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APPEAL SOCIALIST CLASSICS  
EDITED BY W. J. GHENT

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*No. 7*

# Socialism and Organized Labor



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APPEAL SOCIALIST CLASSICS

EDITED BY W. J. GHENT

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No. 7

**Socialism and Organized Labor**

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## THE SERIES

The pamphlets in this series are composed, in the main, of selections from the published work of Socialist writers, mostly of the present day. In some of them, particularly "Socialist Documents" and "Socialism and Government," the writings used are mainly of collective, rather than individual authorship; while the Historical Sketch is the composition of the editor.

To the selections given, the editor has added explanatory and connecting paragraphs, welding the fragments into a coherent whole. The aim is the massing together in concise and systematic form, of what has been most clearly and pertinently said, either by individual Socialist writers or by committees speaking for the party as a whole, on all of the main phases of Socialism.

In their finished form they might, with some appropriateness, be termed mosaics: each pamphlet is an arrangement of parts from many sources according to a unitary design. Most of the separate pieces are, however, in the best sense classics: they are expressions of Socialist thought which, by general approval, have won authoritative rank. A classic, according to James Russell Lowell, is of itself "something neither ancient nor modern"; even the most recent writing may be considered classic if, for the mood it depicts or the thought it frames, it unites matter and style into an expression of approved merit.

For the choice of selections the editor is alone responsible. Doubtless for some of the subjects treated another editor would have chosen differently. The difficulty indeed has been in deciding what to omit; for the mass of Socialist literature contains much that may be rightly called classic which obviously could not have been included in these brief volumes.

The pamphlets in the series are as follows:

1. THE ELEMENTS OF SOCIALISM.
2. THE SCIENCE OF SOCIALISM.
3. SOCIALISM: A HISTORICAL SKETCH.
4. SOCIALIST DOCUMENTS.
5. SOCIALISM AND GOVERNMENT.
6. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.
7. SOCIALISM AND ORGANIZED LABOR.
8. SOCIALISM AND THE FARMER.
9. SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM.
10. THE TACTICS OF SOCIALISM.
11. THE SOCIALIST APPEAL.
12. SOCIALISM IN VERSE.

## CONTENTS

NUMBER AND TITLE	PAGE
PREFACE .....	4
I. IN EUROPE .....	5
Development of the Trade-Unions .....	5
Karl Marx and the Unions .....	5
Attitude of the Organized Movement .....	8
Practical Co-operation with Organized Labor ..	10
Unions and the Party in Germany .....	11
The British Labor Party .....	14
II. IN THE UNITED STATES.....	22
Varied Forms of Organization .....	22
The Break with the Federation .....	22
The Anti-Sanial Resolution .....	25
Socialist Movement Divides .....	26
Attitude of the Socialist Party .....	28
Socialists in the Unions .....	36
III. THE POLICY OF THE FEDERATION.....	42
Introductory Note .....	42
The Federation and the Party .....	43
An Example from Colorado .....	49
Growing Reaction of the Leaders .....	53
IV. THE FUTURE OF LABOR UNIONISM.....	59
The Drift Toward Unity.....	60

## PREFACE

This pamphlet assembles a number of statements, arguments and official pronouncements regarding the policy of the Socialist party toward the trade-unions and other labor organizations and the relations that exist, or should exist, between those bodies. The contrast between the general relationship prevailing on the continent of Europe and that prevailing in the United States, is shown, with something of the complex causes which have developed so regrettable a situation in this land.

In selecting the material relating to the United States the editor has avoided as much as possible the controversy between industrial unionism and syndicalism on the one hand and craft unionism on the other. The greater portion is illustrative of both the differences and the agreements in the policies of the Socialist party and of the American Federation of Labor.

W. J. G.



# SOCIALISM AND ORGANIZED LABOR

## I.

### IN EUROPE.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRADE-UNIONS.

The original and the still dominant form of the modern labor union is the trade-union, the organization of workers by crafts. In England trade-unionism began before the Socialist movement. On the continent the early unions were small and weak, and unionism became a power only with the growth of Socialism. "The English union movement," wrote Bebel, "arose from the class struggle of the English workingmen with the employers. No political party stood by its cradle, served as its nurse and took it under its protection. It was otherwise in Germany. The labor movement, which was born in Germany in the revolutionary period, met an early death, before it had come to years of understanding. It came to its end through the reaction which began in the second half of the year 1849 and lasted till the end of 1850. . . . But when, at the close of the fifties, the political stagnation came to an end, when the middle class resumed its political activity and formed the National Union as its organization, the working class also began to start into life."

The French unions declined with the suppression of the revolt of July, 1848, but though reviving somewhat during the later years of Louis Napoleon's reign, did not become strong until more than a decade after the Commune. Complete freedom of combination was not won until 1884. In other European countries, as a rule, trade-union development has been coincident with Socialist development.

From the beginning of the Socialist movement the policy of its leaders has been to promote the economic organization of the workers and to aid these associations in their daily struggles, but without attaching them, as organizations, to the Socialist party. No one more clearly realized the wisdom of this policy, or more devotedly followed it, than did Karl Marx. His views on this subject and his activities in promoting labor organization are summarized in the following article:

#### KARL MARX AND THE UNIONS.

BY ROBERT HUNTER.

In 1871 Karl Marx wrote to Speyer, who was then prominent in the American working-class movement: "You must endeavor to gain the trade-unions at all costs." A few days

later he wrote to another American Socialist: "The International has been founded to set up the real organization of the working class instead of Socialist and half-Socialist sects."

These two brief quotations from Marx appear to me to be of the greatest possible significance. If any working-class leader had ever been through hell, Marx was surely that one. A few years before he had set out to organize the workers. At the very moment the above words were written the International Workingmen's Association was the terror of all Europe. But while the princes of commerce and the despots of politics were paralyzed by the fear of this new spectre, no one knew so well as Marx its utter helplessness.

#### FACTIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL.

It was being literally torn to pieces by internal dissensions. However much the leaders hated capitalism, they hated each other more. It is not a pleasant experience to see the work of years destroyed by warring sects, and Marx was undoubtedly undergoing at the time he wrote to his American friends the same revulsion towards sectarian Socialism that he had experienced more than once before.

And as he drew away from the bitter dissensions of the warring sects, he turned with increasing respect and hope toward the actual organized movement of the working class. In 1875, when the various German organizations of workingmen met together for the purposes of unity, he wrote to Bebel, Liebknecht and others: "Every action, every positive step forward, is worth more than a dozen programs." He then urges his German comrades, if it is impossible to have adopted a consistent Socialist program, to merely join the workers in one organization without a program.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF LABOR ORGANIZATION.

In other words, Marx's idea was clearly and unmistakably this: That the organization of the working class was the all-important thing. He did not withhold his sym-



pathy and aid to the working class because it was not already Socialist. He did not go to the working class with a certain program, announcing that they must accept that program or be damned. He did not say that the workers must organize in a certain manner, or he would withhold his sympathy. In fact, there is not anywhere to be found in Marx's words or actions a single thing to suggest the sectarian spirit.

What, then, did Marx mean when he wrote to Speyer: "You must endeavor to gain the trade-unions at all costs?" Did he mean that unless the trade-unions would adopt the Socialist program, Socialists should attempt to destroy them? Did he mean that Socialists should enter the trade-union movement merely to make it the side show of a political party? These are questions worth thinking over, and fortunately Marx himself has supplied the answer.

#### SHOULD MAINTAIN SEPARATE ORGANIZATIONS.

In 1869 Marx had an interview with Hamann, the secretary of the German Metal Workers Trade-Union. In this interview Marx said: "The trade-unions should never be affiliated with or made dependent upon a political society if they are to fulfill the object for which they are formed. *If this happens it means their death blow.*"

Now this statement of Marx is so absolutely contrary to the view taken by some of the early Socialists in this country, and by some Socialists even today, that it may well cause amazement. And some may even ask: "What in the world is the use of bothering with trade-unions unless our purpose is to make them Socialist? Why should we attend union meetings, or bother with the mere daily struggle of the working class to better its hours and conditions unless our end and aim is to make the trade-union a Socialist movement?"

Such questions serve merely to prove one thing. That the men who ask them have never grasped the philosophy of Marxian Socialism. Here and there a man of the middle class may be converted to Socialism through appeals to his

heart and conscience, but the mass of the working class will be converted to Socialism by their actual struggle against the capitalist class. By organization they will learn their need of each other. By actual effort to improve their condition they will learn the hard facts of capitalist society. By trade-union organization and by the results of their struggle will they learn the need of political action.

#### TRADE-UNIONS SCHOOLS FOR SOCIALISM.

"The trade-unions," says Marx, "are the schools for Socialism. The workers are there educated up to Socialism by means of the incessant struggle against capitalism which is being carried on before their eyes. *He (the trade-unionist) becomes a Socialist without knowing it.*" I urge the readers to notice one point. Marx does not say that trade-unionists will become Socialists by books, by speeches or by resolutions, by attacks on the union, by bitter dissension between Socialists and anti-Socialists in the union. Not at all. The trade-unionist will become a Socialist *without knowing it, as a result of the incessant struggle against capitalism.*

In the time when Marx was most active in the labor movement, there were, says Kautsky, "many Socialist schools, each swearing to the genuineness of its own patent pill for the cure of all the ills of society, and each trying to rally the workers around itself. The various schools were at war with one another and were thus instrumental *in splitting* the working classes rather than in uniting them." . . . "It thus seemed to Marx," says Kautsky, "that to save the trade-unions they must hold aloof from political organizations."\*

#### ATTITUDE OF THE ORGANIZED MOVEMENT.

The International (1864-1872) aimed at a federation of the labor organizations of all countries. It was, however, through dissensions created by utopians and "direct actionists," diverted from its main purpose, to become a battle ground of conflicting schools of thought. Though it gave an immense

\*The National Socialist, February 24, 1912.

impetus to labor organization and though it served to clarify the minds of the workers as to methods and aims, its more evident effects hardly began to show themselves on a large scale until after its dissolution. During the following fifteen years its labors bore fruit, and both the Socialist movement and the union movement became strongly organized and, on the continent, closely associated with each other.

The International Socialist congresses have repeatedly expressed themselves regarding the need of the co-operation of the party and the unions, recommending Socialists to join the unions of their trades and abstaining from any recommendation requiring the unions to commit themselves to Socialism. Such declarations were made at Brussels in 1891, at Zurich in 1893, and at London in 1896. The London resolution revised the expressions used by the previous congresses into a more definite form. The text given below is presumably correct. I regret that I have been unable to compare it with the original:

#### LONDON RESOLUTION, 1896.

The trade-union struggle of the wage workers is indispensable, in order to resist the encroachments of capitalism and to improve the conditions of labor under the present system. Without trade-unions no fair wages and no shorter hours of labor.

