate distortion of the term "Mass Action" into "Mass Actions."

However, since they are so quick to "quote" even Lenine in their behalf, we shall make them swallow a very bitter pill from the pen of Lenine, on just this question when the idea of projecting the USE OF FORCE to the workers shall be undertaken, and see whose position approximates that of Lenine, the "majority's" or the "minority's."

In his State and Revolution, page 25, Lenine says:

"We have already said above and shall show more fully at a later stage that the teaching of Marx and Engels regarding the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the capitalist State. It cannot be replaced by the proletarian State (the Dictatorship of the Proletariat) through mere "mithering away," but, in accordance with the general rule, can only be brought about by a violent revolution. The hymn of praise sung in its honor by Engels and fully corresponding to the repeated declarations of Marx (see the concluding passages of the Poverty of Philosophy and the Communist Manifesto, with its proud and open declaration of the inevitability of a violent revolution; also Marx's Criticism of the Gotha Program of 1875, in which, thirty years after, he mercilessly castigates its opportunist character)—this praise is by no means a mere 'impulse,' a mere declamation, or a mere political sally. THE NECESSITY OF SYSTEMATICALLY FOSTERING AMONG THE MASSES THIS AND ONLY THIS POINT OF VIEW ABOUT VIOLENT REVOLUTION LIES AT THE ROOT OF THE WHOLE OF MARX'S AND ENGELS' TEACHING. AND IT IS JUST THE NEGLECT OF SUCH PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION BOTH BY THE PRESENT PREDOMINANT SOCIAL-CHAUVINISTS AND THE KAUTSKIAN SCHOOLS THAT BRING THEIR BETRAYAL OF IT INTO PROMINENT RELIEF."

Does this look as if the "minority" agree with Lenine, whom they, in their blissful ignorance so fondly quote, or, do they not rather belong

to the menshevik or Kautskian schools of Marxism?

As for their translation of Mass Action to Mass Actions, that is on a par with the sophistry of the C. L. P. that attempted to make it "actions of the masses." It seems that every group or party that disagrees with Mass Action and its propaganda to the workers, finds some new name for it. Hilquit, at the Albany "fiasco" called it "mass action or mass petition." Take your choice of any of these perversions which attempt to camouflage Mass Action as a tactic of the revolution, and the necessity of systematically propagating it to the workers, IT ONLY PROVES THAT THOSE WHO PERVERT ITS NAME—DEEP DOWN IN THEIR HEARTS DISAGREE WITH ITS MEANING AND APPLICATION.

We are not surprised to have our opponents, both within and without the Communist movement to call us "anarchists" and (by implication, as the "minority" does in their last statement) "agent-provocateurs." Such charges are old. They have been flung by the Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks in Russia. The Majority Socialists of Germany flung it at Liebknecht and Luxemburg and the Spartacide movement. The S. L. P. and the S. P. have been flinging it at the Left Wing and the Communist Party in this country. A lawyer speaking in the name of the C. L. P. before the Department of Labor, in an attempt to legalize the C. L. P., has flung the charge against Fraina. Nuorteva, one of the most malignant foes of Communism in America, made open charges to this effect in all papers. We only point out that the "minority" are in good, respectable company, in also flinging such slanders.

We now come to two paragraphs in the "minority statement" which simply reeks with the spirit of opportunism and compromise. We shall quote them in full.

"In carrying on the work of agitation and education on the question of armed insurrection the social and industrial conditions must be considered. To talk to the workers about arming themselves and armed insurrection at a time when the masses are still without any revolutionary consciousness is to make a farce of and discredit Communism and shows a fundamental lack of understanding of Communist principles."

"While the 'minority' will work for a clear expression on this point in the party program and in the literature explaining Communist principles, it will consider the circumstances in each given case and the general development of the revolutionary consciousness of the masses in deciding whether the propaganda for armed insurrection shall be spread among them."

Erase the name of "minority" and substitute in its place S. P., S. L. P., C. L. P. or I. W. W., and we have a statement that anyone of them or all of them could heartily endorse.

Here again the "minority" are guilty of confusing two entirely different things—calling upon the workers to arm themselves for immediate revolution—and the propagation and fostering of the idea of the inevitability of a violent revolution to the masses of the workers. The "minority" know better, but we believe that they deliberately mistake those two points in order to confuse the issue and thus they will not have to propagate this idea at all. It is a cowardly trick, worthy of Centrists, and one which our enemies have always used against us, to make the masses distrust us and our propaganda.

Obviously, it would not do, from the "minority" point of view, to inculcate the idea of the inevitability of a violent revolution into the minds of the workers,—THEY MIGHT ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND IT BETTER THAN THE HESITATING COMPROMISING VIEWS OF THE OPPORTUNISTS AND CENTRISTS. Or, perhaps better still, the time to preach this idea to the workers, from the "minority" point of view, is when the workers have learnt it themselves from their own bitter experience! Then they could safely pose as "leaders"!

But NOW, in the prerevolutionary epoch of propaganda and agitation of sound Communist principles and the upbuilding of a Communist Party that will actually function in helping to shape and guide the revolutionary forces in the direction of an armed insurrection against the capitalist State (the only method of conquering it) and establishing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat—THAT IS PREMATURE IN THE EYES OF THE "MINORITY"!

