
Stand United!

Unsigned editorial in *Appeal to Reason* [Girard, KS], no. 1,117 (April 28, 1917), pg. 1.
Editor of the *Appeal* was Louis Kopelin.

Last week's first page of the *Appeal* was devoted to the three reports presented by the dissenting members of the Committee on War and Militarism to the Emergency National Socialist Convention at St. Louis. The majority report and Boudin's minority report condemned militarism in general and the German-American war in particular. John Spargo's minority report may be said to have been a semi-endorsement of the war between the country and Germany. We printed the three reports so that our readers may fully acquaint themselves with all possible views on this momentous question.

The *Appeal's* position is, of course, known to our readers. As a consistent and militant opponent of militarism, the *Appeal* has fought this war from the beginning and to the very last. Even though the controlled press has lashed Congress and the administration into declaring war against Germany, the *Appeal* can not and will not lend its support to this conflict. The *Appeal* is not disloyal to the government of the United States. The *Appeal* has no sympathies for the ruling class of Germany or of any other country. In the best sense the *Appeal* is pro-American and consequently pro-humanity.

We feel convinced that the present war is the inevitable result of the determination of American capitalists to carry on business as usual in spite of the military operations abroad. From the very beginning we called attention to this threatening disaster. We urged the administration to stop the war traffic. We pleaded with Congress to suspend our foreign commerce until the war was ended.

However, the exploiting classes are more powerful and influential than the champions of the common people. Through their political power and through their control of the press, our war traffic was permitted to continue and develop. War was therefore the logical outcome. And war we now have.

It is true that many Socialists sympathize with the cause of the Entente Allies because they believe that these nations are fighting the battle of democracy against autocracy. Still others believe that it would be disastrous for the people of this country to have Germany win the war — hence they believe that we should support, in a measure, the government in successfully prosecuting the war. Prominent Socialists like [Allan] Benson, [Charles] Russell, [William English] Walling, [John] Spargo, and others take this position. The *Appeal*, however, cannot support this view because we fear the consequences of any endorsement given to the militarists. We have no assurances that the Entente Allies will content themselves with "imposing" a free government upon the people of Germany (if such a thing were possible) and stop at that. The facts of history are that conquerors always reap the spoils of war. And no matter what the intentions of the United States may be, we feel that its allies would remake the map of Europe and of the world if Germany were defeated.

The *Appeal* does not deny that considerable good may be achieved because of the war. It would be foolhardy to overlook the results already gained. The Russian Revolution and the adoption of col-

lectivist principles by the nations at war speak for themselves. It is true wars begin in reaction and end in revolution. However, the *Appeal* does not favor war as a means of social reconstruction. This method is too violent, brutal, and uncertain. There is a safer and better method. It is education!

While the *Appeal* deplores as much as anyone that there is a difference of view among the forces of progress and Socialism in regard to the present war, still, we believe that we should all work together in the present crisis. At this time there ought not to be carping criticism of the various schools of thought and action. The forces of reaction are united and are working day and night. Let us not weaken the cause of humanity and Socialism by foolish and futile heresy hunts. We need the help of everyone who is in favor of overthrowing the present system of industry with its horrible results, such as war, prostitution, poverty, and the like.

The Appeal believes that this is the most opportune time for the propaganda of Socialism and its system of industry firmly founded on prosperity and peace. The war will bring before the people

the inefficiency and inadequacy of the capitalist method of producing and distributing the means of life. Also the war will bring home the fact that in the real sense the people do not rule and that representative government is not based on democracy so long as there is no initiative, referendum, and recall.

Under the present abnormal circumstances, the comrades will have to exercise considerable tact and sanity. It is not only a question of what is right or wrong, but it is a question as to how best to keep our forces united and how best to present before the people our point of view. The people have been miseducated. And to reeducate them we must first uneducate them of their erroneous ideas by the most patient and courteous methods. It is folly to antagonize. Submit quietly to the demands of the government and the majority, but do what you can to ultimately send to Washington a congress and a President who will transform this hell of capitalism and war into a glorious cooperative commonwealth for the benefit of all.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing Corvallis, OR, 2008. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.