
No Unity with Anti-Revolutionary Party: Declaration of the NEC of the CLP, Adopted May 1, 1920

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Some members or groups of members of the Communist Labor Party have been approached by members of the Socialist Party on the question of unity. They wish unity at least for the time and for the purpose of a political campaign in the interest of Eugene V. Debs for President of the United States on the ticket of the Socialist Party.

In this connection the National Executive Committee of the Communist Labor Party issues the following statement:

The differences between the Communist Labor Party and the Socialist Party are fundamental ones and there is no common ground for unity.

The leaders of the Socialist Party realize this and state so in their individual and official utterances. Still they acquiesce in the attempts of some in their ranks to bring about unity. This stamps the whole attempt as one of the Socialist Party's contemptible opportunistic tricks to gather support for its candidate by selling its principles for votes. After election, again adhering to these opportunistic tactics, it sells out these voters by remaining true to its reactionary principles which betray the worker's cause.

The state is, and always has been, an instrument in the hands of the ruling class. The capitalist state, therefore, is and must be an instrument of capitalist rule and exploitation. By changing the personality of the operator of this machine of capitalist rule and exploitation the character of this machine can not be changed. The Socialist Party, therefore, organizing for, and aiming at the capture of the capitalist state does not aim at a proletarian revolution, but only aims for a chance to operate the machinery of the capitalist state in the interest

of the rule of capitalism, in the name of the workers, and under the pretense of Socialism.

The Communist Labor Party realizes the character of the capitalist state. It realizes that democracy, freedom, liberty, and political rights are empty phrases, and that the workers must organize for, and aim at, not the capture, but the destruction of the capitalist state, the setting up of a proletarian dictatorship as an instrument of the proletarian revolution.

The conception of the capture and use of the capitalist state is essentially counter-revolutionary and adherents to it strips a party of revolutionary character or intent. The second conception, that of abolishing the capitalist state and supplanting it with a workers state, is essentially revolutionary in character and must guide the activities of a proletarian revolutionary organization. The first is the conception of the Socialist Party. The second is that of the Communist Labor Party. There is no bridge between the two. Not even a personality like Debs can bridge over the chasm between revolutionary and anti-revolutionary conceptions. The question is one of principles and not one of personalities. **Debs can not create revolutionary prestige for the Socialist Party by accepting that party's nomination for President, but he loses his revolutionary prestige by allying himself with an essentially anti-revolutionary party.**

Comrade Debs, in an interview concerning the question of unity, is reported as saying that the Third International is not an issue because it does not exist as yet, but is a Russian institution only. This statement is so illogical and bare of all sense that we can not believe Comrade Debs to have made it.

The Third International is not an International in point of number of affiliations. Its international character must be manifested in its principles. In affiliations the Second International surely was international, but in principle and spirit it was rotted with nationalism to the core.

The principles of the Third International, however, are those of the international proletarian revolution. The fact that certain "Socialist Parties" can not or will not affiliate with it does not make the Third International unacceptable or rob it of its international character, but it makes undesirable and impossible any alliance with such "Socialist Parties" as cannot or will not affiliate with it.

There will be no unity because there can not be any. Debs as the candidate for any political office on the ticket of the Socialist Party is

as unacceptable for the revolutionary workers of the United States as he would be as the candidate of a Labor Party, or of any other bourgeois party.

Our members stand instructed not by the National Executive Committee, but by the principles our members promised to adhere to when they affiliated with the Communist Labor Party, not to heed the siren call of vote hungry Socialist Party-ites, but to strictly adhere to the principles of communism by ceaselessly working for the proletarian dictatorship and woking against any political party and its candidates who stand for the capitalist dictatorship.

Our members will refuse any dealings and conferences of any kinds with representatives of the Socialist Party. The comrades will answer such insults upon their intelligence and upon their integrity as revolutionary socialists, with the contempt such approaches deserve.

The National Executive Committee of the Communist Labor Party hereby notifies its membership that it was not officially represented at any conference held in Atlanta with Debs and that whatever anyone may have said in favor of campaign unity between the Communist labor Party and the Socialist Party at such conference is the direct opposite of the position of the Communist Labor Party. Members of the Communist Labor Party whose love for Debs overshadows their loyalty to communist principles should, in justice to our party and to themselves, resign from the Communist Labor Party. Discipline will be invoked in all cases where members support candidates of the counter-revolutionary Socialist Party.

The National Executive Committee.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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