A leaflet, such as the one to the railroad "out-law" strike, according to the "minority", must contain only propaganda to meet the immediate objects of the strikers themselves. It is "anar-

chistic" to point out in such a leaflet, the full implication of Communist principles and policies! It is "folly" to explain the strike and link it up with the governmental machinery of the capitalist class! It is a "farce" if we attempt to give it wider meaning and character by teaching the workers to make their purely industrial strikes POLITICAL STRIKES aimed at the Government itself! No need of explaining to the workers why their strikes must fail and pointing out the reasons for such failure. As for expounding the Communist position, proving that all redress for any class of workers under capitalism is a snare and delusion unless the strikes become political strikes aimed at the State itself—AND THAT SUCH STRIKES MUST BE FOLLOWED BY ARMED MASS DEMONSTRATIONS AND CIVIL WAR AIMING AT THE CONQUEST OF THE STATE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT—that would be similar to "agent-provocateur" work for the Government in the eyes of the "minority"!

We hope that every member of the Communist Party reads their statement carefully, especially those paragraphs on Mass Action. We know what their answer will be.

Finally, their statement on Mass Action ends thus: "if there is any difference between the 'majority' and the 'minority' on this question, it is a difference of tactics."

Here again the "minority" expose their Centrist character and their complete ignorance of Communist fundamentals. The "minority" are not even aware that principles and tactics are inseparable. A difference in tactics as wide as a difference in principles. Those who, accepting Communist principles disagree on their application differ as much as if they differed on the principles themselves. That is just the universal difference between Centrists and Communists. The "minority" talk so naively of a mere difference in TACTICS as if that is a minor question. It seems that the "minority" do not yet know what keeps the Independents of Germany out of the Third International—or the Centrists of France, England, etc. DIFFERENCE IN TACTICS—the difference between acceptance of Communist principles and revolutionary practice, is what separates the Communists from the Centrists. The Centrists (like our own "minority") accept the principles but reject the practice. The "minority" are willing to put Communist principles in the program but in practice wish to propagate the most approved forms of opportunism to the workers. At this stage of understanding and development of Communist fundamentals in America only simpletons or Centrists can attempt to gloss over a difference in tactics as something of no moment or importance!

As to legality

Again the "minority" display their Centrist character in that they cannot distinguish between Communist Party must be implicitly obeyed at it. And to cap their bourgeois ideology they make an analogy between the C. E. C. of a Communist Party (whose only crime charged against them is that of being super-Bolsheviks) with a capitalist government at the time of a proletarian revolution!

We have pointed out in the C. E. C. statement—and proclamations of the Third International have corroborated us—that the C. E. C. of a Communist Party must be implicitly obeyed at all times. Provisions must be made for their withdrawal and removal, but as long as they function as such, disobedience of its authority is disobedience against the Communist Party itself. THIS IS REVOLUTIONARY CENTRALIZATION AND DISCIPLINE IN THE REAL MEANING OF THAT TERM, AND NOT BOURGEOIS LEGALITY. Once establish the precedent that the authority of the C. E. C. can be flouted by any individual or group of individuals any time they may disagree with some of the decisions or the personnel of the C. E. C., or even a majority thereof, and you have a situation that can be repeated at any time, by anybody, on the slightest pretext. A Communist Party can only exist so long as there exists the voluntary self-discipline of the whole membership. Otherwise, we have an aggregation of individuals but no Communist Party.

Splitting the Party

Here again the "minority" display a lack of dialectical understanding in that similar methods under different conditions bear no relation to each other, other than a superficial resemblance; i. e., just as if the counter-revolutionists in Russia against the Soviet Government would accuse the Communists with possessing legal minds in defending the Soviet Government.

New Offensive Against Soviet Russia.

COMMUNICATION OF THE AMSTERDAM SUB-BUREAU OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL, TO THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES:

The International Conference of the Communists at Amsterdam has warned you already in February: "World Capital is preparing another attack on Soviet Russia. Behind the peace negotiations and commercial relations there lurks a treacherous aggression."

This new offensive has now begun in the Far East. Japan has concentrated a big army and has taken the offensive. It announces in the world-press that its army is strong enough to annihilate also the reinforcements on their way to the Red Armies to defend the workers' Soviets.

In the meantime, Poland is preparing for a gigantic struggle. Already it has accomplished a move eastward and has, in agreement with the Entente, advanced such demands as everybody knows to be absolutely unacceptable. French and American war material continues to be piled up in Poland.

The Finnish minister of foreign affairs negotiates in London, and Finland will be granted the special honor of attacking Petrograd, whilst Poland advances towards Moscow and Petlura towards Kiev.

But the German counter-revolution, too, must be considered in this light. Up to this day the secret understanding between English diplomats and Kapp has not been explained. Even now the Entente does not demand the disarmament of the "Junkers," but supports the disarmament of the workers. Already a new "coup" is being prepared by the German military band of robbers and both Austria and Hungary are about to initiate a monarchy by an attack on Russia. Agents of the Entente have already negotiated about the compensations to be allowed to Hungary for attacking the Bolsheviks. Only the wilful blind can believe in peace.

Workers! The fate of the world is now to be decided: enslavement or freedom.

Financial capital cannot forget that it had to acknowledge an initial defeat at the hands of Soviet Russia.

This new and last effort will surpass everything in ruthlessness and cruelty. In this contingency the revolutionary spirit of our Polish comrades is the vulnerable spot of world-capital. Will they allow themselves to be led into misery and death for the sake of their exploiters?

