

THE MONTANA NEWS.

ISSUED WEEKLY.

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ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The annual election of officers of the National Socialist Party—the National Secretary and the members of National Executive Committee—is pending. No election in the history of the Socialist Party, has calmed forth so much interest, excitement and controversy as this election.

It has been the intention of the News to give a thorough explanation of the issues at stake, but the heavy press of local matter, and also the financial necessity of curtailing on matter, have kept us from handling the subject as it should have been laid before our socialist readers.

What are called the impossibilist forces in the American labor movement are attempting to get hold of the administrative forces in the national organization. They want entire new control and methods (lack of method, the constructionists would say.) They are represented by Kerr and the International Socialist Review, those who yell "working class" at every step and frighten the working class into impotent and imprudent effort, those who babble loudly of "direct action" without much practical purpose in its program, those who seem to think that political action is about the last thing a political party has to attend to.

Those of the Industrial Workers who take any interest in the socialist party are interested along this side of the controversy. English Walling, a wealthy radical who calls himself a revolutionist, but seems to have no definite program to pursue, and does not belong to the party at all, has been considerably in evidence in the hysterics that have been stirred up.

In short we may say that the discontented programless element, the wild, the noisy the inexperienced, the irresponsible, are moving heaven and earth for a change their way.

The opposing force we may call the "ins" of the Socialist Party. They are those that call for constructive, practical, political work in society, and other means also, as there may be the occasion. They demand business efficiency, results, working to an end—along the lines of the successful European parliamentary parties.

Simons and the Chicago Daily Socialist are strongly advocating this policy. The Wisconsin socialists, who represent the only part of the American party that has accomplished anything of moment, and who have organized labor with them as a working political force, are making an active campaign in behalf of candidates who are capable of carrying forward this constructive policy in the party work. They are advocating the re-election of the entire old committee, with the exception of John M. Work.

The Appeal to Reason has also spoken which it seldom does in regard to party affairs. It doesn't want to offend anybody. It wants everybody to be a friend and work for the Appeal. It goes with the laissez faire principle—everybody for himself—we don't want any direction. Perhaps the Appeal thinks that some statesmanlike direction might not favor Appeal methods.

The News favors the Wisconsin idea, the ideas that are being enunciated by the most experienced American socialists. This is not to say

that we endorse blindly everything that Wisconsin socialists think or do. We may at times view the labor movement and its political action at a different angle from our eastern brethren. But the Montana News stands for sense, long, hard work, well-formulated plans, and definite political results for the working class, with any others that may be attained.

Noise and ignorance are at a discount with us. This is what we have stood for in Montana, and are trying to bring about, even though many old fossils are lost, and noise and bluster are forced to give way before practical results for the working class.

Thus we both prepare for resolutions and make them.

The complicated and absurd system of voting that has been foisted on the party by John M. Work's referendum is so misunderstandable that it is liable to lead to no election.

Question Entirely Speculative.

Mr. Charles H. Kerr:

In answer to your question I beg to say that so far as I know there is no immediate likelihood of a labor party. Consequently it seems to me the question put is entirely speculative. Furthermore, in case a labor party was formed, the entire party membership, in my opinion, would have to decide by referendum vote what attitude the Socialist Party should take. The seven members of the National Executive Committee have no more power in such matters than any other seven members of the party.

Nevertheless, I realize that organized labor is being forced to the wall and that, during the next few years. Many comrades see that possibility and it is but right that they should seek to know the attitude of those, who may occupy official positions in the party, in regard to that matter.

As a Socialist I should want to wait until I see what kind of a labor party was formed. In any case I doubt if I should think it advisable for the Socialist Party to merge itself with any other organization. Certainly before taking action a Socialist would want to have the Labor Party declare itself distinctly on the following lines. It would have to be a truly class-conscious labor party. It would have to declare itself absolutely opposed to any fusion or alliance with capitalist parties. It would have to place in its constitution a declaration that any members of the labor party that advocated the election of any capitalist candidate would thereby be excluded from the labor party. In other words, I, as a Socialist would want to know whether or not the labor party intended to be absolutely independent and to carry out actually on the political field the class struggle.

If such a party were formed no doubt all of us would want the Socialist Party to confer with the labor party at least in regard to candidates organizations would not be forced into so that these two working class or a bitter fratricidal war-fare thereby cutting each other's throats.