However, this economic struggle only lessens the exploitation, but does not abolish it. The exploitation of labor will cease when society takes possession of the means of production. This is conditioned on the creation of a system of legislative measures. To fully carry out these measures the working class must become the deciding political power. However, the working class will only become such a political power in the same ratio as its organization, the trade-union, grows. By the very organization into trade-unions the working class becomes a political factor. The organization of the working class is incomplete and insufficient so long as it is only political.

But the economic struggle also requires the political activity of the working class. Very often the workingmen have to assert and permanently secure by their political power what they have wrung from their exploiters in the free economic struggle. In other cases the legislative gains

make economic conflicts by trade-union action superfluous. The international co-operation of the working class on the trade-union lines, especially in regard to labor legislation, becomes more necessary in the same degree as the economic relations of the capitalistic world's market and the conflicts of the national industries develop.

In accordance with the decisions of the International Socialist Congresses in Brussels and Zurich, this congress declares that the organization of trade-unions is an absolute necessity in the struggle of emancipation of the working class, and we consider it as the duty of all wage workers who aim at the emancipation of labor from capitalist wage slavery to join the union of their respective trades.

The trade-unions, in order to do effective work, should be nationally organized, and the splitting up of the elements in separate organizations is to be condemned. Political differences of opinion should not be a cause for dividing or splitting up the forces in the economic struggle, but the proletarian class struggle makes it the duty of the labor organizations to educate their members in Socialist principles.

#### **PRACTICAL CO-OPERATION WITH ORGANIZED LABOR.**

The resolution of the Stuttgart Congress (1907) is in substance similar, though it includes a recommendation of the industrial form of organization and a condemnation of dual unionism. As a consequence of the policy followed in Europe, a close co-operation between the party and the unions has been maintained from the beginning. In England, except during the years of the International, which many of the union leaders joined, the trade-unions maintained for many years a separatist and even anti-Socialist policy. Since 1900, however, they have acted with the Labor party, a federation including two Socialist organizations—the Independent Labor party and the Fabian society. On the continent, except in France, and to some extent in Italy, where the syndicalist movement has drawn many of the workers away from political action, the co-operation between the Socialist party and the trade-unions has grown stronger year by year. A recent bit of testimony from a source antagonistic to Socialism bears witness to the unity of action between the two movements. It is from James Duncan, first

vice president of the American Federation of Labor, and appears in the proceedings of the convention of that body in 1911:

"The European movement is an education in itself. The harmony which exists between the trade-unionists, attending to trade affairs, and the Socialists, attending to political affairs, is everywhere in evidence. Where a trade dispute exists there the Socialists are helping, and where a political contest is going on the trade-unionists perform their part in supporting the social program, and between the two the future welfare of the masses of the people will be worked out."

The mutual relations of the Socialist party and the unions in Germany are told in the following address by the secretary of the International Federation of Trade-Unions:

### UNIONS AND THE PARTY IN GERMANY.

BY KARL LEGIEN.

Trade-unions had been in existence in Germany before we had any Socialist movement at all. While others were established at the same time as the political party, some of these unions started through the direct influence of members of the Socialist party, while many unions were also established by both factions of the party that existed in Germany from the '60s up to 1875. But all of these organizations, whether or not under the influence of the party, help the trade-unions to keep aloof from party politics, believing that they should unite the working class of all shades and faiths in opposition to modern capitalism, which has no regard for political parties or religious beliefs. This principle had been endorsed at a trade-union congress in 1872, and also at the joint conference of both wings of the trade-unions, which was held in 1875, immediately after both Social Democratic parties had been merged. After that the movement made rapid progress, but it was brutally suppressed in 1878 by means of the infamous anti-Socialist law.

#### EFFECT OF THE EXCEPTION LAWS.

During the twelve years of the regime of this anti-Socialist law the unions were the only public representatives of the German working class, while our party was upheld by



an absolutely secret organization only. The growth of the Social Democratic movement was very satisfactory, and also unexpected in the first year after the recall of the anti-Socialist law, because at the general election that year we were able to elect a number of members of parliament.

This rapid development accounts for the false hope of many of our comrades of that time that the downfall of the present state of society and the establishment of Socialism were near at hand. As a result of all this we find that early in the '90s the trade-union movement was considered to be of very little importance. Finally, however, it was recognized that the working class must be trained in industrial warfare for better conditions, and that all wage earners must be united in their trade-union movement as well.

#### AID GIVEN TO THE UNIONS.

After this period all possible attention was given to the trade-union movement, and the party itself has done everything within its power to assist the trade-unions in their struggle, and we find that special resolutions were adopted at the various conventions of the German Social Democratic party soliciting the active support of the party for the trade-union movement.

I should not omit to mention the fact that the party has never claimed that the unions should assume a political character or that they should become part and parcel of the party itself. Our Comrade Bebel has repeatedly emphasized the necessity of a politically neutral trade-union movement in order to be able to organize the workers of all shades of faith. The same view has at various times been expressed by the executive council of the party. It has been left to the unions to manage their own affairs and to choose whatever tactics they consider best for their work.

#### THE SO-CALLED "SOCIALIST UNIONS."

For a certain time after the recall of the anti-Socialist law we had a number of unions that called themselves Socialist unions, adopting the Socialist program. However,

they have never been thoroughly recognized by the Socialist party. Their syndicalist tendencies became clear about ten years ago, and the Mannheim convention of the Socialist party, which was held in 1906, decided that these unions should have nothing to do with the party, and that their followers should even be expelled from the party if they refused to join the neutral and centralized trade-unions. They have indeed since been expelled. The so-called Socialist trade-unions have never been of any great importance since the anti-Socialist law. It is scarcely possible to find anything accurate as to their actual strength, for they refuse to publish their details. I believe I am giving them too much credit by saying they may probably number about five or six thousand members in all Germany.

This does not amount to much in comparison with the 2,500,000 paying members affiliated with our neutral or centralized unions. In our German movement we have no room for sabotage and similar syndicalist and destructive tendencies.

#### DUAL UNIONS DISCOURAGED.

In what we call our neutral or centralized unions affiliated with the General Federation of Labor we at all times have refrained from officially recognizing the Social Democratic party. At the Jena convention of the Socialist party, held in 1905, it was resolved that every member of the party should be compelled to join his respective trade-union. That is to say, one of the unions affiliated with our national central union, one of the neutral unions.

Our party has never tried and never permitted the creation of new or rival trade-unions, in spite of the many and somewhat serious conflicts that have at times existed between the parties and our unions. The German party has always recognized the trade-union movement, and it has developed owing to industrial and other conditions prevailing in our country. The executive council has always striven to prevent new organizations, no matter on what pretext, being established, for this would mean the dis-

organization of our labor movement. This co-operation of the party and the trade-unions has largely benefited our movement. It is also one of the main causes of our success at the last general election, with which you are certainly familiar, where, out of a total vote of eleven millions cast for fifteen different political parties, we polled 4,500,000 votes for the Social Democratic party, and where out of 397 members of the Reichstag, we elected 110 Socialists.

#### SOCIALISM THE ONLY GOAL.

We have been indeed able to secure many successes, but we are far from over-estimating our real power. We do have many and great obstacles in our way. Also they are different from those you have to overcome in this country. We are not only convinced that Socialism is possible, but we know equally well that the future of mankind absolutely depends upon Socialism. We therefore must and will overcome all difficulties and obstacles, no matter what they are.

I am convinced that you, too, will be able to do your share in this new work. I sincerely hope, in the interest of the International Socialist movement, that the present convention will mark a further step forward in this line. This depends largely upon the perfect harmony and joint action of our organizations in all countries, for the labor movement is and will remain the only rock on which capitalism is bound to go to pieces, making room for Socialism.\*

#### THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY.

Because the form of co-operation in England between trade-unionists and Socialists differs so markedly from the form usually prevalent on the continent, and because it has been often suggested (and as often vigorously condemned) as a model for co-operation in the United States, a descriptive sketch of the British Labor party is here included. The Labor party, however, is not a party as that term is understood in the United States. It is a federation of representatives of the trade-unions, two Socialist bodies, the Women's Labor league and several

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\*From an address delivered before the National Socialist convention at Indianapolis, May 15, 1912.

co-operative societies for the purpose of maintaining an independent labor group in parliament. The article, written in the fall of 1913, is by the secretary of the Fabian society and editor of the revised and largely rewritten edition of Kirkup's "History of Socialism." Its attitude is of course wholly favorable to the position of the Labor party—a position which has been more or less constantly opposed by the Social Democratic Federation (now the British Socialist party):

BY EDWARD R. PEASE.

The formation of the Labor party was the logical outcome of the direct representation of labor which had been a marked feature of English politics since 1874, when Mr. Thomas Burt (now the Rt. Hon.) and Alexander Macdonald were elected as trade-unionists. Since then there had been constantly a number of trade-unionists in parliament always sitting and voting as liberals.

At the Trade-Union Congress of 1899 a resolution was carried directing the parliamentary committee in co-operation with the Socialist societies to call a conference in order "to devise ways and means for securing an increased number of labor members in the next parliament." This conference met in London in February, 1900, and was attended by a number of M. P.'s, including John Burns, and by representatives of 545,316 trade-unionists and 22,861 members of the three Socialist societies. The result was the labor representation committee, formed for the purpose of promoting the election of a labor group in parliament. It was expressly laid down that the new body should be a group, united for labor purposes, but otherwise not dissociated from existing parties. The members might sit as liberals or conservatives or Socialists: they were only pledged to act together on labor questions. J. Ramsay MacDonald, who had made some reputation as a member first of the Fabian Society and later of the Independent Labor party, was elected secretary, and to his vigor, tact and ability the Labor party has from the first owed much of its success.

#### FIRST SUCCESSES OF THE MOVEMENT.

The general election of 1900 occurred a few months after the committee was constituted, and of the fifteen candidates supported only two, J. Keir Hardie at Merthyr and Richard Bell at Derby, were successful. But at by-elections during the next few years the party had three remarkable successes. David Shackleton was returned for Clitheroe, Lancashire, unopposed; Will Crooks, with liberal support, won a great victory at Woolwich, and Arthur Henderson defeated both parties at Barnard Castle, Durham.

The Social Democratic Federation was affiliated to the committee at the start, but withdrew in August, 1901, and thus definitely cut itself off from the main stream of Socialist activity. For although the Labor party was not a Socialist party in name or membership, it became the organ through which the political activities of the Independent Labor party and the Fabian society were almost completely expressed, its policy was purely Socialist, and the great majority of its leading members, inside and outside of parliament, were Socialists.

#### PARTY DECLARES ITS INDEPENDENCE.

Its members grew steadily, and at the Newcastle Conference of 1903 a long internal struggle was concluded by the decisive victory of the section which had advocated the formation of an independent party. The group plan was abandoned, and a new parliamentary party was established. This change of policy was accepted without demur by everybody except Mr. Bell, who maintained his alliance with the liberals, and presently ceased to belong to the party.

