
To Our Comrades In Kings County!

[Open Letter from Headquarters, Local Kings County, Socialist Party]

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Comrades:—

The Socialist Party has recently passed through a period of internal strife in Kings County which, for a time, caused general demoralization. A large group of the old members became honestly convinced that the party had betrayed its historic principles. This division also occurred in other cities and states. The Socialist Party held its National Emergency Convention a few weeks ago [Aug. 30-Sept. 5, 1919] and its record and proceedings are available for those who desire to ascertain the truth.

The party was said to have been committed to the Scheidemanns. It repudiated the Schiedemanns. It was said to have favored the Berne International. It repudiated Berne. It was said to be “Kolchakist,” that it was against the Soviet government of Russia. It again pledged its unqualified endorsement of Soviet power. It was said to favor counter-revolution. It was said to be tied to reactionary unionism. It heartily endorsed the widest possible industrial organization of the working class.

Every charge made by the “insurgents” was disproved by the Emergency Convention. They are now saying that the party called on police to control the convention. The facts are that police also attended the conventions of the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party. Police have attended all Socialist meetings in Chicago, New York, and other cities for several years. We cannot keep them out. The Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party could not keep them out. Each convention had them including secret agents of the government. So much for the second series of misstatements that are being made.

On the other hand, the two rival organizations formed at Chicago cannot agree with each other. They oppose each other and each has factions that are struggling for control. We ask you to read the programs and resolutions adopted by both of these rival conventions and contrast them with our own. Read what they are saying of each other and ask yourselves whether they are organizations that can live and secure the confidence and support of the working class.

They say that the Emergency Convention refused to seat any but so-called Right Wingers. Our proclamation to the membership and the records of the convention show that quite a minority of delegates with Left Wing sympathies were seated without any contest and helped to organize the convention. The record shows that quite a number of Left Wing delegates who were later contested were given seats in the convention. The record further shows that after giving them their seats quite a number of them refused to accept them! They did not want them. They were there for some other purpose than to participate in the convention to which they had been sent by the membership.

In every way the misrepresentation indulged in before the convention is carried on after the convention. Our answer is for the honest comrades who were recently with us who are undecided to consult the records and judge whether there are any real facts back of these misrepresentations.

The Socialist Party is still growing in Kings County and will continue to grow as the facts become known. Many of the old comrades have returned. Others will return. They are welcome in the party. They know that in the strife between the two minority factional parties organized at Chicago the latter cannot live. The strife has reached New York. In Manhattan a group of the members of one faction has issued a call to meet and take all power from the quarreling leaders. It is the last desperate hope of trying to save something from the Left Wing wreckage. It cannot be saved. It is hopeless, as events will show.

It has come to our notice that many of the sincere former members are quietly inquiring whether their applications will be accepted by the party. For that reason this announcement is made. While we recognize the grievous injury the party has suffered, while we understand the misrepresentations that caused it, yet we also recognize that many comrades were honest and conscientious in taking the course they did. There is no desire to indulge in a policy of vengeance. A few of the leading offenders who were responsible for the injury will be

excluded. But the mass of the honest members are welcome in the party at any time they desire to join.

Comrades: The crying shame of this strife has been that it was fostered at a time when the united service of the party was needed against the forces of capitalist reaction. Our comrades who lie in prison cells are sacrificed. The enemy is given a free hand in its persecutions. Our power and influence in the great industrial battles of the workers have been nullified. Our educational work was all but suspended. All because a few designing men wanted to “capture the party.” It is a tragedy that all should be ashamed of.

The Socialist Party is the party of uncompromising Socialism, the party of the workers, the American section of the International which will be erected on the ruins of a wrecked capitalist world. It is the party of the future in this country. To it we invited every honest, sincere, and devoted Socialist, no matter what his affiliations have been during the past few months.

Fraternally yours,

Local Kings County, Socialist Party.
Headquarters, 61 Graham Avenue, Brooklyn.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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