

# Not Hillquit Alone--But the Socialist Party

By S.M. DARC'Y

(A Criticism of the "Left Socialist" position towards Hillquit's suit to recover Soviet Baku Oil for the czarist owners.)

(Concluded from yesterday's issue)

When the storm over his oil suit broke around Hillquit's ears, the cowardly Thomas sent his letter to the New Leader doubting the wisdom of Hillquit's action. This is precisely the danger of Thomas' treachery. His position is basically no different from Hillquit's. But under pressure of mass sentiment he mouths phrases concerning the good Five Year Plan, etc., only to be in a better position to undermine the First Workers Republic. In action and in theory as well Thomas is just as reactionary as Hillquit. In answer to the first criticism levelled at him Hillquit issued a statement in which he declared that "the right of a government to nationalize industries with or without compensation is not questioned in the complaints." He pointed out that his suit is based on the legality of the Soviet Government itself. But Norman Thomas, that famous left-winger, does question the right of a government to nationalize industries without compensation. In his book "America's Way Out" he says:

**There is much to be said for compensating those who are first singled out for the socialization of their property--after all, a great many owners are guilty of no worse crime than playing the game by the established rules.**

In the face of all these facts how can the granting of the demands made by the Socialist party branches and in Comrade Henderson's letter against Hillquit help in the least. Suppose Hillquit is removed and Thomas put in his place as Chairman of the Socialist party, will that solve the problem for the workers? Not at all. On the contrary, making such a change under the illusion that it does away with the counter-revolutionary position of the Socialist party can only further betray the workers into the hands of the bourgeoisie and their lieutenants in "Socialist" masquerade. The characteristic of "Hillquitian Socialism," Socialist party "Socialism," and Norman Thomas' "Socialism" is that none of it is really Socialism but only bourgeois propaganda in a form aimed to mislead the masses. Socialism can only be built under a workers dictatorship.

Also there are some who think that it is only the American Socialist Party which has become so reactionary. They believe that the international socialist movement is true to the principles of socialism, or at least to the interests of the working class. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In the Vienna Congress of the 2nd International the first point on the agenda was "the fight for disarmament and against the war danger." The reporter on this main report was Senator de Brouckere of Belgium. The chief point in this main report was obviously to point out the source of the war danger, so as to be clear as to where to direct the attack of the "socialists." Senator Brouckere did this. With great flow of oratory he declared--the Soviet Union (!) to be the creator of the menace of a new world war for reaction. We quote:

**Where do we hear in the world today the most challenging words about howitzers, machine guns and submarines? There in those countries where an enemy band from the very midst of the people themselves has seized power and where the feudalism of a former day has given way to the feudalism of the banks and the big industries. We see forces everywhere working cynically for war and they are the same forces as are preparing for civil war.**

Can this be any plainer? Could the "socialists" serve their capitalist masters any more than this? The 2nd International says the Soviet Union seized power and is now using this power in order to provoke a world war in order to establish the "feudalism of the banks and big industries." It is also obvious from the above that this is the theoretical justification for the interventionist attacks on the U. S. S. R. And it is still more obvious that the foul source of these words, the Labor and Socialist International, is the enemy of the world's workers to a degree matched only by the imperialists themselves.

This is the position of the Congress itself. The position of its individual leaders and sections is even worse. Listen for example to a line in the hymn published by "Robotnik," the central organ of the P. P. S. (Polish Socialist Party):

**"Workers! Trample the Muscovites under foot like reptiles, sow their ground with their corpses!"**

Yes, indeed! The workers will treat their enemies as reptiles but they will know that these gentlemen are their enemies! Senator Brouckere, Morris Hillquit and Norman Thomas are silent and open partners to this provocation to pogroms and intervention. Yet they have the gall to talk of "peace" and the danger of war from the U. S. S. R.

Are there any sincere workers who support the "socialist" party? If there are do you know that the Mensheviks, the political blood brothers of Hillquit and Thomas, oh yes, and of Heywood Broun, called in the imperialist armies

against the Russian workers and peasants?