In 1906 the labor representation committee had in its constituent organizations no fewer than 921,280 members, and at the general election of that year it ran fifty candidates, of whom twenty-nine were successful. At length a party—it adopted the name of Labor party—was constituted, Socialist in almost everything except its name, and sufficiently powerful to make itself a factor in parliament.



J. Keir Hardie was elected chairman, a fact which indicates that it was predominantly Socialist in opinion notwithstanding that the organized Socialists were but a small minority of the membership.

#### STEADY GROWTH TO POWER.

The impression made on the country was tremendous. Hitherto Socialists had been regarded as a little body of absurd fanatics, incapable of influencing the working classes, shouting very loud, but never even shaking the solid walls of capitalism. On a sudden they had become a party in parliament, able to force their ideas on public notice, and to exercise a direct influence on the affairs of the country. This impression was deepened by the result of two by-elections. At Jarrow in July, 1907, the Labor candidate was elected, beating a liberal, a tory and a nationalist, and at Colne Valley, Yorkshire, a week or two later, Victor Grayson, a then unknown young man, standing as an Independent Labor party Socialist candidate without Labor party support, was successful over both liberal and conservative.

It will be convenient here to complete the parliamentary history of the Labor party. In 1908 the Miners' Federation joined as from the next general election, bringing fifteen M. P.'s and 550,000 members, and at the election of January, 1910, forty Labor members were returned, an actual increase because of the Miners, though in fact there was a net loss of six seats. In December, 1910, the party, alone of English parties, gained two seats, making their number forty-two, but three seats have been subsequently lost at by-elections in each case fought in altered conditions.

#### THE FORM OF THE PARTY.

The party is a federation of trade-unions, Socialist societies and local organizations, either trade councils or local Labor parties. The trade-unions supply the great bulk of the membership and funds, and the Socialist control of the party depends on the fact that the trade-unionists themselves are Socialists. A conference is held annually which deter-

mines matters of policy and elects the executive committee in three sections, the trade-unionists eleven, the Socialists three, and the trade councils and local Labor parties one. The executive committee decides all matters relating to elections, administers the funds, and controls the publications. J. Ramsay MacDonald was secretary of the party continuously until 1912, when Arthur Henderson succeeded him. The chairmanship of the executive is held for a year only. The parliamentary party, consisting of the Labor M. P.'s, has its own organization. Its chairman and officers are elected annually; Keir Hardie was chairman in 1906 and 1907; Arthur Henderson in 1908 and 1909; G. N. Barnes in 1910, and J. Ramsay MacDonald has held the post since 1911.\* It holds weekly meetings to determine its parliamentary tactics and to decide on bills, motions, etc.

#### SOCIALIST EXCEPT IN NAME.

In January, 1913, the party consisted of 130 trade-unions with 1,858,178 members, 146 trade councils and local Labor parties, two Socialist societies with 31,237 members, 5,000 members of the Women's Labor league, and 1,073 co-operators. Its income, derived from a capitation fee of 1d. per member per year with a small fee paid by trade councils, etc., amounted to £3,862, but considerable sums came from sales of literature and other sources, and it has a large balance in hand. Many unions are at present prevented by injunction from paying their dues, and under the new act its regular income should exceed £7,500.

The party has no formal basis or formulated policy. Proposals to this end have always been rejected because the party includes Socialists and trade-unionists, some of whom are not Socialists and indeed, in a few cases, are opposed to the formulae, though not to the proposals, of Socialism. But as there is no alternative policy to Socialism, its actions are always Socialist. Its program can only be ascertained from its election and propagandist literature, and recently from

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\*He resigned in August, 1914, on the breaking out of the war.—Editor.

its organ, *The Daily Citizen*, which was established in 1912 and is controlled by a company, nine of whose ten directors are elected in equal numbers by the Labor party, the Independent Labor party, and the trade-unions who are shareholders. The private shareholders are expressly deprived of control over its policy.

#### LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS.

The Labor party was largely created by the indignation of trade-unionists at the Taff Vale judgment (1900), which deprived trade-unions of the immunity they had held for a generation from actions for damages by employers injured by strikes. This decision placed the funds of trade-unions at the mercy of employers and virtually made large-scale strikes too dangerous to be practicable. The Labor movement was united in demanding its reversal by parliament, and this was the first plank in the Labor party platform. This reform was effected by the Trades Dispute act, 1906.

Other legislative achievements of the party were the Education (Provision of Meals) act, 1906, for the feeding of school children, and the Trade Boards act, 1909, which introduced the principle of a legal minimum wage to the northern hemisphere. The Taff Vale judgment was hardly reversed by law before the judges found a new flaw in the trade-union code of law. The funds of unions had been used at any rate since 1874 for political purposes, but in the Osborne case (1909) this was declared to be illegal, and all unions were liable to be prevented by injunction from contributing to the Labor party. In fact, though many unions were precluded from paying their dues, the party was never hampered for want of money, and by the Trades-Union act of 1913 the judgment was reversed and the old liberty restored to the unions, subject to adequate protection for dissentient members.

#### DIFFICULT PART TO PLAY.

The Labor party has had a difficult part to play in English politics. In the first place it has been compelled to place

extreme emphasis on its independence. Many of its members, especially those belonging to the Miners' Federation, had been first elected to their seats as liberals, and were called upon by their union to change their party without any change either in their opinions or in their constituencies. Labor candidates for a generation had been elected as liberals; there were already amongst the liberals quite a number of Socialists, some of them, such as Mr. L. G. Chiozza Money, M. P., amongst its best-known literary exponents. It required, therefore, a constant effort to maintain the position of a separate and independent party.

Moreover, very few of the Labor members have held their seats in parliament exclusively by the votes of their own party. A considerable number sat for two-member constituencies where they shared the representation and the votes with a liberal. Most of the rest held seats which the liberals had not contested, and where therefore they had received liberal as well as labor support. But they are also compelled to be constantly attacking liberal seats, because their only possibility of growth is in constituencies already occupied by other parties, and most of those in industrial districts where labor is strong and held by liberals.

#### THE SITUATION BEFORE THE WAR.

From 1906 to 1910 their position in parliament was that of a force on the left wing of the enormous liberal majority, which was free to vote for or against the government but in no case could determine the result. Since the election of January, 1910, they have held a position of much greater responsibility. If they had voted in opposition the government majority would be too small for effective purposes, and they had to choose between giving steady support to the government and forcing a dissolution.

Until the Osborne judgment was reversed by law their course was clear enough. Since then it has been also clear, because they demanded the Parliament act as vehemently as the liberals, and they were fully pledged by their electoral promises to support the budget of 1909, home rule, Welsh dis-

establishment and franchise reform. Moreover, until these measures, insistently demanded by powerful sections of the country, are out of the way, there is no opportunity for those large schemes of social reconstruction which form their ultimate program.\*

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\*Kirkup's "History of Socialism," pp. 384-91.



## II.

## IN THE UNITED STATES.

## VARIED FORMS OF ORGANIZATION.

Labor unionism in the United States has not taken the comparatively fixed form which it has maintained in Europe. Differing in greater or less degree from the form developed by the American Federation of Labor has been that of the Sovereigns of Industry, the Knights of Labor, the American Railway Union, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, the American Labor Union and the two factions of the Industrial Workers of the World. Toward the Knights of Labor the attitude of the Socialist Labor party was, until 1895, friendly. In December of that year a dispute between Daniel De Leon, the editor of the party organ, and James R. Sovereign, the general master workman of the order, brought about the unseating of De Leon as a delegate to the general assembly, and a declaration of war on the part of the Socialists. The order was then rapidly declining, however, and the antagonism of the two bodies was a matter of slight consequence.

Of far graver consequence was the antagonism that developed between the Socialist Labor party and the American Federation of Labor. The earlier Socialist movement had maintained close relations with the trade unions, and the Socialist Labor party (organized in 1877) had for many years continued this policy. A fuller treatment of this subject will be found in the recent pamphlet by Robert Hunter, "Labor and Politics." The incidents leading to the rupture, which came in 1890, are sketched in the following article:

## THE BREAK WITH THE FEDERATION.

BY N. I. STONE.

When, in the '70s and '80s, the Socialists of this country had just started in their work of propaganda, it was on friendly terms with the trade-unions. And when the anarchistic plague broke out in this country the chief point of difference between the anarchists and the Socialists, next to the question of "bullets vs. ballots," lay in their respective attitudes toward the trade-unions. The anarchists believed that trade-unions, like all other "palliatives," were harmful

to the working people, because they merely serve to draw the workingmen's attention away from the main issue and, even when successful, make the workingman content with his present lot and therefore deaf to revolutionary propaganda. They believed in going into a union in order to "capture" it for anarchism, and failing in that they would invariably try to break it up. The Socialists fought them on that score. They maintained that, the more a workingman fought for better conditions and the more successful he was, the more his wants would grow, and that with fewer hours spent in drudgery and toil and greater opportunities for leisure and thought he would be the more amenable to our teachings. The Socialists at that time claimed that it was sheer perfidy to enter a labor organization as an avowed friend, yet with a concealed object to rule or ruin and a hidden desire to see the workingmen fail in their struggle, so as to utilize their despair for revolutionary purposes.

#### ANARCHISTS IN THE UNIONS.

But, as with everything else in this world, even party tactics undergo a change in course of time. Toward the end of the '80s, with the record of martyrdom made by the leading Chicago anarchists—Parsons, Spies and others—in the cause of the eight-hour day, and with the Socialists knocking louder and louder at the doors of the American Federation of Labor, the anarchists suddenly changed their front and joined with the "pure and simplers" to meet the Socialist onslaught. With the hatred for Socialists born of old feuds still in the anarchist hearts, it was but one step for them, and an easy one at that, from "no politics" in general to "no politics in the union." The extreme right and the extreme left, as is often the case, met. We know what it led to. It demoralized the anarchist forces. They became the willing or unwilling tools of the most corrupt element in the trade-union movement; they became disintegrated, most of the rank and file joining our ranks, while several of their leaders have simply joined the enemy's camp by becoming democratic or republican heelers.

Meanwhile, how did time affect our tactics? The change came about very gradually, almost imperceptibly at first, but developed soon after with remarkable rapidity, in fact too quickly for the rank and file to be able intelligently to follow it, least of all act upon it. Let us briefly trace its course.

#### THE CENTRAL LABOR FEDERATION CUTS LOOSE.

In 1889, the New York Central Labor Federation, after an unsuccessful attempt to amalgamate with the Central Labor Union, from which it had before withdrawn on account of an internal strife, reapplied to the American Federation of Labor for a charter. Its application was rejected by Gompers, the president of the Federation, on the ground that the list of unions affiliated with the Central Labor Federation contained also the name of the American Section of the Socialist Labor Party. Gompers referred to the constitution of the American Federation of Labor, which forbids affiliation with political parties, and maintained that he had no right to grant them a charter as long as the Socialist Labor party remained affiliated with them. He would grant them a charter if the Socialist section severed its connection with the Central Labor Federation. The Central Labor Federation refused to comply with the request and decided to bring the question before the next convention of the American Federation of Labor, which met at Detroit.