Not if German proletariat gives them hope of a support from the rear, if there is a chance left of Soviets in Western Europe of coming to the rescue of their brothers in the East. This is why the Entente must help German reaction to regain power, under Ebert-Noske if possible, under Kapp-Ludendorff, if necessary, so as to protect Poland in the rear and to provide troops for a second attack if the first onslaught should break upon the unflinching courage of our Russian comrades.

This is why France must make haste to occupy German cities with Black troops, for though Germany will be allowed to act as executioner, France will not let go her prey and the industrial proletarians of Western Germany continue to constitute a danger for the Polish adventure.

And in the meantime the comedy of Polish negotiations continues in Borisoff; the most competent leaders of Russian economic life are invited to Western Europe for "the beginning of commercial relations"; committees of research (or, rather for counter-revolutionary espionage) are talked about.

Workers! All this is so monstrous that you hesitate to believe it. But the offensive has already begun. The attack had to begin in the East in order that a strong Japanese army might be able to draw Russian troops away from the Western frontier. And this beginning has now been made. In due time alarm will be sounded in the capitalist press of the whole world about a Russian offensive against Poland and Finland, and England has already promised its full support to all the border states in such an event. Have we then really learnt nothing during these five years and a half from the monotonous lies of our adversaries? Do the workers not understand even now that Soviet Russia, the Russia of the workers and the poor

(Continued on page 8.)

A split is justified on principles. Splitting away from the old, corrupt S. P. before a convention was not only permissible but necessary. But to use the same methods in the Communist Party, when, by their own admission and the accusations of the "minority" it was merely a question of the personnel of the C. E. C. (for they did not raise the question of principles at all—the "majority" proved that was behind the split) that is absolutely unjustifiable from the Communist point of view.

We are not advocates of "unity at any price" and we consider a split on principles unavoidable under certain conditions, even before a convention. But if, the "minority" hold the same point of view then they convict themselves of contemptible hypocrisy in provoking and maintaining the split on the question of personalities. All their personal slanders are then seen in their true light as Centrist evasions of the issue, or, like the confused C. L. P. convention delegates who split away from the S. P. convention, not on principle but because they were opposed to the autocratic and police tactics of the S. P. officialdom.

(Will be continued next week.)

"HAS IT BEEN WORTH WHILE?"

HAS IT BEEN WORTH WHILE?

By Y. F.

Editor's Note: We print this article as an expression of the "theoretical background" of the position of the "minority"; the author is the leading theoretician of that group. Following this article will be found a critical analysis by one of the editors.

After seven months of existence of the Communist Party can we say whether it has been a success or a failure? There must be tests of the worthwhileness of a party, just as there are tests of the success of other enterprises. A Communist Party does not simply happen; it is made by collective volition. It may be well made and it may be bungled. There is a social evolution which accounts for the appearance of a Communist party at a given epoch of history. But there is nothing about that evolution which foreordains whether any particular attempt to build such a party will be good, bad or indifferent.

It is important at the outset of this discussion to insist upon this objective attitude toward the Communist Party. We have suffered a great deal to the detriment of the Communist movement in this country by the imposition of a religious attitude of fatal inevitability upon the whole process. A few undefined slogans have served like hallelujahs at a revivalist meeting. Hell has gaped before us in all its fearfulness, even more terrifying than the portrayals by Billy Sunday, the hell of being the minutest fraction under one hundred percent Bolshevik. To escape this fearful peril most of us have been consistently more than one hundred percent Bolshevik—somewhat to the left of the left of the Left Communists of other countries.

Of course someone will answer: this is what the Right Wingers said about us a year ago; if it is true now, why was it not true then? It is true now; it was true then. But the Right Wingers used this sarcasm not to characterize a particular phase of the revolutionary Socialist movement in this country. They aimed their shafts at revolutionary Socialism itself.

What has dominated the Communist movement in the United States up to this time may be described as the big bluff of Bolshevism. The process has been a perfect parallel to Joseph Smith's discovery of the tablets upon which were revealed the eternal truths of Mormonism. Joseph Smith secured many followers for his schemes of colonization because there were many ready for so fortunate a combination of spiritual and economic adventure. A ready-made Bolshevism was superimposed in this country upon a Left Wing movement of many years standing. The adventure element—with revolution in process in Russia, in Germany, in Hungary—was so alluring that none stopped for questioning or analysis. There were, to be sure, the scoffing Right Wingers, but their concern was not the better progress but the destruction of the Left Wing movement. There were the critics from Detroit, the Proletarian University group of Marxian students, but their criticism was ineffective because of its contemptuous manner of presentation and, fundamentally, because their criticism was not responsive to the true vitality of the Left Wing movement.

In May 1919 there was the discovery that there was a Left Wing within the Socialist Party which could control the party. Immediately upon this discovery came the expulsion of a majority of the Socialist Party membership by the Right Wing executive officers. Within a few months appeared the Communist Party.

But just as the Communist Party emerged from its cocoon came a new discovery. The Communists were not the Left Wingers of the Socialist Party, but spurned this Left Wing along with the rest of the Socialist Party!

The Communists, lo and behold, were the bearers of a new revelation! And ever since the Summer of 1919 we have had an official Communism in the United States which proceeds by incantations, counting of beads, salaams to the East, jubilees of phrases and slogans, pieties unending to Bolshevism—to a Bolshevism consisting of a mysterious compound of words and ritual which could only be known to its high priests!

