
Simons, Gaylord, and Others

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Some years ago, when the Socialist party was witnessing a rapid growth in membership and votes, and it appeared that sooner or later it would



become a great power and send many representatives into the halls of our legislative bodies, certain men, and among others Charles Edward Russell, Max Eastman, J.G. Phelps Stokes, Ernest Poole, William English Walling, and others, became active in the movement, wrote long-winded

articles about the glories of Socialism and the curse of capitalism, arranged long speaking tours, and became very prominent and popular in the movement.

Later on, when Socialist papers born overnight went under and the millions of votes predicted failed to materialize and the easy picking of our popular speakers disappeared, then these learned gentlemen turned to other ways and began to predict all over again. Walling discovered a new kind of Socialism and a new way to get it. Direct action became his gospel and for some time he devoted his tremendous fund of prophecy to predicting a glorious future for the syndicalist movement. Then the war broke out and Walling and the other gentlemen mentioned again lost their equilibrium. As the campaign of 1916 developed, they strayed farther and farther from the old faiths and beliefs, and finally found themselves standing for all they had fought against a few years

before in their stand for Woodrow Wilson, because "he kept us out of war with honor."

Of course, these gentlemen had at one time stood for peace and opposed war, and many and brilliant were the articles and books put forth by them, all of which proved that the wars of this age were the outgrowth of the capitalistic system.

Then came the entrance of the United States into the war, and these gentlemen again changed front. They were for Wilson in the fall of 1916, because "he kept us out of war." Now they are for him because he "sent us forth to war to slay autocracy." It is enough to say that these men have repudiated everything they ever stood for when they were active in the Socialist Party. They are no longer active in our movement, but are engaged actively in fighting it. They are for the war and against the Socialist Party, because it is against this and every other war. If any of these gentlemen still belong to the party, the only self-respecting thing they can do is to sever their connections with it. If any of them belong to the party and will not get out, then the only self-respecting thing the party can do is to put them out without delay. They are fighting for the ruling classes of the world. Let the ruling classes take care of them.

Just now the capitalist press is running accounts of a special committee formed by these gentlemen, through which they are advising the Russian Social Democracy, represented by the Council of Workmen and Soldiers, to beware of the designs of the German government for a separate peace, in which they accuse the German Socialist Party of being the tool of the kaiser and

denounce the program announced by both the Russian Socialist movement and the German Socialist movement to establish peace without indemnities and annexations. This is enough to make the devil celebrate May Day in Hades. Here we have Russell, Walling, and Poole standing for indemnities and annexations and denouncing Hillquit and Lee as pro-German because they are in favor of the conference called to meet early in June at Stockholm, Sweden, a conference that is called for the sole purpose of trying to find a way to establish universal peace and rebuild the International.

It has become the fashion of A.M. Simons and W.R. Gaylord to call every Socialist that stands for peace and opposes war "pro-German." This is especially so since the St. Louis Convention [April 7-14, 1917] demonstrated that regardless of how many of our former intellectual sky pilots go wrong, the party as represented by the rank and file is going to stand up and fight the growth of militarism to a finish.

Since the St. Louis Convention Simons and Gaylord have gone the limit. Article after article has appeared in the capitalist press denouncing the delegates and the party and warning the membership to kill the majority report [on war and militarism]. These twin intellectual giants have even gone so far as to visit the federal authorities and endeavor to have the government take action against the report of the majority and against the [Socialist] press for giving it publicity. All appearances indicate that the officials of the government have far more sense than either Simons or Gaylord. The *Milwaukee Leader* states editorially that Simons is in the pay of the Defense League of the state of Wisconsin.

The simple truth is that when the test came to our movement and the delegates of the St. Louis Convention met that test with a resounding proc-

lamation against all wars, Simons and Gaylord got cold feet, turned yellow, and now are busy denouncing the party in the columns of the capitalist press.

The only crime of the party is that it has reaffirmed its anti-war position, a position it has occupied from the beginning. And the fact is that Simons, Gaylord, Russell, Spargo, Walling, [Job] Harriman, and the rest of the gentlemen now opposing the party are doing exactly the same thing they condemned the German Socialists for doing when they voted the war credits at the beginning of the conflict. The only difference is that the German comrades have seen their mistake and are doing all within their power to remedy it, while the gentlemen that would run the party in this country, but can not, are rushing deeper and deeper into the capitalist mire.

Those who are not against war are for war and there is no place in the Socialist movement for the war advocate. There should be no delay. The Socialist party organization of Milwaukee should act at once. Simons and Gaylord must go and the sooner the better.

Our movement stands where the roads fork. There is no neutral ground. Those that are not for us are against us. The position of the Socialist Party is alone worthwhile. Purified by the fires of the conflict, the Socialist International will rise stronger than ever before. It will be doing business when the grass is growing over the grave of Simons, Gaylord, Russell, and the other gentlemen whose superior intelligence makes it possible for them to change their minds every time they get cold feet. In spite of the disintegrating influences of the conflict, in spite of the opposition from without and the enemies from within, we will weather every storm and bid defiance to all our enemies.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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