#### THE FIRST CLASH IN DETROIT.

Thus the first clash between the Socialists and conservatives in the Federation was brought on in an indirect manner. There were delegates on the floor of that convention who insisted that it was not with them a question of indorsing Socialism, but one as to whether the constitution of the A. F. of L. should be enforced. The Socialists, led by Lucien Sanial and Thomas J. Morgan, maintained that the Socialist Labor party was not a political party in the ordinary sense—that it was a labor organization and as such could not be classed alongside the capitalistic parties. The widest latitude was allowed in the debate, and the Socialist speakers

improved the opportunity to plead for Socialism. When the vote was finally taken on the question of the admission of Sanial as delegate from the Central Labor Federation, it stood 535 for and 1,699 against—that is, the Socialists were beaten by a vote of three to one—and Sanial sullenly withdrew, declaring war to the knife against the “fakirs.” Since that year, 1890, the New York Socialists, in all respects the strongest portion of the Socialist forces in this country, practically withdrew, under the influence of Sanial and his immediate followers, from all work in the Federation, although several members of the New York Section were of a different opinion, both before and after the Detroit convention, as to what would be the proper course of action.\*

#### THE ANTI-SANIAL RESOLUTION.

The resolution which confirmed the refusal of a charter to the Central Labor Federation and which denied Sanial a seat, was expressed in courteous terms. The Federation had previously taken a stand regarding the admission of representatives of political parties, and though it welcomed the proffered fraternity of the Socialist Labor party and recognized the similarity of aims of the unionists and the Socialists, it would not alter its policy. The text of the resolution is as follows:

1. That we recommend the cordial acceptance of the proffered fraternity of the Socialist Labor party as embodied in the address of Mr. Sanial. The hope and aspiration of the trade-unionists is closely akin to that of the Socialists. That the burden of toil shall be made lighter, that men shall possess larger liberty, that the days to be shall be better than those that have been, may properly be the ideal of those in all movements for labor reform.

2. We recognize, however, that men of different schools of reform thought often seek to arrive at the same end by different roads. This right of difference must be considered. This is the logical outcome of variation in circumstances, of birth, education and temperament. We affirm the trade-

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\*“The Attitude of the Socialists Toward the Trade-Unions,” pp. 3-4.

union movement to be the legitimate channel through which the wage earners of America are seeking present amelioration and future emancipation. Its methods are well-defined, its functions specialized, its work clearly mapped out.

3. We further hold that the trade-unions of America, comprising the American Federation of Labor, are committed against the introduction of matters pertaining to partisan politics, to the religion of men or to their birth-place. We cannot logically admit the Socialist Labor party to representation and shut the door in the face of other political organizations formed to achieve social progress. We are of opinion that a political party of whatsoever nature is not entitled to representation in the American Federation of Labor. While, therefore, deprecating the necessity which has arisen of refusing to admit those who seek our comradeship, we feel compelled to make the following recommendations:

First—That the credentials of Lucien Sanial, from the Central Labor Federation of New York City, be returned.

Second—That the position taken by President Gompers and the executive council in regard to the old charter of the Central Labor Federation of New York be affirmed on the ground that the Central Labor Federation did virtually cease to exist and forfeited thereby its charter.

Third—That the decision of President Gompers against granting a new charter to said organization be affirmed, as the decision by this body is in accord with the meaning and intent of our constitution.

Fourth—That the delegates to this convention, while declining to admit representatives from the Socialist Labor party as a political party, declare themselves tolerant of all phases of the reform movement, and would bar no delegate as an individual, because of his belief, whether radical or conservative.

#### **SOCIALIST MOVEMENT DIVIDES.**

The Socialists, however, were not to be appeased by fair words, and the antagonism grew in intensity. Socialist peri-



odicals, and particularly the *People*, assailed the Federation and its leaders with extreme bitterness. Nevertheless, Socialist workers generally retained their membership in the unions, and Socialist delegates in the national conventions of the Federation continued their advocacy of the cause. At the Philadelphia convention (1892) Morgan brought in a resolution declaring for the collective ownership of the means of production, but it was defeated by a vote of 1,615 to 559. At the following session, held in Chicago, Morgan brought up the resolution containing the famous "eleven planks" (see No. III, "Socialism: A Historical Sketch" and No. IV, "Socialist Documents"), which was voted to be submitted to referendum for the instruction of delegates to the next convention. The defeat of the collective ownership clause by a substitute plank at the Denver gathering (1894) merely added fuel to the flame. Since that time the Socialist Labor party has maintained a relentless opposition to the American Federation of Labor.

The break with the Knights of Labor, previously referred to, resulted, a few days later, in the organization by De Leon and his following of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. At the national convention of the party in the following year (1896) the new body was indorsed, although a resolution of the previous convention recommending party members to join the unions in the trades to which they belonged, was reaffirmed. A considerable number of the delegates looked upon the Alliance with distrust, but their fears were, for a time at least, allayed by the declarations of De Leon and Vogt that the organization's chief aim was to "organize the unorganized." During the next three years, however, the Alliance revealed plainly its purpose of disrupting, if possible, the Federation. A revolt, based upon this and other causes, among the party membership gathered headway, and in 1899 the two factions of the party split asunder. The faction favorable to the unions held a national convention in Rochester in February, 1900, in which they declared the trade-union movement absolutely necessary and by recalling the previous indorsement of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, repudiated that body. The resolution follows:

#### ROCHESTER RESOLUTION, 1900.

Whereas, The trade-union movement of the working class is an inevitable manifestation of the struggle between capital and labor, and is absolutely necessary to resist the superior economic power of capital, to improve the condition of the workingmen and to maintain their standard of life, and

Whereas, The class struggle carried on by the trade-unions tends to develop in the workingmen the sense of solidarity and political independence by organizing them as a class antagonistic to the capitalist class;

Resolved, That we, the Socialist Labor party, in national convention assembled, fully recognizing that the exploitation of labor will cease only when society takes possession of the means of production, nevertheless declare it the duty of all Socialists to participate in all struggles of organized labor to improve its conditions under the present system;

Resolved, That we hereby recall any and all previous resolutions expressing preference for one body of organized labor over another;

Resolved, That we reaffirm the resolution of the Socialist Labor party adopted in 1893 and readopted in 1896 recommending to all members of the party to join the organization of the trades to which they respectively belong.

Shortly afterward (March 25-27) at the joint conference of representatives of the Social Democratic party and of the Rochester faction of the Socialist Labor party in New York City, this resolution was reaffirmed.

## ATTITUDE OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

### THE 1904 RESOLUTION.

The Socialist party was formed at the Unity convention of 1901 (Indianapolis, July 29-August 2). The trade-union resolution of that convention did not differ in substance from the Rochester resolution. At the national convention of 1904 (Chicago, May 1-6) the introduction of several resolutions brought forth a protracted discussion. A militant "industrialism" had developed in the west, and in 1902, in Denver, representatives of the Western Federation of Miners, of the Western Labor Union and of the United Association of Hotel and Restaurant Employes had formed the American Labor Union, generally regarded as a rival body to the Federation. The spirit and temper of the new movement was strongly represented in the convention, and the Federation, as well as trade-unionism in general, was unsparingly denounced by many of the delegates. Some of these demanded an explicit declaration in favor of industrial unionism. Some others demanded an avoidance of the whole subject. Finally, however, by a vote of 100 to 52, the

supplementary report of the trade-union committee was adopted. The text, which repeats some of the wording of the London resolution of 1896, is as follows:

The trade and labor union movement is a natural result of the capitalist system of production and is necessary to resist the encroachments of capitalism. It is a weapon to protect the class interests of labor under the capitalistic system. However, this industrial struggle can only lessen the exploitation, but cannot abolish it. The exploitation of labor will only cease when the working class shall own all the means of production and distribution. To achieve this end the working class must consciously become the dominant political power. The organization of the workers will not be complete until they unite on the political as well as the industrial field on the lines of the class struggle.

The trade-union struggle cannot attain lasting success without the political activity of the Socialist party: The workers must fortify and permanently secure by their political power what they have wrung from their exploiters in the economic struggle. In accordance with the decisions of the International Socialist Congresses in Brussels, Zurich and London, this convention reaffirms the declarations that the trade and labor unions are a necessity in the struggle to aid in emancipating the working class, and we consider it the duty of all wage workers to join with this movement.

Neither political nor other differences of opinion justify the divisions of the forces of labor in the industrial movement. The interests of the working class make it imperative that the labor organizations equip their members for the great work of the abolition of wage slavery by educating them in Socialist principles.

#### THE 1908 ADDRESS.

At the national convention of 1908 (Chicago, May 10-17) the committee on labor organizations unanimously agreed upon an address to organized labor, instead of a resolution. Again the whole subject of the party's attitude was brought into the discussion. The Industrial Workers of the World had been organized in 1905, supplanting the American Labor Union, and it was represented by a considerable number of members of the con-

vention. Arguments were made, as they had been made in 1904, that the party's declaration should contain an express recommendation of the industrial form of organization. The majority, however, contended that the party should maintain its attitude of support of all unions, and that the matter of their form should be left to the workers. "I want," said Algernon Lee, of the majority, "a declaration sent out that cannot be used by Mr. Gompers to attack the Industrial Workers of the World; and I want a resolution that cannot be used, in the name of the Socialist party, by the Industrial Workers of the World to attack the American Federation of Labor." An amendment was defeated by a vote of 138 to 48, whereupon the address submitted by the committee was adopted without division:

The movement of organized labor is a natural result of the antagonism between the interests of employers and wage earners under the capitalist system. Its activity in the daily struggle over wages, hours and other conditions of labor is absolutely necessary to counteract the evil effects of competition among the working people and to save them from being reduced to material and moral degradation. It is equally valuable as a force for the social, economic and political education of the workers.

#### DOES NOT DICTATE.

The Socialist party does not seek to dictate to organized labor in matters of internal organization and union policy. It recognizes the necessary autonomy of the union movement on the economic field, as it insists on maintaining its own autonomy on the political field. It is confident that in the school of experience organized labor will as rapidly as possible develop the most effective forms of organization and methods of action.

In the history of the recent Moyer-Haywood protest, participated in by unions of all sorts and by the Socialist party, it finds reason to hope for closer solidarity on the economic field and for more effective co-operation between organized labor and the Socialist party, the two wings of the movement for working-class emancipation.