The supreme high priests of this new revelation had seen the divine flame with their own eyes. They had been in Russia. Many years ago, perhaps, in a world of circumstances only dimly akin to those of 1919 in the United States,

but—they had been in Russia. They had witnessed the tablets, almost had they seen the writing of the new scriptures—they had been in Russia. And who dared to say them nay?

The Communist Labor Party came into being alongside the Communist Party as the confused protest of the Left Wing against its absorption into this religiosity of word-Bolshevism. There has been the persistent voice of protest within the Communist Party, but it has been officially stifled.

We must take a reckoning of the seven months, of our efforts and their results. We must consider the Communist Party as an organ of the class struggle in the United States, not as an institution for the holding of ritualistic incantations to the Russian Revolution. And what do we find?

* * *

The accident of the suspension of seven Federations of the Socialist Party at one stroke, most of them Russian-speaking, threw these Federations together into a provisional highly-centralized organization which gave a handful of persons complete control of the Left Wing. This control has been used in such manner by the Federation politicians that the Communist movement in the United States has gone **BACKWARD** since June 1919, and is presently yoked with a miserable heritage of internal factional and personal squabbles which will require much patient effort to overcome.

This is a most serious charge to make against men who call themselves Communists. It is a charge of almost unbelievable pettiness and vanity during months of the most heroic struggle and sacrifice by Communists in all countries. It is not a question of good intentions or good motives. The net result of the Federation leadership has been an absolute pushing backward of the revolutionary Socialist movement in the United States. If this is the truth it must be faced as the truth. It means that in addition to all other difficulties we have lost ground to regain, but defeats are only disastrous when we fail to acquire a new wisdom and a new determination out of them.

The Left Wing Conference of last June was really the starting of a new party. The overwhelming representation at that Conference was of membership expelled or about to be expelled from the Socialist Party. It became apparent almost as soon as the Conference opened that there was a strong minority opposed to any further efforts within the Socialist Party, though it was obvious that the Conference did not include within itself all the Left Wing elements in the old party.

Just what was involved for the furtherance of Communism in America in the formal establishment of a Communist Party at one precise date or another, just what was involved for Communism in the inauguration of the new party by one form of campaign rather than another—this has not been made clear even until today. But on June 22d, 1919, it became Centrism not to favor the formal establishment of a Communist Party on June 22d. The pronouncement to this effect had not been announced on June 21st, so that many found themselves transformed overnight from Bolsheviks to Centrists.

But the Federation caucus met again and lifted the ban of excommunication as against all who would at once join a new party call for September first. But this call must be just as dictated; particularly it must take no account of the Socialist Party (of which many of the delegates were still members. Purity in Bolshevism had shifted from June 22d to September 1st, but the shift in dates was not a response to the demand that the process of Left Wing development within the Socialist Party be taken into consideration. It was an admission that September 1st was just as good as June 22d for the formal announcement of a Communist Party, but the insistence was that Bolshevism prescribed in June just what must occur in September, regardless of intermediate developments.

It is assuredly not the desire at this date to quarrel with the fact of the starting of the Communist Party at any particular time. What is here pointed out is a different illustration of the arbitrary "logic" of pseudo-Bolshevism which has held the Communist Party in its grip ever since its inception. The **Centrists** of June became perfectly good Bolsheviks the moment they were

brought into adjustment with this calendar test, no matter what they may have thought about any of the fundamental principles of Communism. The "Centrist swamp" of July and August was "rehabilitated" as the perfect expression of Bolshevism during the first week of September. The perfect Bolsheviks of July and August (the Michiganders) became counter-revolutionary Mensheviks at some unrecorded hour on the 6th or 7th of September, when their usefulness in the fight to "conquer" the Left Wing had ended. In other words, when the Federation politicians had assured themselves of control of the new party.

All of the English-speaking elements in both the Communist and Communist Labor conventions were reduced to an absurdity by the Federation caucus. One feature of the Communist Party Convention which will leave a bad taste for some time to come was the cheap cynicism about the revolutionary worthlessness of all the English-speaking elements in America.

Just why some of us did not carry out our initial impulse to leave this Convention is a perplexity which can only be explained to-day by the big bluff of Bolshevism. The writer has resolved never to enter either the Communist or the Left Wing Conventions, being deterred on the one hand by hopeless arbitrariness and on the other by hopeless confusion. The Left Wing Council had accepted the September 1st call for a Communist convention because it was obviously supported by the overwhelming majority of the Left Wing membership. It seemed that this was the forum in which to fight against domination of an aggressive, active, hopeful membership by a small clique of vain politicians. Once in Communist convention, there appeared no escape from the dilemma except a Left Wing conquest of the Communist Party.

The "unity" issue which has been in the forefront of Communist discussion since last August has epitomized the fundamental conflict in our ranks. The "federation question" has only been a subterfuge for the revolt against exotic domination of the Communist movement in this country. There has been no idea of attacking the federations as units of foreign-language organization and agitation. Only the demagogic Russian and Jewish nationalists have had the requisite pettiness to insinuate that there is prejudice against "foreigners" as such within the American Left Wing movement. It is only the remoteness of our phrase-Bolshevism from the class struggle in America against which there is resentment, and it is this resentment which has directed itself against the federations as an instrument of intrigue, not against federations as organs of propaganda.