This happened all through Russia and had the approval and help of the S. P. leaders in the U. S. In autumn of 1918 in Odessa; in July, 1918, in the very same Baku oil fields for which Hillquit's mouth now waters; in Georgia; in the North of Russia where the American troops were stationed; in fact everywhere the Mensheviks allied themselves with the worst enemies of the workers against the First Workers' Republic.

Needless to say the lawyers and preachers in the 2nd International and "socialist" party all supported the Russian Mensheviks. They will do likewise in the event of any appropriate (for them) occasion in the future. In fact they have already proven that this is so. When the saboteurs were caught in the Soviet Union and brought to trial, and before the Second International was aware that they had confessed and repented, Wells, president of the German social democrats, declared:

**The trial in Moscow is the trial of our Russian social democratic comrades, with whom we feel ourselves most intimately connected.**

We have already told how the American socialists gave money for a counter-revolutionary organ to be smuggled into the Soviet Union. But within the U. S. the so-called socialists have already shown that they completed their apprenticeship in the counter-revolutionary schools of the 2nd International. The murder of Steve Katovis, under an injunction obtained by the socialist, Solomon; the strikebreaking activity of Norman Thomas and his aids in the textile, mining and needle strikes; the unity of Thomas and the S. P. with Senator Wagner of Tammany Hall against the demands of the unemployed; these are rehearsals for the role which the S. P. hopes to play on the stage of the capitalist state.

Can any serious minded worker believe that the mere removal of Hillquit from the chairmanship of the S. P. or his withdrawal from the oil suit will turn that body from an enemy of the workers and the Soviet Union into a friend? All the facts above prove the contrary. It is not Hillquit alone--it is the whole system of social reformers, turned social traitors, turned social fascists. It is the class which the S. P. serves, the capitalist class. That's so by their own statement. The New Leader issued a letter in June, 1929, characterizing itself. This self description is quite correct even if somewhat incomplete. They say:

**The New Leader appeals to many heads of financial institutions, well known members of the legal profession, a surprising number of very prosperous business men, authors, artists, doctors of medicine, dentists, educators, and others interested in the socialist, liberal and labor movement.**

A large percentage of New Leader readers own their own homes, have automobiles, make trips to Europe, and are generally liberal in all their vacation expenditures. Many of them go away for the entire summer.

Such a statement sounds almost fantastically frank but it is true and quoted verbatim. Since they made this statement the masses have moved to the Left. The movement against unemployment and wage cuts developed to considerable proportions and even some sections of the middle class looked to militant leadership of the workers in the fight against finance capital. Then the S. P. changed the tone of its appeal and again began putting the emphasis on its appeals to workers. Did the S. P. change its role as an agent of the bosses because it changed its costume and lines? Not in the least. A coyote with or without a sheep's skin is still a coyote.

The change, however, represents the ascendancy of Norman Thomas' methods over Hillquit's methods. Hillquit is more open in his championing of the bourgeoisie, Thomas more slick. Hillquit wants to feed betrayal to the masses in its raw state; Thomas knows that it will be hard to make them take it that way and so he sugar coats with militant phrases. It is easy for the masses to recognize Hillquit as the enemy of the workers but it is harder for the masses to recognize Thomas, no less an enemy of the workers. Precisely this is the reason why Thomas is the more dangerous enemy and must be fought more than ever.

From such a paper, and such a Party what has a worker or a workers' government to expect? Certainly what we are getting: betrayal, sell-out and counter-revolution. No destruction of Hillquit as S. P. chairman will solve the problem. Only the destruction of the S. P. together with the capitalist system which it serves will answer the demand of the situation.

In Comrade Henderson's letter he says:

**This (Hillquit's action against Soviet oil) must not be allowed to drop; and all workers in the socialist party must demand that adequate measures be taken to clear up this oil scandal.**

In this we agree with Comrade Henderson. Except why should the workers "demand" adequate measures--the workers can take adequate measures--they must follow Comrade Henderson's example; they must leave the party of the lieutenants of capitalism parading under the mask of "socialism" and join the party of the working class--the Communist Party.