The Socialist party stands with organized labor in all its struggles to resist capitalist aggression or to wrest from

the capitalists any improvement in the conditions of labor. It declares that it is the duty of every wage-worker to be an active and loyal member of the organized labor movement, striving to win its battles and to strengthen and perfect it for the greater struggle to come.

#### CONFRONTED BY GREAT CRISIS.

Organized labor is today confronted by a great crisis. The capitalists, intoxicated with wealth and power and alarmed by the increasing political and economic activity of the working class, have as a class undertaken a crusade for the destruction of the labor organizations.

In Colorado, Nevada, Alaska and elsewhere law and constitution have been trampled under foot, military despotism set up, and judicial murder attempted with this aim in view. Where such violent methods have not seemed advisable, other means have been used to the same end.

The movement for the so-called open shop but thinly veils an attempt to close the shops against organized workmen; it is backed by powerful capitalist organizations, with millions of dollars in their war funds.

#### COURTS ALWAYS HOSTILE.

The courts, always hostile to labor, have of late outdone all previous records in perverting the law to the service of the capitalist class. They have issued injunctions forbidding the calling of strikes, the announcement of boycotts, payment of union benefits, or even any attempt to organize unorganized workmen in certain trades and places. They have issued arbitrary decrees dissolving unions under the pretense of their being labor trusts.

They have sustained the capitalists in bringing damage suits against unions for the purpose of tying up and sequestrating their funds. They have wiped off the statute books many labor laws—laws protecting little children from exploitation in the factory, laws making employers liable for damage in case of employes killed or injured at their



work, laws guaranteeing the right of workingmen to belong to unions.

While affirming the right of employers to bar organized workingmen from employment, they have declared it unlawful for workingmen to agree not to patronize non-union establishments. The only consistent rule observed by the courts in dealing with the labor question is the rule that capitalists have a sacred right to profits and that the working class has no rights in opposition to business interests.

#### DANBURY HATTERS' CASE.

In the Danbury hatters' case the United States supreme court has rendered a decision worthy to stand with its infamous "Dred Scott decision" of fifty years ago. It has stretched and distorted the Anti-Trust law to make it cover labor organizations, and has held that the peaceful method of the boycott is unlawful, that boycotted employers may recover damages to the amount of three times their loss, and that the property of individual members, as well as the union treasuries, may be levied upon to collect such damages.

By this decision the supreme court has clearly shown itself to be an organ of class injustice, not of social justice. If this and other hostile decisions are not speedily reversed, organized labor will find itself completely paralyzed in its efforts toward a peaceful solution of the labor question. The success of the capitalists and their courts in this assault upon the labor movement would be a disaster to civilization and humanity. It can and must be defeated.

#### BALLOT AS A WEAPON.

At this critical moment the Socialist party calls upon all organized workingmen to remember that they still have the ballot in their hands and to realize that the intelligent use of political power is absolutely necessary to save their organizations from destruction. The unjust decision of the supreme court can be reversed, the arbitrary use of the military can be stopped, the wiping out of labor laws can



be prevented by the united action of the workingmen on election day.

Workingmen of the United States, use your political arm in harmony with your economic arm for defense and attack. Rally to the support of the party of your class. Vote as you strike, against the capitalists. Down with military and judicial usurpation! Forward, in one solid phalanx, under the banners of organized labor and of the Socialist party, to defeat capitalist aggressions, to win immediate relief for yourselves and your wives and children, and to hasten the day of complete emancipation from capitalist exploitation and misrule.

#### THE 1910 RESOLUTION.

At the special national congress of 1910 (Chicago, May 15-21) three trade-union resolutions were introduced—one each by a majority and a minority of the committee on resolutions and a substitute from the floor. Both the minority report and the substitute demanded an outright indorsement of industrial unionism. In general the same arguments were heard as in the two previous national gatherings. The substitute was defeated by 58 to 23 and the minority report by 54 to 29, whereupon the majority report was adopted without division:

Resolved, That this national convention of 1910 reaffirms the attitude of the Socialist party towards the labor-union movement as declared by the national convention of 1908, in brief as follows:

1. That the party has neither the right nor the desire to interfere in any controversies which may exist within the labor-union movement over questions of form of organization or methods of action in the industrial struggle, but trusts to the labor organizations themselves to solve these questions and to evolve in the direction of ever closer solidarity and ever more effective action on the industrial field.

2. That it is the interest and the duty of the party to give moral and material support to the labor organizations in all their defensive or aggressive struggles against capitalist oppression and exploitation, for the protection and

extension of the rights of the wage-workers and the betterment of their material and social condition.

The national executive committee is hereby instructed to cause the "Address to Organized Labor" as adopted by the convention of 1908 to be edited in so far as to bring up to date the references to specific events contained therein, and then cause it to be reprinted as a leaflet and use all proper means to give it the widest circulation among the organized working people of the United States.

#### THE 1912 RESOLUTION.

The contest in the national convention of 1912 (Indianapolis, May 12-18), over the form of the resolution was wholly in the committee on labor organizations. This committee was divided, six to three, on the question, and a minority report was prepared. At the last moment, however, the minority yielded, and the majority report was submitted unanimously. It was passed without a dissenting voice by the convention:

Political organization and economic organization are alike necessary in the struggle for working class emancipation. The most harmonious relations ought to exist between the two great forces of the working class movement—the Socialist party and the labor unions.

The labor movement of the United States has of recent years made marvelous progress in all directions. It has steadily increased in numbers and has reached trades and industries which were before unorganized. It has in many instances concentrated its power and increased its efficiency by the amalgamation of related trades into federations and industrial unions. Many unions have opened meetings and journals to the discussion of vital social and political problems of the working class, and have repudiated the demoralizing policies presented by the National Civic Federation. The organized workers are rapidly developing an enlightened and militant class-consciousness.

The reality of this progress is attested by the increasing virulence with which the organized capitalists wage their war against the union. This improved economic organization is not a matter of abstract theory, but grows out

of the experience of the wage workers in the daily struggle. Only those actually engaged in the struggle in the various trades and industries can solve the problems of forms of organization.

The Socialist party therefore reaffirms the position it has always taken with regard to the movement of organized labor.

1. That the party has neither the right nor the desire to interfere in any controversies which may exist within the labor union movement over questions of form of organization or technical methods of action in the industrial struggle, but trusts to the labor organizations themselves to solve these questions.

2. The Socialists call the attention of their brothers in the labor unions to the vital importance of the task of organizing the unorganized, especially the immigrants and unskilled laborers, who stand in greatest need of organized protection and who will constitute a great menace to the progress and welfare of organized labor if they remain neglected. The Socialist party will ever be ready to co-operate with the labor unions in the task of organizing the unorganized workers, and urges all labor organizations, who have not already done so, to throw their doors wide open to the workers of their respective trades and industries, abolishing all onerous conditions of membership and artificial restrictions. In the face of the tremendous powers of the American capitalists and their close industrial and political union, the workers of this country can win their battles only by strong class-conscious and closely united organizations on the economic field, a powerful and militant party on the political field and by joint attack of both on the common enemy.

3. That it is the duty of the party to give moral and material support to the labor organizations in all their defensive or aggressive struggles against capitalist oppression and exploitation, for the protection and extension of the rights of the wage workers and the betterment of their material and social condition.

4. That it is the duty of the members of the Socialist party who are eligible to membership in the unions to join and be active in their respective labor organizations.

### SOCIALISTS IN THE UNIONS.

BY MAX S. HAYES.

In a general way, the aims and objects of the American Federation of Labor, so far as its political and social demands are concerned, are quite similar to those contained in the "immediate demands" of the platform of the Socialist party. Holding a sort of dual position in the two organizations and having attended the conventions of the American Federation of Labor during the last fifteen years as a delegate, I have followed the trend quite closely and, naturally, have gained some convictions upon the principles upon which both organizations are founded. I want it understood that I am not here speaking as a representative of either organization. I have not been delegated by the Socialist party, nor by the American Federation of Labor, to express the view of their memberships. I give my own impressions. In other words, I do not wish to pose as a labor leader or a Socialist leader. I would prefer to be classified as an ordinary labor and Socialist agitator. I sometimes become provoked when I am referred to as a labor leader or a Socialist leader because my impression of both movements is that they lead themselves largely, but have spokesmen, advocates, agitators, etc.

#### A. F. OF L. THE LOGICAL LABOR ASSOCIATION.

In my capacity as delegate to the American Federation of Labor, and as a member of the Socialist party, as editor of *The Citizen* for the last twenty years, as a participant in the trade-union movement for thirty years, and the Socialist movement for about nineteen years, I have come to the conclusion that the American Federation of Labor is the logical economic organization for this country. I have no sympathy with the so-called Industrial Workers of the

World, any more than I had for the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, which was organized prior to the I. W. W., or with the American Labor Union. I do not agree with Mr. Debs on the one hand in his views as to the form of organization which the labor movement should take on the industrial field. Nor do I agree with Brother Sam Gompers on the other hand, in his opposition to the Socialist movement or to the progressive demands made by the Socialist movement.

There is not the difference between the membership of the Socialist party and the membership of the trade-unions that people are frequently led to believe exists, because of the contentions, the rivalries, the jealousies or the animosities that may exist between the so-called leaders of these movements. I do not wish to deal particularly with individuals, because, in the long run, there is not very much to be gained by criticizing individuals. When I speak of individuals I want it understood that I am dealing with their views, with their qualities. Whatever antipathy may exist between Mr. Debs and Mr. Gompers as well-known representatives of the organizations with which they are affiliated does not exist among the rank and file.

#### TRADE-UNIONISTS FORM MAJORITY OF PARTY.

To the uninformed individual it might appear that there is a sort of gulf, an inseparable barrier, between the Socialist organization on the one side and the labor movement on the industrial field on the other side. Now, as a matter of fact, the very large bulk of the membership, a majority I would say, of the Socialist party, is composed of trade-unionists. I can speak from experience, when I say that. As representative of the Typographical Union, I have often been very materially assisted by Socialist organizations. For instance, in cities and towns in the middle west, where we had no local organization, and where there appeared to be difficulty in getting the printers to form a union and to affiliate with the international organization, I have written letters to members of Socialist locals and en-



listed their co-operation in interesting printers in the subject of organization, later following up the correspondence by a personal visit, with the result that we formed a union.

That is my individual experience. And, undoubtedly, many international organizers—I am making a distinction between international organizers and the paid organizers of the American Federation of Labor, those directly connected with headquarters in Washington—have been assisted by Socialist organizations in the smaller towns. We have Socialist organizations in hundreds of towns where there are no unions, and they are often used for the purpose of securing the formation of trade-unions. I might sit here and explain for an hour or more the co-operation that exists between the membership of the Socialist party and the labor unions, particularly in the smaller towns of the country. . . .

