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# For the Adoption of the Communist Exclusion Plan

by **Otto Branstetter**

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The article in last week's *Chicago Socialist* headed "Expel Believers in 'The Third'? Up to Convention" is written in Comrade [J. Louis] Engdahl's best Communist style.

It follows the well established rules of Left Wing and Communist propaganda, of which Engdahl is a close student and admirer, by avoiding the real issues and resorting to misrepresentation, insinuation, half truths, and deliberate misstatements of fact.

Engdahl says, "It has created considerable interest among the Socialist parties of other countries." I challenge him to produce a single article in a European Socialist paper or a single communication from a Socialist party in any other country in support of this statement.

## **In Line of Policy.**

He questions the authenticity of the statement issued by the Communist International denying our application for affiliation, and calling upon their sympathizers to join the United Communist Party. This statement was first published in the *Russian Press Review* of October 1920, No. 5, and was later published in *The Communist*, official organ of the United Communist Party, as an authentic, official reply by the Communist International. There is no more reason for doubting its authenticity than there is for doubting any other statement or declaration from that quarter, and is in line with the policy followed by the Communists in splitting the Socialist parties in Italy, France, and other countries.

Engdahl's reason for doubting its authenticity is found, perhaps, in the fact that the communication ridicules the resolution he so proudly sponsored and says his "ideas were confused, permeated by cowardly compromise and petty bourgeois prejudices."

It is naturally difficult for Engdahl to believe that Zinoviev could make such a terrible mistake about him and his ability, but, as a matter of fact, it is the only statement issued by Zinoviev or the Executive Committee of the Communist International which shows any intelligent understanding of the individuals and factions in the American movement.

Engdahl says that our application for affiliation reached Moscow “only through a visitor to the Soviet Republic who was imprisoned for counterrevolutionary activity.” I deny this emphatically and challenge him to prove this statement.

It is true that the National Office “has never been in official communication with the Third International,” but that is not entirely the fault of the National Office, as Engdahl would have his readers infer. The Communist International was in communication with America. It had a courier service and sent communications and documents to the United States regularly. It could have sent communications to us as well as to other groups and individuals if it had wanted to. It did not want to; it had declared war on the Socialist Party and was out to “smash it” with the assistance of Engdahl, Holland, Glassberg, and others and had no desire to communicate with us.

The contemptuous manner in which Zinoviev refers to this group is no evidence that they are not doing his dirty work. Most people do despise the dupes who do their work.

These criticisms of Engdahl’s article are made first because they are really the least important. The statements I have challenged would mean nothing if they were true. What is really important is the manner in which he attempts to make the National Executive Committee responsible for this resolution.

When Engdahl says: “The party National Executive Committee, therefore, has seized upon an alleged condition, which it refuses to investigate, in order to find the basis for the expulsion of party members supporting or endorsing the Third International...” he lies, in the approved Communist manner.

### **The National Executive Committee.**

He knows that the resolution was submitted by the 13th Ward Branch of Chicago, and that a somewhat similar resolution was submitted by the 7th Ward Branch; he says so in his article. He knows

that the inclusion of a motion or resolution on the agenda does not indicate the approval of the National Executive Committee. He knows there are many motions included which the National Executive Committee does not support.

The facts are that the resolution came before the committee in the regular order from the 13th Ward Branch, that the committee had no previous knowledge of it; that a majority of the members did not favor its adoption at the time they placed it on the agenda.

Since his conversion to Communism, however, facts do not trouble Engdahl. When it comes to sabotaging or attacking the Socialist Party or its officials it is a mighty poor Communist who would let a few facts stand in his way.

So far as my position is concerned, I am for the adoption of the resolution. I introduced it in my ward branch and am glad of it. If there was any doubt in my mind of its advisability, this latest example of Communist methods would be enough to convince me.

### **No Logical Reason.**

The resolution is necessary and advisable. I hope it will be adopted. There is no logical reason why anyone supporting the Communist International should want to stay in the Socialist Party with honest intentions. They should not be allowed to stay with dishonest intentions.

Engdahl has no right to object to the resolution on the grounds of unfairness, free speech, or similar arguments. He advocates affiliation with the Communist International and acceptance of the 21 Points without reservations. The 21 Points demands the expulsion of Hillquit. The issue is clearly drawn. Engdahl makes it himself. Shall we expel Hillquit or Engdahl?

I vote enthusiastically for Engdahl. After all, we are still a Socialist party, and Hillquit is a Socialist. Let us keep Hillquit, Oneal, Shiplacoff, Maurer, and the other loyal, devoted Socialist comrades and permit Engdahl to obey his master's voice and join the United Communist Party.

*Edited by Tim Davenport*

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