Now we approach more directly the work of the Communist Party itself.

(End of first installment which the author promises to continue.)

"HAROLD LORD VARNEY" OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

(THE POLITICAL OBITUARY OF Y. F.—"COMMUNIST")

BY A—W.

I.

The laurels won by Harold Lord Varney, former chief editor and "theoretician" of the I. W. W., who published a sensational article in the New York World on February 8th of this year—in which he denounced "the gods whom he had worshipped before and extolled the gods whom he had previously denounced," by proclaiming his conversion to the "capitalist faith,"—aroused the envy of Y. F.,—also a former editor, but who still remains the "theoretician" of the present "minority group" of the Communist Party of America. So he also decided to immortalize his name by the same great deed.

The article of Y. F., which is printed in this issue of the Communist under the significant title "HAS IT BEEN WORTH WHILE" (that is, has it been worth while to organize the Communist Party of America) is a certain means to the attainment of such immortalization, being unquestionably the political obituary of its author as a Communist.

It is true that in this first article (at the end of which the reader is encouraged by a promise of its continuation) he does not attack Communism with the same frank vehemence and malice as does his colleague Varney against

I. W. W., but he succeeds to avoid such attack for the time being only by means of a shrewdly-devised manoeuvre—by means of making a distinction, or even a contradiction (but which it is unnecessary to add, does not actually exist) between Communism and "BLUFF BOLSHEVISM," as he brands it. This gives him the opportunity in fact to slander Communist tactics in general, as such (which is equivalent to Communism), at the same time preserving a "decent" and an entirely "innocent" semblance of attacking only the "BLUFF BOLSHEVISM" of the Communist Party in general and the Russian Communist Federation, in particular.

The reader will, of course, agree, that this manoeuvre is by no means a new one, but on the contrary, a very familiar and exasperatingly wearisome manoeuvre of all social-opportunists who praise Socialism but curse Bolshevism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat—who praise Marx to the skies but condemn Marxian tactics—who enthuse over the Soviet system in Russia, but are terrified by the thought of its possibility in the United States... We are unjust however, in crediting the use of this manoeuvre only to social-opportunists—for it is equally common and peculiar to all opportunists in general—to bourgeois opportunists in the same measure as to social-opportunists. As an illustration, it will be sufficient to refer to the allied imperialists, who, while prosecuting in every possible manner the Socialist Internationalists of their own country during the war, could not "rejoice" sufficiently over the stand of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in Germany!.. Of course, their "rejoicing" rapidly disappeared as soon as the war was over. But that is another matter).

In order to prove that we are not committing an error by crediting our distinguished author with the above-described though far from creditable manoeuvre, we will cite a very characteristic question from his article. After devoting a whole paragraph to vituperative and abusive attacks upon the Communist Party and Bolshevism, the author, not without good reason,—like "a cat who knows whose meat it has stolen" remarks:

"Of course, someone will answer: This (i. e., the mud thrown upon Bolshevism by the author) is what the Right Wingers said about us a year ago. If it is true now, why was it not true then?" And he immediately hastens to dispel all doubts and questions by categorically and emphatically answering:

"It is true now; it was true then. But the Right Wingers used this sarcasm to characterize a particular phase of the revolutionary Socialist movement in this country. They aimed their shafts at revolutionary Socialism itself." (Italics ours).

The meaning of this quotation is obvious: The fact that the Right Wingers had slandered revolutionary Socialists was not so bad in itself; that which in the course of their abuse they said—"was true" (!). The only thing with which our author reproaches the Right Wingers in a friendly manner is, that they had slandered revolutionary Socialists in general, whereas, they should have slandered the American Revolutionary Socialists!..

But the above-described trait—an inclination to apply two standards, to measure by two different yardsticks, one intended "for the home product," the other for "strange distant ones far away"—is not only a manoeuvre of opportunists but also a symptom of opportunism—an indication of a "reevaluation of values"... Having begun with slanders and attacks against the Revolutionary Socialists and Communists in their own country, the opportunists invariably—due to the internal logic of their position—sooner or later end by coming into open conflict with the bitterly-hated Communists in general.

Y. F.'s article presents, in our opinion, exactly such a symptom of "sliding over to the Right," of an irrevocable tendency towards opportunism, toward the final desertion of the Communist ranks, and that is why we entitle it "A Political Obituary" of its author as a Communist.

Anyone who cannot understand the import of article; who cannot read this tendency towards opportunism between the lines, wherever it may not be obvious from the lines,—is utterly unable to understand this article and the only meaning which it conveys, and for such a person the reading of his article is an absolutely waste of time...

2.

Let us pass over to a more detailed analysis of the article in question, which analysis this article undoubtedly deserves,—not because of its intrinsic qualities, of course, but because of the position recently occupied by its author in the

Communist Party, and even more than that—because the article represents the most complete sample of theoretical and philosophical "background" (if it is permitted to call it "theory" and "philosophy") of the position (or, more correctly, lack of position) of the "centrist elements" in the Party,—those unsettled, always wavering, indecisive elements, who, in September of last year,—due to the trend of circumstances but by no means through their own volition,—found themselves in the Communist Party. These "centrist elements" who, since that time have "grieved" because they could not find in it a comfortable place for themselves, longed for the old "freedom" where principle and discipline were not necessary qualifications, until finally, as a result of the "Korniloff coup d'etat" accomplished by their leaders, ruled themselves (in fact) out of the Party.*

The author of this article is a typical representative of these "centrist elements" and all the "unpleasantries" experienced by them, while in the Party.