#### INCREASING NUMBER OF SOCIALIST DELEGATES.

If you will follow the A. F. of L. proceedings—and those who are delegates to the conventions of the American Federation of Labor know it—you will find that there is a steady increase in the number of representatives from the national unions who are Socialists. Take the miners, just as an illustration. A very large percentage of the United Mine Workers today are Socialists. That is particularly true of the Middle West, in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. Some of the mining towns in those states are almost solidly Socialist, as is demonstrated by the votes cast in the elections of delegates to their national conventions, usually held in Indianapolis. The same is true of the brewery workers, the machinists and many other trades.

No objection has ever been raised by the Socialist party. In fact the Socialist party, the Socialist press and the prominent Socialists who do not happen to be in a position where they themselves can affiliate with trade-unions, have advised and constantly insisted that the rank and file of the Socialist membership, whenever eligible, should join



trade-unions and assist in the struggles on the industrial field. . . .

#### DIRECT ACTIONISTS IN A. F. OF L.

I am a member of the trade-union movement, because it is the bread and butter organization. It is a movement that meets problems on the industrial field, as has been stated by President Gompers, from day to day, in reducing hours of labor, raising wages, gaining more decent working conditions in shops, mines and on the railroads of the country. That is an absolute necessity. But I recognize the limitations of the trade-union movement, and I have come to the conclusion that it is absolutely necessary to have also a political expression of the wants and desires of the working class in order to place ourselves in a position of equality in waging the contest with the capitalists, who organize politically and industrially as well.

I recall when some of the ultra-conservatives in the American Federation of Labor opposed any and every form of political action, contending what the Industrial Workers of the World now claim: that the workers can secure by direct action without the assistance of governmental machinery whatever demands they may make; that they can achieve by purely economic action a condition where they will be able to secure the full product of their toil.

We had, for instance, in the Kansas City convention in 1898, again in the Detroit convention, in the Louisville convention, debated those points, and prominent members and officers of the American Federation of Labor took the position that the labor movement should keep its hands off political maneuvering in its efforts to gain advantages.

#### A CHANGE OF FRONT.

But there has been a sort of a steady evolution even among those conservatives to the extent that they now operate through what they call a Labor Representative Committee, adopting the name of the Labor Representation Committee of Great Britain. That is merely the name, however.

There were, I believe, three individuals selected at the conference in Washington to steer the labor movement along political lines, whereas in Great Britain the Labor Representation Committee developed into the Labor party, with which the Independent Labor party of which Keir Hardie is one of the prominent spokesmen, is affiliated, and with which the British Socialist party will undoubtedly affiliate within the next few months. . . .

The officers of the American Federation of Labor have advocated political action and the election of members to Congress who are now classified as a labor group, in a loose manner. Practically every member of the labor group, however, maintains his adherence and responsibility to his political party. Thus, for instance, Secretary of Labor Wilson made the public statement that he cannot and will not be regarded as a labor representative. He was elected as a Democrat and, logically, affiliated himself with his party in Congress. He is, however, a labor man.

#### TAGGING AFTER THE CAPITALIST PARTIES.

Now, there comes the division in the labor movement. The conservative elements are inclined to the view that more can be accomplished by acting through the old parties in the election of members to Congress, while the radical elements, with which I generally affiliate in the American Federation conventions, insist that the only logical, definite and substantial manner to make progress is through a party that is composed wholly and solely of labor men. That is, we contend that it is essential that we be as conscious of our solidarity as workers on the political field as we are on the industrial field. We maintain that it is an absurdity to make demands upon the industrial field from the employing class and then turn around and elect attorneys to Congress and to the State Legislatures, who are dominated, as has been proven in any number of investigations, by large corporations and, naturally, side with the employers when it comes to a crisis, and make it difficult to secure the enactment of legislation which we have been demanding for many

years, such as the curbing of the injunction curse in labor controversies, amending the Sherman law, and so on.

It is difficult to force those measures through the National Congress or the State Legislatures, because of the fact that these attorneys and capitalists, manufacturers, merchants, etc., understand their class interest much better than the workers understand their class interest. Hence, in every contest where the lines are sharply drawn, the capitalist representatives usually are opposed to the enactment of remedial legislation for labor. In this country we have had a tremendous advantage over the workers in Europe, who were mentioned yesterday. The workers in Europe have had more to contend with than we have had in this country. They have been held in a condition of industrial slavery for centuries, from the feudal state down to the present capitalist system of industry. The workers in Europe have found the class lines drawn against them, the lines of privilege. The church and state were allied against them. Here we have been practically free, and yet the workers are paying absolutely no attention to their political power so far as going along independent lines is concerned.\*

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\*Testimony before the Industrial Relations Commission in New York, May 23, 1914. From "The Double Edge of Labor's Sword," pp. 154-61.

## III.

## THE POLICY OF THE FEDERATION.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The American Federation of Labor dates from the convention which met in Pittsburg November 15, 1881, and formed the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada. Its present name was adopted at the reorganization effected by the joint convention of the Federation unions and a number of independent unions which met at Columbus on December 8, 1886.

The convention of 1881 adopted a legislative program of thirteen planks and some further resolutions also demanding legislative action. It elected also a legislative committee of five members to initiate measures and to keep informed regarding measures affecting labor before congress and the state legislatures. It declared that the new organization should be non-partisan, and it forbade members of the legislative committee from publicly advocating the claims of any of the political parties.

## A PARTISAN "NON-PARTISANISM."

The policy of non-partisanism was, however, interpreted by the officials in a somewhat elastic manner. The speaker of the House of Representatives was solicited to appoint men favorable to labor on the committee on labor and education; the election to public office of certain labor men, by nomination of the old parties, was officially hailed with joy; concerted efforts were made from time to time, by alliance with one party or the other, to defeat anti-labor men, and official commendation was tendered to several old-party politicians "as true and tried friends in the cause of labor." As early as 1884 the conventions of the two chief parties were solicited to incorporate in their platforms the demands of the Federation, and in the fall of that year the organization declared it the imperative duty of every trade-unionist to work and vote for such legislative candidates as had shown themselves favorable to labor. A resolution by two Socialist delegates introduced in the convention of 1885, declaring for the formation of an independent workingmen's party, was defeated.

## INDEPENDENCE INDORSED, THEN CONDEMNED.

At the convention of 1886, however, conditions brought about a momentary reversal of policy. The reorganization of

the Federation brought in some new elements. Moreover, throughout the greater part of the North, there was a spontaneous uprising of labor expressing itself in independent political action. The "non-partisanism" of the Federation could not withstand this tide, and a resolution urging "a most generous support to the independent political movement of the workingmen" was unanimously passed.

Mr. Gompers, nevertheless, was opposed to this action, and the general collapse of the new movement in the following year made easy for him the guiding of the Federation back into its former policy. The suggested formation of a third party was condemned by him in his report for 1888, and in the convention of the following year a resolution proposing a new party was rejected. In 1890 occurred the Sanial incident and in 1892 and 1893-94 the incidents of the Morgan resolutions, which have already been treated. The Denver convention, though it rejected the famous plank 10 of the Morgan demands, defeated Gompers for re-election and chose instead John McBride, generally believed at the time to favor independent political action. But at the following convention Gompers was again elected, and the Federation's old-time policy was resumed. Some of the effects of that policy, which in later years has served to affiliate the Federation with the Democratic party and the National Civic Federation, will be found in the following pages. The first article is taken from the statement of Morris Hillquit before the Industrial Relations Commission:

## THE FEDERATION AND THE PARTY.

BY MORRIS HILLQUIT.

By way of summary I shall say a few words on the relations of the Socialist movement to the American Federation of Labor. . . .

First of all, the matter, it seems to me, is one of very large importance. The American Federation of Labor and all other organized workers within or outside of the Federation represent about three million persons. The Socialist party at the last presidential election polled almost one million votes. We may legitimately assume that for every male voter there is a female non-voting Socialist sympathizer, and, taking the men and women voters and non-voters we may conservatively estimate the number of per-

sons in the United States who support the Socialist philosophy and program to be likewise about three millions.

#### COMMON AIMS OF THE ORGANIZATIONS.

The relation between those two powerful factors in the industrial and political world seems to me of importance, and I wish to state, for the benefit of the Commission, the public at large and the working class particularly, that whether for good or for evil, the Socialist movement and the organized economic labor movement must be considered ultimately as one—born of the same conditions, having consciously or unconsciously the same aims and objects, and leading to the same result.

The Socialist movement aims to secure to the workers the full product of their labor and, by the same token, to deprive the idlers of their unearned part of the general national product. It stands, then, for the nationalization of industries; for the collective ownership of means of operating those industries. The labor movement, it appears very clearly from Mr. Gompers' statements, stands likewise for an ever increasing share of the product to be given to the workers; for an ever decreasing share of the product to be left to the non-workers, and Mr. Gompers admitted that this process has no limitation and will not stop before the entire product of the work is turned over to the working class as a whole.

Thus, you see, substantially and ultimately, the two movements stand for the same thing. The distinction is mainly one of the degree of consciousness. The Socialists proceed upon a general social philosophy. They have thought out the thing, they have asked themselves where it leads to, they have drawn their conclusions and formulated them in the Socialist program. The trade-union movement, on the other hand, as Mr. Gompers himself stated, is not concerned much with ultimate ends or social philosophies. It works for immediate ends, but those ends lead eventually to the same point.



#### THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLE ALSO POLITICAL.

There is also no great merit in the distinction between political and economic functions. The demand to abolish child labor in a certain shop or a number of shops, or to introduce an eight-hour workday in a certain shop or in a number of shops, is economic if made by the workers in those shops on their employers. The same demand stated broadly for an entire industry or an entire division of the working class, and being formulated by way of legal enactment, becomes political action. And it is just because the Socialists stand for the larger aspect of the movement that their activity is more political, and it is because the labor unions, while standing on the same basis, do not have the larger vision that they consider their activity primarily economic. As to the ultimate result, the two do not differ much from each other. I make that statement to avert any misunderstanding as to the attitude of the Socialist party toward the American Federation of Labor.

What Mr. Hayes has said here is not merely his individual view. It is the view of the Socialist party at large. The Socialist party is absolutely committed to a policy of friendship to organized labor, and unequivocally recognizes the American Federation of Labor today as the main representative of organized labor. The little tilt I had with my friend, Mr. Gompers, was very largely individual and directed not against the American Federation of Labor, but against certain conceptions and policies of the present leadership of the American Federation of Labor. The attitude of the Socialist party to the American Federation of Labor as such, as distinguished from its leadership, is absolutely friendly, and the criticism which is directed against its present leadership is also of a friendly nature.

#### THE DRIFT TOWARD INDUSTRIALISM.

I shall mention these criticisms briefly. In the first place, the Socialists believe that the leaders of the American Federation of Labor fail to recognize the drift and trend towards industrialism in organization. Now, mind you, we

don't say that the American Federation of Labor is not developing in that direction. It is. But what we do say is that the development is not aided consciously by its leaders, because the leaders fail to understand the importance of it. The present leaders of the American Federation of Labor fail to see that industrial conditions today are not what they were in 1881, when the Federation or its predecessor was organized.

