
Minutes of the Left Wing Section of Greater New York: First Membership Meeting — April 20, 1919.

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Regular membership meeting of the Left Wing Section, Socialist Party, held April 20, 1919, at Manhattan Lyceum, 64 East 4th Street.

Meeting was called to order at 2 pm.

Gitlow elected Chairman and Lindgren Vice Chairman.

About 800 members were present.

An order of business was submitted, and with one amendment, to wit: that good and welfare betaken up before adjournment, was adopted.

A Resolutions Committee was selected, consisting of Wolfe, Cohen, Brodsky, Hourwich, MacAlpine, Lindgren, Blueglass, Pflanzner, and Wilenkin.

A motion was carried to have the proceedings of the meeting interpreted into Russian by Himmelfarb for those Russian members who are not familiar with the English language.

The Executive Committee reported that the inception of the Left Wing Section dates back to the joint Central Committee meeting, where a portion of the members bolted and then retired to another part of the building and held a meeting of their own. The Left Wing Section has now a membership of about 4,000 in Greater New York, and various local branches throughout the nation have become affiliated with the movement. The report was accepted.

The Financial Secretary reported the total receipts, since the first membership meeting of the Left Wing, were over \$1,000. That the expenditures amounted to about \$700 and that there is a balance of about \$300. Report was accepted.

An appeal was then made by the chairman for a contribution and collection was taken up, which netted \$329.43.

A message sent by Comrade Martens, who was

unable to attend in person, extending his allegiance and support to the Left Wing movement, was delivered by Comrade Hammer.

The minutes of the City Committee were read and accepted with one correction. A motion was carried to limit discussion on all questions to three minutes. The minutes of the last Executive [Committee] meeting were read and adopted.

The Resolution Committee then reported as follows:

1st — May 1st resolution — asking for a demonstration and strike on that day. The resolution was adopted by rising vote.

2nd — Lawrence Strike resolution — pledging moral and financial support to the Lawrence strikers. The resolution was accepted and a motion made that a collection be taken up. The motion was carried and a collection was made which netted \$143.69.

3rd — Political Prisoners resolution — declaring our solidarity and unity with imprisoned comrades and calling on the members of our class to organize for the release of all class war prisoners; to oppose participation in bourgeois liberal amnesty conventions and to define our attitude on that question at the National Emergency Convention. Accepted.

4th — Local New York resolution — that Left Wing members of Local New York support the nomination of Maximilian Cohen as the Executive Secretary of Local New York, and the nominations of Fraina, Hourwich, and Lindgren as the delegates to the National Executive Committee and Fraina, Reed, Ferguson, and Ruthenberg as the delegates to the International Congress. Resolution accepted.

5th — *New York Call* resolution — to support the *New York Call*, provided that ownership and con-

trol of the *New York Call* is vested in the membership and that referendum on the question is taken immediately. Resolution adopted.

An announcement was made at this time that the Ukrainian Federation of the United States had joined the Left Wing. A motion was made to protest against the *Forward* calling itself a Socialist paper until it becomes party-owned and controlled, and to demand the removal of its name from the party membership card. An amendment was made referring the matter to the City Committee, which was carried. The meeting then proceeded with the hearing of the resolutions.

6th — Socialist Party resolution — demanding a referendum on the question of expulsion of party members and repudiating the reactionary measure of the State Committee, and to stand behind every member, branch, or organization expelled, and to express condemnation and contempt against those attempting to expel revolutionary elements. Resolution accepted.

7th — New York Executive Committee resolution — to instruct the membership of Greater New York to send full quota of delegates to the Conference of the Left Wing Section to be held in Boston in June. Resolution accepted.

8th — Instruction to Left Wing Delegates — to empower the City Committee to prepare and adopt all New York instructions for the guidance of Left Wing delegates to the conference. Resolution accepted.

9th — On Mexico — pledging our class solidarity to the Mexicans. Resolution adopted and referred to the City Committee for style.

10th — *The New York Communist* — approving the action of the City Committee in issuing the *New York Communist* and pledging our moral and financial support to same. Resolution adopted. Comrade MacAlpine then submitted the need for money for the issuance of the Communist and asked for financial support. A motion was carried to hold a Red Week for the benefit of the *Communist* and the Jewish *Kampf*, consisting of mass meetings, concerts, bazaars, etc. A motion was carried to elect a committee of three to devise ways and means of raising additional funds, the

committee consisting of Comrades Solomon, Sacks, and Volodin.

A resolution was then submitted asking that we endorse the *Kampf* as a Jewish Left Wing publication.

A motion was made to limit the sale of the *Communist* to party members. The motion was defeated.

A motion was made to hold a parade on May 1st, starting at Rutgers Square and ending at Union Square. The motion was defeated.

The amendment to have a demonstration consisting of open air meetings was carried.

A motion was carried to send a telegram of good cheer to Debs.

A motion was carried to refer the election of delegates to the Left Wing Conference to the City Committee. Carried.

A motion was carried that the City Committee call a special membership meeting before the Left Wing Conference is held, and submit the names of the delegates elected and the instructions given them to be followed at that conference.

The 17th AD Branch then reported that the Executive Committee on its own initiative dissolved their branch and then reorganized it. That no charges have ever been preferred against the branch nor did the Grievance Committee take any action at any time on that branch.

That the Reorganization Committee meeting was held on Sunday, April 20th, and only Right Wingers were permitted to enter the hall and participate in the proceedings. That 35 members attended that meeting and proceeded with the elections of new delegates to the Central Committee, electing 13. That prior to this organizational meeting, on Thursday, April 17th, at a regular meeting, 10 Left Wing delegates were elected to the Central Committee to replace the others. That in view of the organization meeting, they anticipate considerable trouble at the next Central Committee meeting and asked for a committee from the meeting to cooperate with them in this fight. A motion was carried to elect such a committee and the following were elected: Reed, Cohen, Joseph Brodsky, MacAlpine, Hourwich, Carl Brodsky, and Hammer.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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