To begin with the first Convention of the Party. The author naively confesses that his, and adherents' "initial impulse" was to leave that convention. Even by this time he cannot understand why he did not then follow that "impulse"; the only reason which he can possibly advance in explanation of this—certainly unfortunate both for himself and the Party—lack of determination, is that same terrible "BIG BLUFF OF BOLSHEVISM" again, which, for a while, completely hypnotized him and stripped him of any capability for "self-determination." We quote:

"Just why some of us did not carry out our initial impulses to leave this convention is a perplexity which can only be explained to-day, by the big bluff of Bolshevism."

The very convention, for which our author did not spare the most brilliant and alluring colors in the first issue of the Communist, September 27th, 1919, becomes for him an object of the most bitter attack in April 1920! (We quote:)

"There was an all-prevailing sense of realism about the work in hand, absolute candor in interchange of argument, impossibility of compromise as the solution of any item. Three distinct groups were marked out at the opening of the Convention, and the whole proceeding represented the balancing of these three groups against one another... Three delegates who did not quickly enough yield their impulsive individualism to the mass discipline (italics ours) of one or another of the three groups left the Convention. They found more congenial atmosphere in the Centrist Convention of the "Communist Labor Party," where each was a law unto himself, and where the group as an entity was beyond the possibility of decisive action."

Thus, almost enthusiastically, wrote our author in September 1919. What a change! That which he then proudly called "mass discipline" in April 1920 he calls "hopeless arbitrariness"... We quote again:

"There are many other respects in which this Convention stands out from all other Socialist gatherings in America. For one thing, the fact that the Federation delegates were largely Slavic emphasized the close union between the organization of the Communist Party here and the parent organization which came into being at Moscow in March of this year—The Communist International. It was the Russian expression of Marxism which predominated this Convention, the Marxism of Lenine, and the party traditions of the Bolsheviks."

Leaving aside such utterly unscientific definitions—becoming rather to a professor of a bourgeois university rather than a Communist—as, "Russian expression of Marxism," "the Marxism of Lenine," etc.—compare the above quoted paragraph, written in September 1919, with the following denunciation in our author's last article:

"The supreme high priests of this new revelation had seen the divine flame with their own eyes. THEY HAD BEEN IN RUSSIA. (Italics ours.) Many years ago perhaps, in a world of circumstances only dimly akin to those of 1919 in the

* It should be stated, that we class in the category of "centrist elements" who, for a long time felt uncomfortable and dissatisfied with the too narrow, limits of consistency in principles and revolutionary discipline of the Communist Party,—not all, but rather a small 'initiative minority' of those who now have formed the "minority group" led by former Executive Secretary Damon; the majority of this "minority group" found themselves in it by accident, as a result of misunderstanding or misinformation—and, we do not doubt—will soon sever with it and return to the Party—to the C. E. C.

United States, but—they had been in

They had witnessed the tablets (!) almost had they seen the writing of the new scriptures—they had been in Russia. And who dared to say them nay?"

Whatever will be the reply to the question—when was the author truthful to himself and to his readers, when was he expressing his real feelings and impressions of the Convention—in September 1919 or in April 1920—the above comparison of quotations enables us to draw quite a definite conclusion as to the sincerity and truthfulness of the author...

Not having been determined enough to carry out his "initial impulse" to leave the First Communist Convention in America,—it had left such a "bad taste" with our author, that he very wisely "resolved never to enter either the Communist or Left Wing conventions." (Whether or not this time he will carry out his decision, remains to be seen—in the future...)

Mark you,—in informing us of this "resolution," the author does not speak of a particular convention which he will not "enter" in the future; he speaks of the "Communist or the Left Wing conventions." Apparently, those testable qualities of the first Communist Convention, which left such a "bad taste" with him, and which bar him from attending future conventions, he considers as inseparable, permanent and organic defects of all Communist conventions—in other words—of Communism itself.

3.

Having remained in the Communist Party against his own determination, against his "initial impulse,"—it was only natural that our author should feel miserable, dissatisfied, a "stranger" in its ranks, hypnotized, as he had once put it, by "an all-prevailing sense of realism" and "impossibility" of compromise as the solution of any item; it was only natural that a doubt as to the "worthwhileness of the Party" (!) should arise to haunt him.

"Has it been worth while?"—i. e., the formation of the Communist Party—this very question, this pseudo-objective, majestically "judicial" attitude toward the revolutionary proletarian party exposes in the author a spineless petty-bourgeois intellectual, who never acts, never lives in the present and in the future, but always in the past, always pre-occupied with reflective, utterly useless "self-analysis"... "Has it been worth while?"—this very question, and the following "tests of the worthwhileness of a party," imply, an utterly non-Marxian, bourgeois-professorial attitude toward the Party. A party, according to the bourgeois conception of our author—like a suit of clothes, may be "ready-made" or "made to order." (No wonder that in another part of his article, extensively rich with similar "new ideas," he speaks of a "ready-made Bolshevism..."). Moreover, he says, a party "may be well made and it may be bungled." Which, of course, implies the equally profound idea that having been "bungled" a party may be "remade," it even may be "ordered" to another "maker." Accordingly, being dissatisfied with an "imported from Russia" or "ready-made" Communist Party,—along the "Russian fashion" and "Russian traditions," and, consequently, utterly "unfit" for American conditions—our author decided to have this party "re-made"—to have it "made to order"—this time in some reputable "American firm."

