
Declaration to the Members of the Socialist Party of America of the Communist Propaganda League: With comments by Alexander Stoklitsky, Feb. 6, 1919.

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Newark, NJ

(From Newark Headquarters of Communist Party)†

To all the members of the American Socialist Party:

The Communist Propaganda League of the city of Chicago and vicinity was founded on November 7, 1919, the day of the first [anniversary] of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, also the first day of German Revolution.

There gathered a group of comrades consisting of the representatives of the Bolshevik Federation of the American Socialist Party and several important active members of the local Socialist movement, who thoroughly agree to the program and principles of the Russian Bolsheviks. The above mentioned comrades gathered in order to talk over the state of affairs in our movement and to determine the methods and means of directing our American Socialist Party to the truly revolutionary way.

At the time when this little meeting took place, the meeting of the few comrades devoted to the interests of the International Revolutionary Proletariat, the streets of the city of Chicago were filled with rejoicing masses of the people who celebrated the armistice. Masses of the Chicago proletariat crowded the streets and full of mad joy wildly rejoiced what to them seemed to be the end of the imperialistic war. Endless masses of proletarians were on this day practically the

masters of this city. They lacked just one thing which would elevate them to the standard of the enlightened proletariat of Europe — they had no revolutionary ideas.

The Communist Propaganda League was organized of the purpose of propaganda of the truly revolutionary ideas of the proletariat in order to indicate to the American proletarian masses the true Revolutionary way which is followed by the international workingman who is on the way to complete economic and political freedom from the yoke of capital.

The program of the Communist Propaganda League:

We, the members of the Communist Propaganda League, appeal to you as members of the American Socialist Party, to all the other members of our party, and we speak not only in the interest of our party but also in the interests of the truly revolutionary proletarian movement throughout the United States. Each and every truly revolutionary and thinking socialist must criticize the principles and tactics of our American Socialist Party — must criticize their conception of the political struggle as too narrow for the party of the revolutionary proletariat; must criticize their platform and program, which in character might be called the platform and program of the reformers and small bourgeoisie rather than the platform and program of the revolutionary proletariat; also worthy of criticism is the fact that our party proved to be not on sufficient

†- This document seems to have been seized during the Palmer Raids of Jan. 1920. The parenthetical notation was probably inserted by the Bureau of Investigation transcriptionist who typed up this document. Lack of facility by the author with use of the word “the” indicates that this is likely a translation from the Russian or the writing of a native Russian speaker.

height to be able to unite the revolutionary elements of the industrial proletariat; that the very form of the organization of our party proved too complicated, too unprepared in order to respond to the current events speedily and aptly for the proper propaganda of the revolutionary ideas. To anticipate also the fact that our party, which took at [the] St. Louis conference [Emergency National Convention: April 7-14, 1917] a definite position against the participation of the American proletariat in the imperialistic war, did not allow this stand to develop and to give logical results.

What is noticed in the party is a certain ready for compromise conservatism in reference to the leading role of the Russian Bolsheviks in the industrial affairs of the Proletariat. The Party all in all does not take into consideration to a sufficient degree the importance of mass demonstrations of the proletariat, which are the only means of leading us to the revolution. Besides, our party still believes in the pre-election campaign and pure parliamentary system as the revolutionary means, notwithstanding the fact that the experience of the past 2 years proved sufficiently the emptiness of the belief in this method.

Turning all this many-sided criticism of the activities of our Party into definite requirements, the Communist Propaganda League offers the following program as the obligatory basis of our revolutionary work:

1. Union and cooperation of activities in the affairs of the International Proletariat is to be only with those revolutionary socialists of other countries who, like the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), remained true to the ideas of the International Proletariat.

2. Socialistic propaganda must be exclusively the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat: Socialist movement must be built only upon the revolutionary following of the enlightened proletariat. The end must be put to the use of small bourgeois reforms as a basis for the activities of the Socialist Party.

3. Socialist principles and platform in which must be given the revolutionary demands of the proletariat only. Down with hypocrisy and running after the votes! Platform as revolutionary movement!

4. Uphold such political changes as will guarantee the control of industry by the proletariat, but not the political changes based upon the bourgeois "De-

mocracy."

5. Solidarity of the Socialist Party with class-conscious industrial unions.

6. Unification of all proletarian demonstrations and protests constitutes a part of the revolutionary class struggle. Political actions including political strikes and demonstrations and also to be in cooperation with the industrial mass movements.

7. No compromises of any kind with any group whatsoever which is not devoted to the class struggle, such as Labor Party, People's Council, Non-Partisan League, League of Municipal Property, etc.

8. The working class must be organized for the purpose of protest against all the imperialistic wars no matter if they are "for the defense of your country" or for the "Democracy." Such opposition must be carried through, including refusal from conscription and taking part in general strikes. The working people must take part in the wars of the proletarian Revolution only and in such wars to parry the attack against the Proletarian Government.

9. Sensible ideas of the limited possibilities of a bulletin as the weapon of the revolution or the "justice" [of] the capitalistic countries and trust only in mass force, mass actions of the proletariat.

10. Centralized party organization corresponding very closely to the centralized imperial control which must be overthrown.

- a. Organization for quick action and immediate response to new situations; to have a National Executive Committee consisting of paid party comrades and propagandists with offices in the National Office.

- b. Definite and easy control of the members over all the party executive organs, and people.

- c. Party control over all the comrades chosen for the official positions.

- d. Control over all official publications by the members of the party through the regular Executive Committee but not through the independent special commissions or guardians.

- e. To organize a central lecture and information bureau.

- f. Definite party platform, propaganda, dues, and methods of organization.

Remarks: Members of the Executive Committee of Chicago Communist Propaganda League are

comrades:

Robert Howe

Adolph Dreifuss

Alexander Stoklitsky

S.A. Kopnagel

William Bross Lloyd

Secretary: Isaac Edward Ferguson.

Secretary's address: 803 West Madison, Room
422, Chicago, Ill.†

Only members of the Socialist Party are accepted
as members of the Communist Propaganda League.

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Dear Comrades:

Secretaries of the Russian Federation of ASP
(American Socialist Party) completely agree with the
activities of the given League and offer all their branches
to make all efforts to organize such Leagues in their
local towns so as to uphold the left movement devel-
oping in our party.

With comradely regards,

Translator-Sec'y: A. Stoklitsky.

Chicago, Ill.

Feb. 6, 1919.

†- 803 West Madison St. was the headquarters building of the Socialist Party, which housed offices for both Alexander Stoklitsky, Translator-Secretary of the Russian Socialist Federation, and Adolph Dreifuss, Translator-Secretary of the German Federation. I.E. Ferguson did not have an office in the National Office, however, indicating that the de facto head of the organization was probably Stoklitsky.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport.

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