

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

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in the furtherance of the struggle here, and that only by following the business of the Socialist Party of Canada in educating the working class along Socialist Party of Canada's lines, do we render material aid to the revolutionary struggle. No explanation is given, Comrade Stewart merely clubs the idea of basking in the sunshine of our Russian comrades' victory. The fact remains that those who advocate affiliation with the Third International are not attempting to bask in the sunshine, but are endeavoring to bring a little sunshine into the Socialist Party of Canada: possibly this ray of sunshine may clear the rancor and discord within the Party, which has to date resulted in different definitions on its function being given by each individual member of the Party. Some members state that it is merely a Marxian school for the education of the working class, others on the other hand contend it is a political organization, while others chip in and agree that it is our Party, and it is always in the right. The truth, however, is that if each statement made, written or uttered, should be compared, there would be found nothing but contradiction after contradiction.

Thus Comrade Stewart wishes us to believe, in his article, that the Socialist Party of Canada did give, is giving, and will continue to give its whole-hearted support to the Bolshevik Party, which is now in power in Soviet Russia.

Would Comrade Stewart please trouble himself, for our enlightenment, to state what assistance the Party has given. Assistance? Yes! Assistance by individual members to load munitions and railroad supplies on the docks of Vancouver for Kolchak, the counter revolutionist. Of course, the excuse will be given, that it was merely the economic struggle which compelled them to do so. Yet, I as one, am bound to think that not all was done on those docks to prevent this destructive work from going forward.

If the already conscious longshoremen could not, by proper guidance, from a Party calling itself revolutionary, prevent this outrage, then at least I must give credit to the one man who was sufficiently class conscious to quit his job. This man was J. S. Woodsworth. Assistance? Yes! by continually spreading the lies that Soviet Russia is building up the Third International for its own little comfort, and that Soviet Russia is the controlling power of the International, thereby giving aid and comfort to the Second International, and its Mater, the League of Nations, as for instance the statement of the Winnipeg comrades that: "The tactics are largely Russian in character and do not apply to this country."

Marx never feared to openly condemn those parties which in principle and tactics were opposed to the International Association of Workingmen. No side issue counted in this vital question. Today Comrade Stewart and in fact Local No. 3 in general, desire to avoid the question of affiliation by saying that if assistance to Soviet Russia is the object it is being, and will be, given irrespective of, and entirely independent of the Communist International. This idea is very self-complimentary indeed.

May I, however, suggest that Soviet Russia is aiding the workers, and therefore the parties, of the other non-revolutionary countries, and thus is aiding the Socialist Party of Canada? May I point out that Soviet Russia is fighting our battles? May I explain that the actual economic benefits derived by the Social Revolution to date count as nil when compared with the value and benefits derived in the work accomplished in destroying capitalist power?

Do you know that Soviet Russia pulled the workers of Europe and America out of the mire, where they had been thrown by the Second International, and left to perish by the Socialist pacifist and theoretician parties? Do you understand the three years of Communist battle waged by Russia and the results: Capitalism in Europe virtually tottering and

the workers looking towards Soviet Russia beacon-light? Finally, do you value the yeoman work of the Soviet Republics in the pioneer struggle of establishing the first successful communist state? Aid to Soviet Russia? I am afraid, Comrade Stewart and colleagues, your letter contains in this respect a great fallacy. Actually by affiliating with the Communist International we are not aiding the Communist Party of Russia, for the two are two distinct and separate bodies, but we are taking a step forward in the **Class Struggle of Canada**, and thereby assisting the workers, not of Russia, not entirely of Canada, but the **Workers of the World!**

Comrade Stewart in his next article should avoid such sophisms, but on the main they are not his. They are the inconsistencies of a Party which has never yet taken a step to formulate a policy in its advocacy of revolutionary action. They are the inconsistencies of men of the old world, who refuse to take note of the present trend of events, and are content to live in the happy memories of the last century.

To save a few sages the trouble of replying to this last sentence, permit me to quote F. J. McNey, in the issue of February 15th.: "This discussion... will have beneficial effects no matter what the verdict may be, inasmuch as it will help to clear up certain vague points, and misconceptions." Incidentally, Comrade McNey, unknowingly as much as states that even should the verdict on affiliation be in the affirmative, it will have "beneficial effects." Very good; for in view of this, I have great hopes for Comrade McNey.

