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

THE objections raised against acceptance of the 18 points of the Communist International by Local Winnipeg, representing as they must the opinion of the majority of that Local, cannot be allowed to go unchallenged. Both in the preamble and in the resolutions from No. 3, statements are made for which they have no proof, and matter not germane to the question is introduced.

Because some "Reds" imply certain forms of action for getting control of the power of State, or John Reed has an article in the "Workers' Dreadnought" giving a report of the "Delegates" to the Second Congress, which report must be accorded a certain amount of literary license, the terms of affiliation are not thereby either substantiated or disproved.

The article says: "The first clause in the conditions for affiliation says, 'The dictatorship of the proletariat must not be spoken of simply as a well learnt formula, etc.' What does this mean? The dictatorship of the proletariat must be propagated as an object to be obtained, notwithstanding that in highly organized and industrialized countries, when the workers gain control, the period necessary in the elimination of the capitalist class may be of short duration! A passing phase, and not a long drawn out struggle compared to the common ownership and democratic control of the means of wealth production and distribution. If that is so, then how illogical it is to teach the dictatorship of the proletariat, or to speak of it, not merely as a well learnt formula."

What does Local No. 3 mean by "A passing phase, and not a long drawn out struggle compared to the common ownership and democratic control of the means of wealth production and distribution?"

Do they imply that "common ownership, etc." is a struggle?

If so, what about?

To attempt to compare, in point of time, a condition which does not yet exist to a condition which has never existed, belongs to the religious world and not to that of monistic materialism.

The period during which a dictatorship of any class is necessary is determined by the degree of ideas and habits of thought antagonistic to the rule of such a class, which may be in existence.

The necessity of teaching an acceptance of the principles of the "Dictatorship," of training the workers to become habituated to the idea of its necessity, is one of the lessons learned from the Russian revolution. The assistance the academic Marxists, Kautsky, Huysman, MacDonald, et al., not to forget the S. P. G. B., have been to capitalist imperialism by their tearful denunciation of this "autocracy" must not be underestimated. Every newspaper report announcing "Revolts in Russia" is based upon these anti-dictatorship articles.

To imagine that the dispossession of the capitalist class brings an end to the necessity of class rule in society, is to ignore the objective facts of life.

The capitalist class is dominant because the subject class has a capitalist ideology. Ideas and habits of thought remain in existence long after the conditions from which they arose have passed away. Proletarian rule will be necessary until all danger of social disturbance, resulting from such ideas and habits, has ceased to exist.

The objection that the Third International considers parliamentary action of secondary importance can also be applied to the S. P. of C., with this difference, that while we do not consider parlia-

mentary action of much account in the struggle for power, we have no other programme for obtaining it.

Irrespective of who happened to be in attendance at the second congress of the Third International, the terms of affiliation are so definite as to prevent non-revolutionary bodies from joining, and also to cause such who had already joined to sever their affiliation.

It would have been better had Local No. 3 been a little more elaborate in their resolutions of objection, and also more accurate in their quotations from the Theses.

With reference to reason No. 3, the terms do not state that open civil war is in existence. "The class struggle in almost all the countries of Europe and America is entering upon a phase of civil war." What about the situation in the U. S. with its Red Raids, etc., or the situation during the general strike in 1919?

Perhaps Local No. 3 considers these affairs have no connection with the class struggle.

Number four has been dealt with in a previous issue of the "Clarion." Number five is answered by the introduction to the 18 points.

As to number six, it may be said that there is no struggle for political power in so far as the S. P. of C. is concerned. The activities of the Party centre around the education of the masses. The struggle for power calls for organization as a means to that end. In that struggle the Parliamentary activities of the Party are of secondary importance.

We can be declared illegal without joining the Third International any time the ruling class considers it politic to do so. The point is—that we have not got a disciplined organization which could function under such conditions.

World Imperialism brings into existence changes in bourgeois administration, as well as changes in the tactics pursued by the working class in its struggles with its masters. The conditions now in existence, in consequence of the deadlock in international commerce, are already reacting upon the workers. The failure of parliaments to alleviate the distress is becoming apparent, and with it a growing distrust of the parliamentary institution. Councils are being formed through which the unemployed voice their grievances. It is true that these at present are probably of a temporary character, yet at the same time it shows the tendency of the workers' movements.

The terms of the Third International demand that as a party we do many things which have heretofore been done by party members on their own initiative. If we, as a party, ever expect to attain political power on behalf of the working class, it is necessary that we be a disciplined organization. It is useless to dream of enforcing discipline during a transition period unless those wielding power are themselves disciplined.

J. KAVANAGH.

Calgary, Alberta.

Editor, Western Clarion,—

The decision in the matter of affiliation with the Third International, rests on the answers to the following questions:—

First.—Is the S. P. of Canada a party of Marxian Socialism?

Second.—Does the Third International uphold the principles of revolutionary Socialism, and conduct the class struggle along Marxian lines?

If the answers to both questions are in the affirm-

ative, then the question of affiliation can easily be decided, though the expediency of affiliation at the present time may be questioned.

In the above-mentioned manner the question of affiliation of the S. P. of Canada with the Second International, was decided.

Granting the asseveration of the S. P. of C. as to its Marxian basis; and judging the Third International by its actions, the objections to affiliation cannot arise from fundamental differences. The Second International was denounced by the S. P. of C. as an aggregation of pseudo-Socialists and fake Labor Parties who were betrayers of the working class.

This objection is also raised against the Moscow International, and is the only one yet put forward, that is worthy of serious consideration.

Surely Comrade McNey will put forward some more proof of the "stinkiness" of the organizations affiliated with the Third International than mere choleric denunciation.

True, many of the members of those organizations have been imprisoned and executed, no doubt through their inability to keep their knowledge of the class struggle "under their hats." Only arm-chair strategists can conduct a struggle without casualties.

However, it would not do to say that Lenin and the Russian Communists were not Marxists, but then we are reminded that "there are other Marxians," and I might add, "57 varieties."

The French philosophers of the 18th century sought for a perfect system, based on eternal reason. Comrade McNey discovered a perfect theoretical policy, 12 years ago, which is immutable, and on which the law of change itself has no effect.

Comrade McNey's assertions are not supported by facts, one in particular with which he is familiar. I will ask him to cast his mind back to the lumberworkers' strike in the Puget Sound district in 1917. Did the individual members of the S. P. of C. whom he asserts "never failed or refused to propagate scientific Socialism at all times and under all circumstances" do so then? Or were they indifferent to say the least, because of the "commodity" nature of the struggle? Or were there any "hidden views" that Comrade McNey offers four cents for?

The Syndicalist bogey-man set up by Comrade McNey receives a severe jolt when confronted with facts. The Syndicalists in the U. S. repudiated the Third International by withdrawing the referendum. However, enough votes had been cast to show that their membership was opposed to affiliation. In Sweden the Syndicalists hold mass meetings protesting against the imprisonment of anarchists by the Bolsheviks.

What is the Third International?

The Third International comprises the Communist Parties of Russia, Hungary and Germany, and when we speak of those parties we speak of Lenin, Trotsky, Bela Kun, Liebknecht, and Luxemburg, names that will go down in history as those of the standard bearers in the first great conscious effort of the class-conscious proletariat to fulfill its historic mission.

Perhaps this is hero-worship, but being an ordinary plug I cannot, Stirner-like set up my own little ego to worship.

Comrade Harrington prefaces his objections to affiliation with the statement that "whether we accept or reject the terms of the Communist Interna-

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