
A Rebuke from Prison

by Emil Herman

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US Federal Penitentiary,
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Comrades:

Whereas it has come to my knowledge that the National Executive Committee, at their meeting held on May 24th to 28th, inclusive, 1919, did take certain arbitrary and unconstitutional action regarding certain foreign language federations of the Socialist Party, and did, moreover, exceed the authority of their office in “expelling” the state organization of Michigan, contrary to the constitutional requirements provided for suspensions and expulsions; and, further, that the NEC has ordered that National Referendum “B” and “C” be NOT TABULATED, but have selected an “investigating committee” to examine the individual ballots which are to be called in from all over the country — this despite the fact that the vote has NOT been challenged — and intend to exclude the votes of Michigan state organization and the “suspended” language federations in making final count.

I wish to express by PROTEST as a Socialist and a member of the National Executive Committee against each and all of the actions mentioned above. And I wish to be recorded as voting “NO” upon each of the foregoing propositions.

The NEC have, at all their meetings, seen fit to consider as “present” all its members who are, by action of the government, prevented from personally attending. As an expression of sentiment and comradely sympathy I, as one so detained, appreciate this graceful tribute very sincerely.

But when, as appears from the minutes of the recent NEC meeting, this imaginary “presence” is made use of in an attempt to constitute a quorum when no quorum exists in order to make wholesale expulsions from the party and to deprive the membership of expression through the referendum, I am constrained to PROTEST, and this most vigorously, such an undemocratic, unparliamentary, and un-Socialistic procedure.

Surely, as Socialists, we cannot afford to stoop to the use of such petty political trickery, nor should we wish to do so.

Emil Herman,
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Socialist Party of America.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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