I believe in common with most other Marxian Socialists in every country that we want to help the working class to find its feet, to battle politically and industrially for its emancipation, but in my opinion we ought to keep our organization intact. We ought to continue to carry on our propaganda, to conduct our newspapers and forward Socialism with the same spirit and enthusiasm as now. Briefly my opinion is precisely that so well expressed by Frederic Engels many years ago: "I think all our practice has shown that it is possible to work along with the general movement of the working class giving up or hiding our own distinct at every one of its stages without

Fraternally yours,
ROBERT HUNTER.

Six per cent of the people, the capitalist class, own 82 per cent of the wealth, 19 per cent, the middle class, own 15 per cent, and 7 per cent, the working class, own 3 per cent of the wealth. The latter's share consists of houses and personal property, such as furniture, ect.

Reported Attempt to
Corrupt Organized
Labor

(Continued from First Page.)

bribe the carpenters of Deer Lodge to betray the spokesman of Organized Labor, the Montana News.

Not being able to keep the workmen of Deer Lodge from organizing themselves into unions, and being defeated in his attempt to victimize the president of the Machinist Union, and being foiled in his attempt to break the Retail Clerks' strike, Mayor Conley decided to endeavor to control the unions, or play one organization against another. The story as given the representative of the Montana News is as follows.

Conley made overtures to members of the Carpenters' Union that if that union would pass resolutions condemning the Montana News for exposing his rascality and union smashing policy that he, Conley, would give a number of carpenters steady work during the balance of the winter and would sign a working agreement with the Carpenters' Union, in return for that union using the white wash brush to cover up Conley's dark and dirty work.

The carpenters of Deer Lodge are union men and know that the Montana News is the only paper in Montana that fights the battle for organized labor, and refused to be a party to such a contemptible act as Conley tried to get them to do.

Conley seems to be a student of Parry and Post and must have been studying from Post's text book, "How to Control the Unions." It is the policy of the corporations and all those who make their money from the toll of the wage earners, to endeavor to control the unions that they have to deal with, if they can't destroy the union or prevent their employees from organizing themselves into unions.

The methods generally used by corporations and employers to control the unions is to have a Bunco Steerer inside the unions to do the dirty work for them. The work of the Bunco Steerer in the unions is to lead the workers into a trap set for them by the boss, or to lead the workers on to a side track where they will remain inactive while the boss skins them, or to get the workers mixed up in factional strife. Conley sees the unions in Deer Lodge organized become militant, the work of revolt and protest spread and in order to continue his graft he tries the tactics of Post by putting the Bunco Steerer at work; but in this case the bunco game would not work. If there are any Bunco Steerers in Deer Lodge, they have not made their appearance so far among the union men.

The eyes of all Organized Labor in Montana are fixed on the unions of Deer Lodge at present, and the union men of Deer Lodge must be true to

the historic mission of Labor. Convict Labor must go in Montana; for the present the fight is on in Deer Lodge, later on, when the time arrives to strike the blow at this form of slavery, the fight will become general through all Montana.

An Old Veteran Gone.

Comrade H. W. Wilkins, one of the oldest and best known workers, in point of service, in the Socialist movement of America, has been stricken down by the hand of death.

Comrade Wilkins during his long service lectured in nearly every state from the Atlantic to the Pacific. His last year of service to the party was rendered under extremely trying conditions as he had been afflicted with cancer. At the close of the campaign of 1908 he was forced to give up all active participation in propaganda work and retired to his home in Waverly, Mass.

Here, surrounded by his wife and three children, he battled against the inroads upon his life made by cancer of the mouth with all the fortitude and patience he could command.

Word comes from his bereaved wife that he passed quietly away Tuesday evening, January 18th, at 5:35. He was conscious to the last, death coming to him suddenly and unexpectedly.

Those who knew Comrade Wilkins will feel deep and sincere regret that such an untiring fighter for the freedom of the working class has been called away.

He has not been allowed to live to see Socialism triumph, but his friends and his sorrowing family can always recall that Comrade Wilkins was for a quarter of a century in the front ranks of the proletarian army and never wavered nor lost his faith in the ultimate triumph of the movement to which he gave his life.

Comrade Wilkins, the man, is gone. His work will live after him and be remembered for generations.

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