Comrade McNey has evidently read only a few phrases in the organ of the Communist International, which phrases he has accidentally switched in here and there in his article, which makes it a supposed statement directly from the magazine, that "all the Communist parties in all countries are yellow and rotten right through," or else I may possibly, if this fails, be obliged to go to the other extreme of reasoning about Comrade McNey's methods. On the other hand, he says, "That the Communists of Russia on the average are well grounded on the fundamental principles of scientific Socialism; but they are not infallible. They are liable to make mistakes once in a while as the rest of us." So the Communist Party of Russia is evidently not entirely guilty, in fact there is still hope for it. Furthermore, the Socialist Party of Canada, is according to this authority, just as liable to commit mistakes. This will bear for future comparison. In fact if we go a few lines further we will find that he himself makes an unpardonable but I hope not an intentional mistake. He states that: "The left wing Communist Parties that are now clamoring for affiliation with the Third International, never knew there was anything the matter with the Second International, until Lenin pointed it out in the last two or three years." As a matter of fact, a division in the Second International occurred immediately on the outbreak of war. The Second International first came in for denunciation at the Zimmerwald Convention, September, 1915, next at the Kienthal Conference held six months later, and since then, a general policy of war was carried on by left wing groups against the old International with a clear issue in sight; the formation of a new International. It was the Russian revolution of March, 1917, which brought the final and decisive crisis in the old International. Thus it is plainly seen that Comrade McNey is entirely wrong in the above contention.

The article in many ways coincides with Stewart's position dealt with above, but before leaving the matter, I wish to point out that he, like the other defenders of the Party, declares the Socialist Party of Canada to be fully correct past, present and future. He does not even mention one objection to what he styles as the "eighteen demands" but furthermore, he charges Comrade Kaplan with intimidation and falsehood, in trying to gain his end. I admit the Socialist Party of Canada has principles in view; I contend, however, that it has no programme for realizing these principles. If by saying that, I am stating a falsehood I am intimidating the Party, then I certainly must be guilty, and should be condemned, but in this article, and in those

which will follow later (*) I hope to prove my contentions. What, Comrade McNey, has cowardice to do with intimidating "others into making fools of themselves" by "acting contrary to the dictates of their own intelligence and judgment, by calling them cowards?" He states in the third last paragraph that: "It is the privilege of any member of the Socialist Party of Canada to advocate affiliation." It is not my fault, if others, because I avail myself of this privilege, can be intimidated into making fools of themselves; it is because of the loose convictions of these intelligent (?) defenders of the Party. Men of strong convictions, intelligent men, are not afraid of intimidation, they are strong enough to stand arguments.

FRED W. KAPLAN.

(*)Editors Note: Comrade Kaplan asks for space for two further articles.

"ACTIONISTS" AND REVOLUTIONISTS

Calgary, Alta.

We are told in a recent article in the "Clarion" that what is required now is more "action" and less talking. This, by a critic of Jack Harrington, apropos affiliation with the Third International. As one who has been doing, is doing, and intends to keep on doing, a considerable amount of talking under the auspices of "The Socialist Party of Canada," I would say to Harrington's critic, along with the other "actionists," that more action and less acting would be of far more help, at the present time, in the enlightenment of our class to the end that it take upon itself to be rid of capitalism, than all the diatribes in the world.

Wherever Socialist locals are found, or, for that matter, in O. B. U. locals, or even in towns where neither exists, the "actionists" are always very much in evidence. At first contact with these comrades, and on hearing their constant use of the word "action," the impression is made that here, surely, is the revolution beginning to move; that in these "actionists" we have the vanguard of the movement. Enquiry, however, into the "action" carried on or proposed by these enthusiasts, quickly disposes of any hope that may have been generated as to the nearness of our emancipation through their efforts.

The S. P. of C., according to most of them, is out of date; it is a party of Marxian phrase-mongers, which, while supporting the Russian revolution, yet hesitates, and is woefully afraid to go the whole distance, by joining the Third International. Another way of denouncing the S. P. of C., used by these comrades, is to refer to those who have had the temerity adversely to criticize the conditions laid down for affiliation with the Third International, as "Kautskian."

Samuel Johnson's saying that "Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel," might well be used as the basis for another: "Kautskian" is the first and last retort to his antagonist of the ignoramus unable to meet the argument of an opponent in the class struggle."

Ask the "actionist" what he means; ask him what kind of action he proposes; and he will answer "action." Read his articles where he speaks of "action"; try to find out what kind of action he means and you will come right back to the word "action." With all of them talking is sneered at. Action it never was, is not now, nor will it ever be. Talking, indeed, is almost, with them synonymous with "in-action." The action of the "actionists" of course varies in different parts of the country. In some places where the prohibition act is not rigorously enforced, the "action" consists for the most part of swilling beer or playing pool, and so on, condemning ruthlessly mere "talking," and loudly advocating "action" the while. "Action" first, "action" second, "action" all the time. Always "action."

A group of "actionists," somewhere in Eastern Canada, makes allegations against the S. P. of C. in general, and against Jack Harrington in particular, quite in the Kautskian strain. Harrington is Kautskian to the core. Now, Harrington needs no defence from me; but the charges against him would, at least, be worthy of discussion were they made by one who had spent but a fraction of the

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