Now, by a fortunate coincidence, such an "American firm," under the name of "Damon & Company," has recently been formed, and the "order" for a new "American Party" has been given to this firm, the name and reputation of its owner and manager (formerly with the Communist Party of America) being of sufficient assurance that its product, carrying the trademark "made in America" will "fit" and satisfy "American customers"...

(Due to lack of space this analysis will be continued in the next issue.)

TO ALL MEMBERS AND BRANCHES OF THE FEDERATIONS

Comrades:

We, the representatives of the Language Federations of the Communist Party of America—the Lettish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian and Russian Federations—demand that the Executive Secretary Comrade Damon and the members of the C. E. C. Kosbeck and Langley, return immediately to their respective posts and work until the next convention under the supervision of the C. E. C., duly elected by the Constituent Convention of the party. The convention, at which all the differences that have arisen in the party will be investigated and settled, shall be called not before June—and not later than July—

(Due to lack of space this appeal will be printed in full in the next issue.)

PARTY METER

CASH STATEMENT FOR APRIL, 1920.

	Damon:	Bunte:	Total:
Cash Received:			
Dues: Fed. Back Dues		400.00	400.00
Current	755.15	335.20	1090.35
Special Organization Stamps	418.50		418.50
Defense Stamps	636.95		636.95
Defense Fund Contributions	1018.00	63.65	1081.65
Organization Fund Contributions	58.25	16.50	69.75
Press Fund Contributions	136.00		136.00
Machinery Fund Contributions	104.90		104.90
Communist: Old Accounts	179.11		179.11
Current	30.00	11.30	41.30
Literature & Supplies: Old Accounts	53.30		53.30
Loans Payable		200.00	200.00
Advances Returned (Braun)		14.92	14.92
Lettish Federation: On account		300.00	300.00
Defense Expense: Bond Returned		1000.00	1000.00
District Accounts: From balances held ..	496.76		496.76
Total Received in April	3881.92	2341.57	6223.49
Balance from March	5850.88		5850.88
	9732.80	2341.57	12074.37
Cash Paid:			
Office Expense: Sundries	9.28	5.69	14.97
Supplies	28.05	1.85	29.90
Postage50	1.50	2.00
Salaries	205.00	160.00	365.00
Organizing Expense: Traveling	89.71	22.11	111.82
District Expense: Office Expense	65.89		65.89
Traveling	78.13		78.13
Salaries	955.50		955.50
Defense Expense: Attorneys	115.00		1000.00
Bond (Later returned)	1000.00		1000.00
Workers Def. U. Countrib.: To W. attor,	250.00		250.00
C. E. C. Meeting Expense	48.82	12.00	60.82
Communist: Editor's Salary		45.00	45.00
Printing	369.00	385.00	754.00
Delivery	90.83	32.98	123.81
Leaflets: Printing	296.60		296.60
Literature: Express	8.00		8.00
Loans Paid		200.00	200.00
District Accounts: Bal. held & Advances	603.23	245.00	848.23
Advances: Braun (100.00 less 85.08 Exp.)	14.92		14.92
Total Paid in April	4228.01	1111.13	5339.14
Balance to Damon and to May	5504.79	1230.44	6735.23
	9732.80	2341.57	12074.37

The following funds were taken away from the C. E. C. without authority by Damon:

Balance of his statement of 4/10/20....	4670.26
Balance of District I statement of 4/3/20	21.07
Balance of District III statement of 4/3/20	115.00
Paid by District V statement of 4/10/20	255.00

Chicago Bank Balance	30.21
Balance in the hands of Isaac	413.25
	5504.79
Bal. of Trust Fund Previously set aside	1590.37
Total	7095.16

IMPORTANT CONVENTION NOTICE.

The Executive Council hereby announces that it has set the date for the regular party convention, which, for obvious reasons cannot be printed here. The information will be conveyed to the membership through the regular party channels.

We print herewith the correspondence between the C. E. C. and the "minority" on the matter of holding one convention. As will be seen from the correspondence, the "minority" refuses to withdraw its call before entering negotiations as to the details of arranging the convention and also continues to refuse to recognize the right of the C. E. C. to call the regular Party Convention. Therefore the Executive Council has decided to proceed with its own arrangements for the regular Party Convention.

TO THE "MINORITY GROUP"

May 4th, 1920.

Comrades:

We hereby acknowledge receipt of your letter of April 22d, proposing "joint action in calling one convention of the party" and saying that you "are prepared to take up discussion of the details regarding this convention."

Your letter received our careful consideration and in reply we state that the only conditions on the basis of which one convention can be held, are the following:

1.—Before we can enter into any discussion as to time, method and place of holding one convention, it follows quite logically, and we consider it absolutely essential, that the "minority" call for the convention already issued must be cancelled first.

2.—The proposed convention, being the second regular convention of the Communist Party of America can be called only by its Central Executive Committee elected at the first convention.

Upon the acceptance of the above conditions we are ready to discuss with the "minority" the various technical matters as to date, place, method of elections etc., for the purpose of holding one convention.