Mr. Gompers placidly said here on the stand that the American Federation of Labor had originally adopted a plan and system of absolute autonomy of trades and had rigidly adhered to it. If it actually had, the action would not be a subject for praise, but one for severe criticism, because industrial development has not stood still within the last thirty years. Industries today are more interrelated, more interwoven, more organically connected, than they were in 1881, and if the workers are to keep pace with these industries and be in a position to meet their employers and their organizations, they must organize accordingly. The example cited by Mr. Gompers, that of the state organizations and the federal government of the United States, does not apply at all. That is purely political. And industry cannot be so separated from its parts as one state may be separated geographically and arbitrarily from another.

Now, we recognize, however, that the American Federation of Labor is tending toward ever greater industrial organizations. We fully approve of the report which Mr. Gompers offered in evidence here before the Commission and favor the extension of industrialism within the American Federation of Labor. We only wish that the leaders of the Federation had been clear-sighted enough to see the tendency and to co-operate with it and help it along more assiduously.

#### THE REVOLT OF THE UNSKILLED.

Another point of criticism we have is this, that the American Federation of Labor does not seem to understand the significance of the agitation which has assumed the name I. W. W., and here I want to make this statement: The

Socialist party has no sympathy with the methods of the Industrial Workers of the World, none whatever. You have heard the testimony of the representatives of that organization. We regard their methods as absolutely ineffective and childishly inadequate. But the "Industrial Workers of the World" means more than the fourteen thousand men organized in Mr. St. John's organization. It means a certain new spirit in the American labor movement. It means Lawrence, it means Paterson. It means Little Falls, it means McKees Rocks. It means this new phase of the labor movement which has arisen within the last few years. How are we to account for it? How does the American Federation of Labor account for it? It is not a mere accident. There must be some cause underlying it. Nothing is produced without causes. The causes, as we Socialists see them, are briefly stated as follows:

First, the development of machine industry has made skilled labor a less and less important factor, and unskilled labor a more important factor in this country. It has attracted a different type of immigrants, who have come here by millions, who have no right of citizenship, are unorganized and poor beyond description, and who have no means of civilized resistance or welfare. It has created a new class within the working class, and has led to the spontaneous unorganized and frequent violent outbursts which we designate by the general phrase, "I. W. W. revolts." These revolts are not explained by calling the I. W. W. names. They represent a new phase in the labor movement, and the American Federation of Labor should have taken cognizance of it by making more strenuous efforts—it has made honest efforts, I admit—but it should have made more strenuous efforts to organize these men and to acclimatize them, and, if you want, to Americanize them and make them part and parcel of the American labor movement.

#### THE CIVIC FEDERATION.

On the question of politics Mr. Hayes has said a good deal, and, in view of my limited time, I shall not take it up.

But I wish to say a few words on another subject of criticism, and that is the relation of certain leaders of the American Federation of Labor to the Civic Federation. The Civic Federation is an organization founded by employers for the purpose principally and primarily of deadening the aggressive spirit of the American labor movement, and I think it is succeeding marvelously. Mr. Gompers has stated here that the National Civic Federation has no membership, and that he is not a member of it. Since he is to follow me, I should like him to answer these few questions:

First, if the National Civic Federation has no membership and any one who happens to come in has a voice in the choice of officers, would it be permissible for me and, say, a hundred of my Socialist friends to go to the next meeting and to vote in the election of officials? If it were, we might be tempted to try it.

Second, if the National Civic Federation has no membership, it has, presumably, no dues. It maintains an elaborate office. It pays salaries to a secretary and a large staff of workers. It has various departments. It spends very large sums of money. One of the features of its activities is a very lavish annual banquet. I should like to know, Mr. Gompers, where that money comes from. Does the American Federation of Labor contribute any part to it, and if it does not, who does? And if it is all contributed by our capitalists and their friends in the National Civic Federation, I should like Mr. Gompers to say whether, in his opinion, such contributions are made solely and single-mindedly for the benefit of the workers.\*

Gompers' reply to these questions, as given on p. 180 of the pamphlet quoted, is as follows: "I omitted to say 'dues-paying membership.' Answering his question of this morning, I should say that the National Civic Federation exists by the voluntary contributions of those who agree to contribute in furtherance of any thought or purpose that they may have in mind."

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\*Testimony before the Industrial Relations Commission in New York, May 23, 1914. From "The Double Edge of Labor's Sword," pp. 172-77.

**AN EXAMPLE FROM COLORADO.**

BY ROBERT HUNTER.

Just after the general elections of 1912 I took from the trade-union papers a statement sent out in the press service of the American Federation of Labor. It was an interesting clipping, a very precious clipping, and one that I thought might interest me in two or three years.

It told of the election to the House of Representatives at Washington of several old trade-unionists, all of whom had bona fide trade-union standing, with paid-up trade-union cards.

It also called attention to this startling fact: The "trade-unionists in Colorado make a record that is unparalleled." The telegram from Mr. Gompers' office read: "If the record of the trade-unionists in every other state in the union equals that of this state, the action of the coming legislatures will be reflected in the laws enacted. There will be twenty-two members of farmers' and trade-unions holding seats in the next session of the Colorado legislature, and, taking the legislature as a whole, indications are that it will be exceedingly fair and give favorable consideration to all measures affecting the interests of labor."

The press service of the A. F. of L. then relates the progressive measures enacted in Colorado and calls attention to the union men who were elected in 1912 to control the great state of Colorado. I give this list below, just as it was sent out by the American Federation of Labor:

**LABOR'S "EMANCIPATORS."**

Elias Ammons, Farmers' Union, Governor, Democrat.

Benj. Montgomery, Farmers' Union, Lieutenant Governor, Democrat.

James B. Pearce, R. R. Telegraphers' Union, Secretary of State, Democrat.

Roady Kenehan, Horseshoers' Union, State Auditor, Democrat.

Mary C. C. Bradford, Woman's Trade Union League, Superintendent Public Instruction, Democrat.

Edward Keating, Typographical Union, Congressman, Democrat.

Joseph Berry, Locomotive Engineers, State Senator, Democrat.

H. E. Garman, Typographical Union, State Senator, Democrat.

S. S. Bellesfield, Typographical Union, State Senator, Democrat.

Ralph Tucker, Trainmen's Union, State Senator, Republican.

William Metz, Conductors' Union, State Senator, Democrat.

John Cross, Farmers' Union, State Senator, Democrat.

John J. Tobin, Farmers' Union, State Senator, Democrat.

John I. Tierney, Typographical Union, State Senator, Democrat.

Mat Lynes, Locomotive Engineers, State Senator, Republican.

John Hurd, Mine Workers' Union, State Senator, Democrat.

John Williams, Bookbinders' Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

Phil McCarthy, Stationary Engineers, House of Representatives, Democrat.

Mrs. Lee, wife of Union Machinist, House of Representatives, Democrat.

William R. Elmore, Machinists' Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

Charles J. Leftwich, Carpenter's Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

Onias Skinner, Farmers' Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

Peter Turnbull, Metal Workers' Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

Jack Slattery, Hotel and Restaurant Employes, House of Representatives, Democrat.

John T. Kavanaugh, Street Carmen's Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

William Daily, Typographical Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

A. C. Newton, Typographical Union, House of Representatives, Republican.

— McDonald, Machinists' Helpers' Union, House of Representatives, Democrat.

#### AND YET—THINK OF LUDLOW!

Now, dear reader, I ask you to read carefully and ponder over these remarkable statements and the above remarkable list. And, after you have read them and pondered over them, will you not think of the victims of Ludlow and the



miners of that state fighting like our revolutionary fathers against the tyranny of John Rockefeller's Hessians.

Think of these "card men" turning the state of Colorado over to the mine owners and of these supposedly loyal friends of the working class paying the state's money to the thugs of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., for their murderous work in the recent strike.

And then read the words I wrote and published in the Socialist papers in February, 1909, and tell me if I was right:

#### AN EARLIER "VICTORY."

"In the Colorado legislature there are eleven trade-unionists (in 1909). They have been elected on the Democratic ticket, as a part of the new plan to tie labor to the Democratic party. They are evidently well known trade-unionists, active and efficient in the affairs of the unions. They hope, it is said, to pass legislation in the interests of labor.

"Some of the labor journals have spoken of them as representatives of labor. But that is saying too much. Unfortunately, they are not the representatives of labor. They are the representatives of the Democratic party.

"One of two things will happen. They will either forget labor and become political schemers and tricksters, or they will defend labor and break with the Democratic machine.

"They have already been tested. I do not know how they voted. An enemy of labor, a corporation vampire of the most despicable sort, has been chosen to represent Colorado in the senate. He probably could not have been chosen had these eleven men voted against him. In case they voted for Charles J. Hughes they began their political career by dealing a deadly blow to labor.

#### DO SUCH MEN REALLY REPRESENT YOU?

"Just such things will happen again and again. Their honesty and sincerity will undergo a terrible strain, and soon they will be forced to believe that the interests of the

Democratic party are more precious than the interests of labor, and they will abandon labor and cling to the betrayer of labor.

"I want to ask labor a few questions. Are these men now your representatives? Do they report to you? Are they responsible to you? Do you control and guide their actions? Do you know what they do? Do you instruct them?

"These are practical questions, because he who is responsible to political bosses is not, and cannot be, by the very nature of the case, your representative.

"The time is arriving for the political representation of labor. It already exists in every other white man's country throughout the world. But the workmen of other countries have realized one fundamental proposition. A man cannot serve them and another at the same time.

"In those countries the workmen had the same experience you are now having. For years they elected their men on old party tickets, and the time came when these men betrayed labor and had to be gotten rid of.

#### RESPONSIBLE ONLY TO CAPITALISM.

"It was not because those particular labor men were more corrupt than the rest of us, or less earnest in their devotion to the interests of labor. It was simply because they were responsible to other interests, and, being responsible to other interests, their responsibility to labor ceased.

"Throughout all the world now labor is in politics. Not to assist Democrats or Republicans, but to fight its own battles. It has broken away from the old parties, and has sent men to represent it.

"In this way the ones elected serve one interest, and one interest only—the interest of labor. They receive their instructions from labor. They report to organizations of labor, and they are often continued on the payroll of labor. When they do not vote right or act right, they are forced out of the organization of labor.

"It is time to think of these things. Some of the best

leaders labor has ever had have been ruined and corrupted by trying to serve two masters. They can be saved to the labor movement in one way only, and that is for labor to go into politics as a class, to oppose all other political organizations, and to force their representatives to fight the battles of labor, and those battles alone.

“Labor has no representatives in Colorado. The Democratic party has added to its machine eleven trade-union men, who, however honest and sincere they may be now, will in time be forced either to betray labor or to resign all relations with or affiliations to the parties of Hughes and Guggenheim.”

