

# The S. P. of C. and the Third International

## FOR AFFILIATION

THE question of international affiliation has never heretofore greatly bothered the S. P. of C., our work being mostly confined to that of an educational propaganda — the teaching of Marxian economics and the class struggle. We have managed fairly well to steer clear, particularly in recent years, of the "constructive" and "practical" Socialist (?) politicians, who have been able to make so much trouble in many countries.

Now arises the question of affiliation with the Communist International. And I submit, comrades, that the conditions are very different from those under which we have refused international affiliation in the past. I shall vote for unconditional adherence to the Moscow Communist program, — not for sentimental reasons, I hasten to add, lest some ultra scientific comrade proceed to read me out of the Party — at once. After following as closely as possible under existing conditions the work of the Bolsheviks in Russia, and the program and principles of the Third International, I am prepared to endorse them unreservedly. They are the only body of workers today who constitute a real International — the only considerable group of workers who are consciously and intelligently carrying on the class struggle. That's what counts!

I take it there is no single comrade in the S. P. of C. who has anything but contempt for the old aggregation of freaks and politicians who now constitute the Second International, the organization whose sloppy, nationalistic propaganda we as a Party condemned years ago, and thus helped to rid ourselves of their counterparts in this country, the S. D. P'ers, Cottonites, etc.

As for the so-called fourth that met some time ago, at Berne, undoubtedly there are some well meaning comrades included, but that counts for nought. It was an aggregation of middle aged and old men — men whose mentality has been twisted by the conditions under which they have carried on. The future belongs to the young and those who have managed to keep up with the times mentally — to those who come to these problems of the present day without the peculiar quirks and follies inherited from other and very different conditions. These men, Ledebour, Adler, Longuet, etc., have undoubtedly served the workers well in times past. But their day of usefulness is gone. They have lost touch with the modern working class point of view. Their work in their day was good and will undoubtedly live, but that is no valid reason for cluttering up our movement with dead men's bones.

The same process is at work in our own Party. Where are those who ten years ago were doing good work in the "Clarion" and on our platforms? With a few exceptions we hear of them no more — others have taken their places — younger men as a rule, and we older ones have dropped out. It is in accordance with the law of development.

The meetings of the 4th, as reported in the New York "Call," by Gollomb, the U. S. representative, reminded me somewhat of the newspaper talk during the Peace (?) Conference, when for months we were told that Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau were "seeking a formula" that would reconcile the existing antagonisms. And they found a "formula," but the antagonisms still antagonize, words, words, words, and yet more words! And a continuous howl against "Dictation from Moscow" because that dictation is allegedly Russian. Now I submit, comrades, that this is the old nationalist howl all over again — you can't get away from it when dealing with the Socialist (?) politician, whether of the Right or Centre.

Personally, I don't care a damn who or what controls the Third International provided it is really Socialist control. The executive may be made up of Russian Jews, Turks or Hottentots so far as I am concerned. The basis of the fear of "Dictation from Moscow" is nationalist and racial, and emanates from representatives of those nations or races who, though they may call themselves Socialist, are really full of a camouflaged belief in their particular

race as the "salt of the earth," and the repository of all the virtues and wisdom of the ages.

The Communists of Russia are not fools — indeed their wisdom — despite mistakes — has been phenomenal and explainable only by the fact of their long study and understanding of the workers' philosophy of Marxism. They are not "long-haired men and short haired women" of hairbrained philosophy, but practical, educated workers who know how to bring about Socialism and intend to do so. Nor are they ignorant of conditions in other countries, as most of them have spent many years of their lives in exile in various parts of the world. Moreover, whatever the basis of representation on the Communist Executive Committee may be today, it will doubtless shortly contain members from most countries whose movements affiliate. "Dictation from Moscow" is a straw man, a bogey man.

The question narrows down to this: Shall we seek affiliation with the Third International or go it alone? True we might affiliate with the S. P. of G. B., but that would scarcely be international affiliation. Moreover, the S. P. of G. B. is somewhat like the Scotchman of the story who when a former pastor asked him as to developments at the old kirk, replied "Weel, brother, ye see there's no sae many left the noo — only mysel and brother Dugald, and I'm no verra shre o' brother Dugald's orthodoxy."

We stayed out of the Second because of its inclusion of so many freak movements. Now there is an organization more truly international than any that has been known in the history of the workers — an organization that has shown itself able and willing to cope with the international capitalist class. And this organization is Marxist; of that there can be no doubt. Our place is on the inside of that movement.

