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# Introductory Editorial of *The Socialist*, April 29, 1919.

by David P. Berenberg

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A crisis has arisen in the Socialist Party. An enemy has appeared within our ranks. At a time when unity of purpose and unity of action are prime necessities, this enemy has raised the black banner of anarchy among us. It is to meet this enemy that *The Socialist* is published.

Within the last two months, an organization calling itself by the grandiloquent name “The Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party” has been hard at work disrupting meetings, paralyzing activity, permitting precious weeks to pass — weeks in which nothing was done, save that the work of destroying the organization went on.

This group — reviving the insolence of DeLeonism — has arrogated to itself all the revolutionary phrases, all the revolutionary aims, and all the revolutionary ideals of the socialist movement. It has concocted a manifesto which it now seeks to force upon the party without giving the membership a chance to think it over, to discuss it fully, to work the thing out in all its far-reaching implications.

It constitutes, within the party, a separate organization — with its own admission cards and membership, its own treasury, its own paid executive officers, its own officers, central and city committees, paid speakers who tour the state its interests.

It arrogantly supersedes the branches themselves by instructing branch delegates to the party Central Committees on how they are to vote — a function properly belonging to the branch, and only to the branch.

Its paper, *The Communist*, libels and slanders party officials. We do not wish to take the indefensible position that party officials are above criticism. But slander and libel are not criticism. And the public need not be party to our internal quarrels.

This organization has embarked on a policy of rule or ruin. Its character and its purposes may be best illustrated by a statement made at Albany by Harry Waton on April the 13th [1919], in which he announced allegiance to the Left Wing manifesto, even to the extent of shedding the blood of his comrades!

Revolutionary phrases are easy to use. Many of the comrades whose daily work is of such a nature that they are unable to attend their branch meetings regularly, may readily be fooled by those who loudly announce themselves the only simon-pure revolutionists, and who dub anyone not in full agreement with them “Eberts and Scheidemanns.”

This group must be fought to a standstill for the good of the proletariat!

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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