

# Socialist Party or Workers' Party

By LUDWIG LORE

Voting, in the past, was an easy matter. Either you belonged to the great majority that voted regularly for one or the other of the old political parties, voting the same ticket year after year, perhaps because you were, above all, a staunch party man, or changing your party allegiance at every election, because the past term had always so thoroughly convinced you of the absolute worthlessness of the party in power, that any candidate seemed better than the one before you. Or else you belonged to those voters who realized that there is no difference between the old capitalist parties, that both of them represent the interests of your exploiters against the interests of the working-class. Then you voted the socialist ticket as the only expression of working-class opinion. Very probably you did not even know exactly what it was that the socialists demanded. You had not taken the time to read their platform thoroughly. In general you knew that they stood with the workingman, and for the moment that was enough.

In this campaign it will not be quite so easy for you to decide. Of course if, in spite of all that has occurred in the past seven years, in spite of war and oppression, of unemployment and high prices, you are still prepared to cast your vote for the Democratic or the Republican parties, there is little more to be said. There your task narrows itself down to guessing which of the candidates is most likely to be personally honest. It's a game of heads you win and tails I lose. But if you believe that your vote must mean something, that it is the concrete expression of certain political views and certain more or less definite political principles, then the political situation with which you are confronted in the present campaign demands your serious attention.

Instead of a single party representing, or claiming to represent, the interests of labor, there are two in this campaign, the Socialist Party and the Workers' League. With the Socialist Party the voters are more or less familiar. The Workers' League, on the other hand, is a new organization with whose purposes and principles many are still unfamiliar. They are working-class parties in the sense that they are opposed to the domination of capitalist interests in our national, our state and municipal governments. Beyond that, however, there are differences between them that are so far-reaching and so all-important, that no working man who takes himself and his vote seriously should enter into this campaign without a fairly definite conception of their relative position.

The Socialist Party continues to occupy approximately the same position that it has held for the past twenty years. It demands, as it has always demanded, the public ownership of the important public utilities in the city, it calls upon the civic authorities to provide better schools, to inaugurate public improvements in order to procure work for at least a part of the men and women who are looking for jobs. It calls upon the voters of the city to elect its candidates to office so that they may use their political influence in the legislatures to improve the condition of the working-class, to do away with some of the most pressing outrages under which the workers of New York are suffering. While it never fails to insist, in this campaign perhaps even more religiously than on previous occasions, that the evils under which we are suffering are the result of capitalist misrule, and that only a government by the working-class can solve the problems that confront us, it is careful, under

all circumstances never to demand anything that could not be accomplished under capitalist rule. In other words, the demands of the Socialist Party are demands for reforms that could, with a sufficiently strong socialist minority in our legislative bodies, be forced upon a capitalist state or municipality, without in any way endangering its existence and integrity.

The Socialist Party has always prided itself upon the fact that the old parties have been forced time and time again to incorporate in their own platforms the demands that have been popularized by socialist propaganda. It has sponsored social insurance, minimum wage laws, child labor laws, laws regulating the hours of industry, laws providing for safety appliances and hygienic conditions in our industrial establishments, laws safeguarding the political rights of American citizens. Its representatives, whenever they were elected, strove almost without exception to force their capitalist opponents in the various legislatures to adopt measures that would alleviate in a measure the most acute miseries of the working-class.

This very desire to win reforms that would make the life of the worker a little easier has led the Socialist Party to become more and more modest in their demands. They formulate their measures so that they are in accord not with the needs of the working-class, but with the willingness of the parties of the ruling class to adopt them. Their representatives have again and again betrayed the most fundamental principles of the socialist movement because they feared that determined insistence upon these principles would bring political annihilation to the entire movement. They have foresworn the revolutionary movement, they have denied allegiance to Soviet Russia, they have repudiated affiliation with any international socialist movement, they have supported war measures, they have purged their party of every man and woman who openly supports and advocates proletarian revolution and the forcible overthrow of the capitalist system as the only hope of the working-class, because they are determined that their party shall be, first and foremost, at all times in a position to elect its candidates, so that they may make use of all legal means for improving the condition of the American proletariat. Having once taken this position, it follows as a natural consequence that the organization must insist at all times upon its legal character. It must emphasize that the Socialist Party stands for the achievement of working-class rule by democratic and constitutional methods only, and that it is unalterably opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Undoubtedly it can be argued that there is room in American politics for an honest reform party. America stands far behind all European countries in all social reform measures, and a strong Socialist Party could perhaps force the adoption of some such movement. There is room for a party in America that will represent those elements in the working-class that are fairly satisfied with conditions as they are, that are opposed to the overthrow of the capitalist system, but believe that the working-class should force upon its rulers a sort of benevolent paternalism, that will take care of those unfortunates who through illness, accident or unemployment are condemned to temporary or even permanent suffering under the present system of unlimited and unrestricted capitalist control. There is room for a party that will represent those elements in the working-class and in the bourgeoisie who still uphold the American

## OUR PRISONERS

In the September issue of the Bulletin of the National Defense Committee, we reported that Ben Gitlow, candidate for Mayor of New York City on the Workers' League Ticket, and Isaac Ferguson, engaged in preparing the Ferguson-Ruthenberg briefs, had quite suddenly and unexpectedly been transferred to Auburn, while Winitzky had been transferred to Great Meadow. In Winitzky's case this plan to remove him to Great Meadow was not carried out, and Ferguson has again been brought back to Sing Sing. Of course it is very important that Ferguson should be within easy reach of New York City while he is preparing his legal briefs. As for Gitlow, with his appeal coming up this month, it is also imperative that he can be easily accessible to his attorneys who have been instructed to make the request that he also be brought back to Sing Sing. Ruthenberg was transferred to Dannemora at the same time that Gitlow and Ferguson were taken to Auburn, but he has now been brought back to Sing Sing.

