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# A Short Cut to Revolution

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The December [1916] issue of the *International Socialist Review* contains an article entitled "The Left Wing" by S.J. Rutgers, being an account of the alleged formation of a movement within the Socialist Party by so-called "revolutionists." As it is stated that this proposed organization expects to organize in all parts of the country, it will be of interest to the comrades to know just what part this movement has played in the Socialist Party of Massachusetts, where the "hybrid" first made its appearance.

The program is a very modest one, being nothing less than the organization of the Socialist Party of the United States on a "correct basis" and after this is accomplished the movement in other parts of the world will be taken care of by the founding of a "new International." In Attleboro, Salem, Malden, Beverly, and Boston, the men connected with this movement have largely dominated with the following results: Attleboro, the local has disappeared and the only agitation carried on there has been by the State Office. Salem and Beverly, the same story. These three cities once had large and active locals. The policies of the "revolutionists" organized the movement out of existence. Boston, the membership has declined, many members leaving in disgust. Malden, once having 4 branches, now has 1. In all of these cities there would have been no meetings during the Presidential campaign were it not for the State Office sending speakers.

In Boston the [Socialist] Propaganda League

is mainly represented by Lettish Branch 1, which controls the City Committee. Members of this branch stated that they would not vote the Socialist Presidential ticket; they have repeatedly repudiated political action; they refused to arrange a meeting for the Presidential candidate of the party [Allen Benson]; they refused even to arrange street meetings; they did not help the campaign in the state; they forced through the City Committee a resolution defining tactics for the party in which political action was not included, but advising the working class to wage "civil war" against the capitalist class.

No financial aid was received from these "revolutionists" for the campaign. They controlled the state organization in 1913-1914, and when the finances of the State Office became known it was found that they had accumulated a debt of over \$1,200. That debt has been paid off in 2 years since they went out and two campaigns have been waged and all new obligations have been paid. While controlling the state they conceived the "revolutionary" idea of making the State Office a mail-order house for dealing in coffee and "selling beans for the revolution."

They propose to establish "Democracy instead of Autocracy" in the Socialist Party. Many of them repudiate decisions of the membership in referendums when these decisions do not agree with their own views. Their "democracy" had a fit setting in meetings of the Boston City Committee. It should be seen to be appreciated. One ses-

sion was a howling, screaming mob and members had to close the windows and doors to avoid the police.

Rutgers advises others in organizing the [Socialist] Propaganda League to worry “about this being the most formal way” of organizing within the party. The formal way provided by the party does not appeal to them for these super-men are superior to referendums, conventions, and constitutions. They must have an inner circle within the party. Composed of Syndicalists, Direct Actionists, IWWs, anti-religious bugs, and a hash of other views, they constitute the queerest collection of opinions that will be found anywhere in the country.

What the future has in store for them is seen in Lettish Branch 1 of Boston. This is a part of the Lettish [Latvian] Federation which is split into factions because the men who are [Socialist] Propaganda Leaguers control it, and the two are tearing each other to pieces over “proper tactics.” Translations of the Lettish organ, *Stradneeks*, show that the Socialist Party is continually denounced for practically every position it has taken in re-

cent years. This is a forecast of what may be expected should the “revolutionists” get support elsewhere.

Insisting on industrial unionism, few of them belong to any union; they have not the ability to organize one. Having wrecked Socialist locals, they are unable to reorganize them or organize others. All that they are capable of doing is to saddle the party with debts, and to refuse to cooperate with it in campaigns, refuse to even wage a campaign of their own to reach the working class, adopt “burning resolutions,” and block all efforts of the party based upon majority decision in conventions and referendums.

Finally, the Socialist Party of Massachusetts is sound; it is committed against militarism; it bases its agitation on the class struggle, and has always accepted the decisions of the membership in the state and the nation. It does not deviate from the principles and policies of a working class party. If comrades want to try the methods of the [Socialist] Propaganda League, they will find its record outlined above. If you want this thing, well, this is the thing you want!

***Edited by Tim Davenport.***

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