Expecting your prompt reply, we are,
Fraternally yours

D. Bunte, Act. Sec'y.

TO THE MAJORITY GROUP, C. E. C. COMMUNIST PARTY

New York, April 22, 1920.

Comrades:

At the Conference between your group and ours we submitted, as a final proposition to avoid a break in the unity of the party the following proposal:

"That we discard further discussion of the questions under controversy and proceed with the work of organizing a convention in which both groups will be represented by such delegates as they may be able to elect through the district organizations."

Our group has already issued a call for a party convention and the date has been fixed, but we are still prepared to come to agreement on the matter of having both groups come to the one convention, in order that the membership may, through their delegates, themselves act upon the existing controversy. We therefore again propose to you joint action in calling one convention of the party and are prepared to take up discussion of the details regarding this convention.

Fraternally yours

(Signed) David Damon,

Executive Secretary, Communist Party of America.

Acting for the Polish, South Slavic, German, Esthonian and Ukrainian * Federations and Districts 1, 4A, 4C and 5, and minority group of the C. E. C.

New York, May 5th, 1920.

TO THE MAJORITY GROUP C. E. C.

Comrades:

We are prepared to discuss with you and come to an agreement in regard to all the details of a joint convention call, including the date of the convention, but until and unless such an agreement is reached the call which we have issued will stand.

The question whether this call stands cannot have the slightest effort upon the negotiations, inasmuch as we are prepared to withdraw it an substitute a joint call if an agreement is reached, and, as we view the matter, this condition on your part is made in order to delay our convention, as once the call is withdrawn you can then raise impossible

*The former Executive Secretary's use of the name of the Ukrainian Federation was entirely unauthorized as will be seen from the statement issued by all the Russian Federations printed elsewhere in this issue.

conditions as obstacles to prevent agreement on the joint call.

We are not quite so gullible as you may think, and, while we reiterate our willingness to enter into immediate negotiations and come to an agreement regarding the joint call, our present call will stand and in the absence of any agreement before the District Conventions will be held, the National Convention will be held as we have arranged.

Fraternally yours,

(Signed) David Damon,

Executive Secretary Communist Party of America.
Motion: Since the "minority" has rejected both conditions set by the C. E. C. for negotiations for calling one convention of the party, and since they are going ahead with preparations for their own convention, we proceed with preparations for the regular Party Convention to be held not later than

Motion: That we issue a statement to the effect that the charges presented against Andrew at the C. E. C. meeting were found to be without any basis in fact; that Andrew denied the charges as presented and no proof was brought forward to substantiate those charges; that the C. E. C. exonerated Comrade Andrew, and the Executive Council considers the matter closed. Carried.

Motion: Since no reply has been received from the Executive Committee of the C. L. P., we consider negotiations with them at an end. Carried.

THE COMING CONVENTION

(Continued from page 1.)

sion of the former Executive Secretary, entrusted to him by the C. E. C., to appoint paid District Organizers in every District, even where District Organizers appointed by the C. E. C. are still functioning, in order to build up rival organizations in all the party units—TO CAPTURE THE DELEGATES FOR THEIR SIDE. In other words, to break the very foundations of the Communist Party—ITS REVOLUTIONARY DISCIPLINE.

DO NOT ELECT SUB-DISTRICT AND DISTRICT DELEGATES NOW.

The call for the party convention will be issued by the Central Executive Committee; setting the time for sub-district and district conventions, details and methods of elections.

THIS CALL WILL BE ISSUED SOON. WAIT FOR THE CONVENTION CALL OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Central Executive Committee of The Communist Party.

D. Bunte, Acting Secretary.

NEW OFFENSIVE AGAINST SOVIET RUSSIA.

(Continued from page 5.)

peasants, wishes to live in peace, must wish to live in peace and does, literally everything, in order to secure peace? Must we need again and again believe our enemies and betray our friends?

The proletariat of the world over have to answer now, so as to show its determination to prevent this crime.

The Amsterdam Bureau of the Communist International appeals to all workers and to the transport workers in the very first place, to **boycott all ships and goods from and for Japan**, as long as the policy of intervention in Siberia is maintained. Class-conscious workers should not touch any goods destined for Japan or coming from Japan, nor should manufacture or handle or transport such goods.

Workers of Japan! We address ourselves to you in the first place. But also the American, the British, the Dutch, the Norwegian, the French, etc. workers can give active support.

Such action will show those in power that the workers are on their guard and prepared for deeds.

But this will not be enough.

We have already issued a call for a general strike of protest against intervention in Soviet Russia on MAY 1st.

Such a protest is all right, but it must be followed up by coercive deeds, for capital will give way to power only when its very existence is at stake.

In hatred against Soviet Russia all capitalist states fraternally unite. Though Lloyd-George may so hypocritically play the peace-maker, Britain none the less remains the mainstay of reaction and the leader of reaction the world over. It is to the British workers therefore, that a most important part in this struggle will fall. Let us firmly resolve that we all do our duty.

Be prepared for a general strike against the coming attack on Soviet Russia.

Answer the Polish-French-American-Finnish-British-Hungarian-Roumanian-Japanese-etc. offensive by a mass movement the world over, in all countries and with one common purpose: the rescue of Soviet Russia and of the world out of the hell of imperialism unto the new life built up by labor, for labor.

For the American Sub-Bureau of The Third International

D. Odlrwhoe.

D. J. Wynkoop,
H. Roland Holst,
S. J. Rutgers.