### GITLOW-WINITZKY APPEAL

The Gitlow-Winitzky Appeal comes up this month. Our drive to raise funds for this appeal is still on. Lawyers cannot serve us without money. The decision in Gitlow's case will effect all the other criminal anarchy cases. Funds we must have. We have borrowed money to pay our lawyers for past work so that they could take up this appeal for us. The money we borrowed must be paid back within 90 days, and other money raised to meet the expense of the Appeals and trials scheduled for this fall and winter. We need help! Can't you, each one who reads this, bring this matter before your union and make an appeal for help? We have no rich, middle-class people to support us; we must depend for all support upon the workers. Do not fail us! These men are in jail now because of their efforts in behalf of the workers. Failure to support them simply means desertion in the hour of their greatest need.

### MINIMUM BUDGET FOR NEXT THREE MONTHS

Actual Expenses		Additional Expenses (Estimate)	
Hale, Nelles & Shorr .....	\$1,200	Ferguson-Ruthenberg appeal .....	\$ 250
Hale for Gitlow-Winitzky .....	550	Lindgren-Amter-Jakira .....	3,000
Incidental legal fees .....	800	Lindgren, Federal .....	500
Services .....	150	Jakira, Sullivan case .....	500
Gitlow Record .....	300	Three Bronx Women cases .....	3,500.00
Ellis Island Commissary .....	370	Deportation cases .....	1,000
Relief (\$300 per month) .....	900	Cortland, N. Y. cases .....	800
<b>Total actual expenses .....</b>	<b>\$4,270</b>	<b>Total estimate .....</b>	<b>\$9,406</b>
		<b>Total actual and estimated .....</b>	<b>\$13,670</b>

### READ THIS BUDGET—\$13,670—

That is what is required to meet the obligations of the National Defense Committee in New York during the next three months. The Committee has in its treasury \$661.16. Of this, \$300 has been borrowed and must be paid back as soon as possible. And we have over \$13,000 to raise. Every person interested in the fate of our class-war and political prisoners must set to work to do his utmost to assist.

(NOTE). Our financial report shows only \$48.94 as the balance in the treasury at the end of September, but since then we have made desperate effort and have managed to increase the balance on hand, though the actual balance will disappear and we shall be in debt as soon as we pay our lawyers. We face a situation that will require the undivided support of all who are interested in our political offenders.

traditions of political liberty. There is room for a party that will represent the pacifist, anti-war elements in our population who still believe that education and propaganda can bring about the cessation of all wars under capitalist rule.

Inasmuch as the Socialist Party has attempted to unite these elements into one movement, somewhat after the pattern of the British Labor Party, we have no quarrel with it. It is when the Socialist Party, in its platform and through its speakers still insists that it stands for the overthrow of capitalism, when it still pretends sympathy to Soviet Russia, the forerunner of a world-wide proletarian revolution, that we object in the most emphatic terms. The Socialist Party is dishonest when it claims to represent the revolutionary proletariat of the United States. It is dishonest when it claims that its ultimate goal is the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' republic. The Socialist Party to-day is as truly counter-revolutionary as is the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. Its revolutionary phrase-mongering is nothing but a revolting attempt to hold in its ranks those men and women who are ready to join a revolutionary movement.

It is poor policy to try to be clever in great things. That the Socialist Party has learned to its own loss. It tries to appeal to all classes, to capture all shades of opinion. And in consequence antagonizes them all. The liberal bourgeoisie, where it possesses sufficient courage to become a

political factor, has joined the Farmer Labor Party because it openly and honestly espouses a program of reform, without resorting to phrases which in their very nature must be repugnant to the delicately nurtured sensibilities of our middle-class professionals. On the other hand, the revolutionary working-class, the former membership of the Socialist Party, is leaving the organization *en masse*. All over the country entire local and even state organizations are severing their allegiance with the party which no longer represents their ideals. The Socialist Party, though in this campaign it may still poll a large vote from among the disgruntled workers and shop-keepers, is on the downward road toward complete disintegration.

In the present campaign there is only one party that represents the principles of the revolutionary socialist, the Communist movement. The Workers' League makes no secret of its revolutionary character. It is not afraid to tell the working-class that capitalist reforms, even when they are won by a determined working-class. The Workers' League recognizes that the working class pays doubly and triply for every reform measure by intensified production, that the capitalist class will reimburse itself for every penny that the working man and the working woman gets in the form of social insurance by intensified exploitation.

Lastly, the Workers' League dares, openly, to espouse the cause of Soviet Russia, because it knows that a proletarian republic, a Soviet Republic, is the only hope of the class-conscious American working-class.