The Russian comrades have started the ball. They are fighting that other international, the white international of world imperialism. The Communist leaders of Russia and of the Third International are no more Russian than am I in anything except accident of birth. They are fighting as internationalists, not as Russians. They are working for the world revolution. Russia was for many reasons the easiest country to precipitate into the struggle since she emerges as the first working class republic. I take it that the S. P. of C. endorses that struggle unreservedly — that we agree with the program of the Russian Communists. Then the Russian comrades and the Communists of the world are entitled to our support. It is our duty as Socialists not because of sympathy (!) with Russia, but for our own safety and because we ourselves want and must have the revolution. However little moral affect our affiliation may have, it should, whether much or little, be extended freely simply as a step towards our own emancipation.

True, it may mean repression. But without affiliation with Moscow we have felt something of that. And don't forget our master class can get us at any time they please, affiliation or not. As soon as they begin to feel the effect of our work we will get ours good and plenty. Law and constitutional guarantees count for nothing with them, for do they not make and break either at will? And why shouldn't they since they have the power? Anyhow, events will soon bring on further repressive measures unless the signs of the times deceive me mightily. So let's get into the world movement, and be counted on the side of the intelligent section of our class in the world struggle that is coming. Vote "Yes" on the question of affiliation with the Third Communist International.

ROSCOE A. FILLMORE.

## FOR AFFILIATION

In dealing with the question of affiliation to the Third International, it is well that we should not be disturbed by thoughts of the "Dictatorship of Moscow," nor yet because we should be expected to enlarge the sphere of our activities.

While the interpretation of Marxism as expounded by the Party, and its activities in connection therewith, may have been correct during the years

of the Party's existence to date, it does not follow that the position taken in the past would be in line with Marxism, theoretical and practical, in the period we are now entering upon.

Objection has been raised against acceptance of the terms of affiliation because some terms apply to conditions not yet developed in this country.

It should be obvious that terms laid down to cover all countries cannot be expected to apply in every detail to each and every country, but are applicable according to the different prevailing conditions.

Clause 17 mentions this qualification.

Exception is taken to clause 2 in the following words:

"Here we come into direct conflict with our former policy. Apart from its ultimate utility, which is doubtful, such activity would immediately involve us in a series of bitter struggles, that would hamper and in the end nullify our educational work."

I consider this position to be unsound in its relation to the furthering of the class struggle, living as we are in a revolutionary period, in which the developing of power is of primary importance.

Present economic and social conditions, together with recent events in local history, demonstrate the need of obtaining a foothold wherever power is wielded.

To leave Labor Unions and Municipal Councils in the unchallenged control of reactionaries, in view of the part played by these organizations in movements of a revolutionary character, not to speak of the everyday struggles of the workers, is to assume the overthrow of capitalism as a mechanical process.

If the theories we advance are scientifically correct and as such fit the facts of life, the more bitter the struggles the more will their superiority over the concepts opposed to them be demonstrated. We have everything to gain and nothing to lose, in every phase of the class struggle.

The objection to clause 8 I can scarcely conceive as being seriously intended. To classify international arbitration, or the League of Nations, with colonial liberation movements, seems an attempt at ridicule.

The struggle for the control of the Soviets carried on by the Bolsheviks from March, 1917, to November of the same year, shows that the overthrow of Czarism was necessary before the real issue could become manifest to the mass of the Russian people.

To contemplate the possibility of a proletarian revolution in a colony garrisoned by an Imperial State, without first overthrowing that State Power, is Utopian.

The revolts now in progress in India, Egypt, and Ireland take the form of civil wars between the peoples of those countries and the British State.

In civil war neutrality does not exist. Communists in such countries have no choice. They are compelled to become part of the rebel forces, whilst at the same time carrying on propaganda for proletarian control.

Every success of a revolting colony against an Imperialist State weakens the power of that State. A weakened State is a prerequisite to a proletarian revolution.

While the State remains strong, revolution is impossible. A State weakened by defeat, or suffering from disaffection in its armed forces, offers the easiest task to a revolutionary proletariat. Colonial rebellions tend in this direction. They thus become part of the task of Communists living in Imperial countries.

J. KAVANAGH.

## AGAINST AFFILIATION

This discussion as to whether the S. P. of C. should, or should not, affiliate with the Third International, will have beneficial effects no matter what the verdict may be, inasmuch as it will help to clear up certain vague points, and misconceptions. We are told that this is no time to "split hairs." Very good! Let us part our hair straight down the middle, and never split a hair. Let us put as much "moral effect" into this discussion as pos-

sible. While the struggle is the capitalist enemy of the State, the greatest enemy of the working class and traitor to all to be fo-

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