#### THE SHAME OF COLORADO.

Since that was written we have witnessed five years of history. The eleven trade-unionists of 1909 became twenty-two trade-unionists in 1912. Even the governor of the state and the circle about him held “union cards.”

Well, has ever labor in any state in the union suffered so much as it has had to suffer in Colorado from the hands of these traitors to its cause? When will labor learn that even its warmest friend cannot serve two masters? No trade-unionist can serve a Democratic boss, a Republican boss, or a Progressive boss, and serve labor at the same time.

No trade-unionist, however sincere, can serve the working class and John D. Rockefeller, too.

Until labor builds up its own party, finances it, controls it, makes its platforms, selects its candidates, and owns them body and soul, can it ever hope to have political representatives fighting its battles.\*

#### GROWING REACTION OF THE LEADERS.

Socialist criticism of the leadership of the American Federation of Labor is directed not only against its reactionary attitude in the matter of affiliation with the capitalist political parties, as well as the National Civic Federation, and its failure to bring about a more compact organization of the working

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\*The American Socialist, July 18, 1914.

class, but also against its opposition to certain forms of state action. At the thirty-fourth annual convention (1914) a resolution proposing a general agitation for a national eight-hour law and a resolution favoring municipal ownership of public utilities were both defeated. Mr. Gompers had previously, in his testimony before the Industrial Relations Commission in New York, explained his attitude and that of his following against a legal eight-hour day for men working in private industries. The eight-hour day was already being won, he said, by the direct action of the unions. "The American Federation of Labor," he continued, "has some apprehensions as to the placing of additional powers in the hands of the government which may work to the detriment of working people, and particularly when the things can be done by the workmen themselves." Regarding municipal ownership, Gompers in the convention based his opposition on the alleged fact of the greater difficulty of organizing municipal than private employes.

#### AN INCONSISTENT ATTITUDE.

This attitude can hardly be regarded as consistent. Apprehensions regarding an increase of governmental power did not prevent the thirty-fourth convention from voting in favor of government railways in Alaska, government workmen's compensation measures and the appointment of a government receiver for the Colorado mines in case the mine owners refused to accept President Wilson's proposal. Such apprehensions, further, do not prevent the A. F. of L. from maintaining a lobby in Washington and in every state capital to forward labor measures, nor from publishing each year a list of "legislative gains" won through the organization's efforts. By many persons closely acquainted with the Federation's work and policy the opposition of the leadership to eight-hour laws, municipal ownership and the minimum wage (to which also Gompers has publicly declared his opposition) is ascribed to the prevalence at headquarters of an anarchistic, direct-action philosophy insofar as it can be harmonized with the well-known legislative activities of the organization. It is also ascribed to the determination to develop as many points of disagreement as possible between the policy of the trade-unions and that of the Socialist party, and also to the increasing domination of the leadership by the National Civic Federation. A statement by Adolph Germer, former vice president of the Illinois branch of the United Mine Workers, and a delegate to the thirty-fourth convention of the Federation, which expresses the indignation felt by Progressive and Socialist trade-unionists at the action of the convention, is given on the following pages. Some of the more personal passages are omitted, as inappropriate for this pamphlet.

**A LEADERSHIP FALSE TO ITS TRUST.**

BY ADOLPH GERMER.

There are certain actions taken by the last convention of the American Federation of Labor that should be made widely known to the rank and file of labor.

It is the duty of every progressive Socialist trade-unionist to spread far and wide the following facts:

1. That the group that controls the A. F. of L. has delivered coolly and deliberately a most deadly blow to municipal ownership.

2. That the group that controls the A. F. of L. has announced to the world coolly and deliberately that it is opposed to obtaining a national eight-hour day by legislation.

Don't doubt me. These are the facts, and if the enemies of labor and of the people generally need comfort, here it is.

**ACTION GIVES AID AND COMFORT TO THE ENEMY.**

If Belmont and Ryan, Taggart and Sullivan who extort from the people enormous tribute for gas, water, electricity and street railways, want good powerful backing, they now have it from the machine in control of the organization that claims to represent the laboring classes of this country.

If the sweater and the exploiter of labor, if the steel trust and the mine operators want to knock the eight-hour day on the head, all they have to do now is to quote the action of the A. F. of L. convention recently held in Philadelphia.

If every corrupt legislator hereafter throws eight-hour bills out of the legislatures, he can find backing in the official proceedings of the A. F. of L.

Every stand-pat reactionary, every bought soul and every corporation lawyer can now defend himself when denying labor the eight-hour day by quoting the decisions of Mr. Gompers and his disciples.

But make no mistake, these decisions against municipal ownership and a national eight-hour day are not the decisions of labor.



The rank and file have nothing to do with them, and if I am not mistaken, the rank and file will soon alter them.

The machine of the A. F. of L. is powerful enough to pass any resolution it wants to pass, and it has passed these particular resolutions for certain good reasons.

The reason advanced by the Gompers crowd in its opposition to municipal ownership is, that it has been harder to organize the employes where the utilities were owned by the municipality than where they were owned by individuals or private corporations. This crowd is always skillful enough not to point out that in nearly every municipality the local groups of the A. F. of L. are the adjunct to the capitalist political machine, and this chiefly because of Gompers' political policy of "Reward your friends and punish your enemies." Every exploiter of labor has been elected to office on the pretensions of "friendship" to labor.

#### REAL REASONS FOR OPPOSITION.

It is not the fear of Mr. Gompers and his machine that they will not be able to organize the employes of municipally owned utilities that causes them to oppose municipal ownership. They have other reasons.

By belittling municipal ownership and by opposing a national eight-hour law, they are endeavoring to destroy Socialism and the Socialist movement.

Could anything be much more absurd, pathetic and utterly ridiculous? Could anything be more treasonable to labor? Could an old gang fighting in its last trench be driven to measures more futile?

They are not only certain to lose their own heads as a result, but they will drive from them by their madness every intelligent and progressive trade-unionist.

They have made it impossible for them to claim any longer to represent the millions of laborers in the country who are now working ten, eleven and even twelve hours a day.

They are giving the strongest possible justification to the enemies of the craft unions who have been saying for

years that these craft unionists are selfish aristocrats of labor who are interested only in their own welfare and have no bonds that tie them to the mass of toilers.

DISGRACE TO AMERICAN LABOR.

They are practically saying to the millions of unorganized that they have no interest in the welfare of these millions and that they don't care a hang if an eight-hour day is never obtained.

This is the most reactionary position ever taken by any section of the labor movement in any part of the world.

It is a disgrace to American labor and there is no question whatever that the men who pushed through the committee's report opposed to eight hours by legislation will rue the day the A. F. of L. took that action.

It brings nearer the welcome time when labor will free itself from a few of the old leaders who have been a little too closely associated in the past with Belmont, Ryan, Taggart and Sullivan. . . .

EMPLOYERS APPROVE A. F. OF L. ACTION.

During the recent eight-hour campaign in California the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association used large placards quoting Mr. Gompers' statements against an eight-hour law. The most effective opposition to such a law was furnished to the enemies of organized labor by Mr. Gompers.

He explains his attitude by saying that he wants the unions themselves to obtain and enforce an eight-hour day.

He says he does not believe in leaving such matters to the government.

In other words Mr. Gompers would get the eight-hour day by starving the workers through long drawn-out and bitterly contested industrial conflicts in which scores of human lives are inevitably sacrificed. Of course, it's an easy matter for one with \$7,500 income per annum and expenses to talk of obtaining eight hours through unions. But the man who opposes an eight-hour day by legislation at \$7,500 per remains at long range, while those who want laws passed

to reduce their hours of labor do the real fighting. An unknown number of lives have been yielded up in industrial conflicts and millions of dollars have been spent in efforts to obtain a shorter work day, and now Mr. Gompers and his machine join hands with the Manufacturers' Association to prevent labor from getting a shorter work day.

REAL LABOR WILL TRIUMPH IN THE END.

Labor will, nevertheless, endeavor to get the shorter work day, both by legislative efforts and through the unions. No matter what Mr. Gompers says or does, the rank and file know what they want, and when they become acquainted with the part played by the A. F. of L. machine at the last convention, the Gompers reactionary regime will crumble and the labor movement of America will assume a true working-class character and take a foremost place in the labor movement of the world.

Let us get a nearer view of Mr. Gompers' "consistency." He discards legislative efforts to get an eight-hour day, yet every issue of the *American Federationist* is filled with praise of the laws obtained by the A. F. of L. through its legislative efforts.

The Clayton law and many other labor laws were heralded as immense and everlasting victories for the labor movement.

And if he does not believe in laws for labor, why is there a labor lobby at every state legislature and at Washington? Why does he bother about the Clayton law? Why does he back the Democratic party?

If the end and aim of political effort is not to obtain, among other things, a national eight-hour law, what is the use of all his recent political efforts, of his denouncing the Republican reactionaries, and of his praise of the great friends of labor among the Democrats?\*

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\*The American Socialist, January 2 and 9, 1915.

## IV.

## THE FUTURE OF LABOR UNIONISM.

The hope for a better understanding between the trade-unions and the Socialist party and for a closer co-operation between them rests upon the following contingencies:

1. The displacement of the present leadership of the American Federation of Labor.

2. The continuation of the uniform policy of the Socialist party to aid the trade-unions in their daily struggles and to abstain from any interference with their form of organization. What Socialist members of the unions may do in seeking to effect changes is a legitimate exercise of their right as members, while like efforts on the part of the Socialist organization would be an intolerable interference.

3. The progress of industrial evolution, which is forcing even the more conservative unions to more closely federated forms of organization.

4. The growing realization on the part of the trade-unionists themselves of the deadening effect on the spirit of their organizations resulting from their subordination to the capitalist parties and to the National Civic Federation with which their leaders are affiliated.

5. The growing realization of the limitations of power on the part of the trade-union to effect fundamental changes for the benefit of labor. On the one hand, the rapid succession of episodes like the Colorado strike, the Ludlow massacre, the conviction of John R. Lawson, the West Virginia and Michigan strikes, the Danbury hatters' decision, the Kansas decision affirming the right of an employer to discharge a workman for belonging to a union, and the flood of injunctions perpetually poured out against labor; on the other hand, the testimony from a hundred sources, including the staff report of the Industrial Relations Commission, showing the chronic state of unemployment for millions, and of overwork and miserable wages for other millions—can not but bear fruit in a growing conviction that the working class must supplement its economic efforts by a class effort to conquer the political power.

The speech by August Bebel, delivered at a labor convention in Berlin, May 31, 1900, is regarded as one of the best Socialist expositions of the subject. A statement and plea somewhat similar and adapted to American conditions, forms a fitting conclusion to this pamphlet.

**THE DRIFT TOWARD UNITY.**

BY ROBERT HUNTER.

The movement now going on in all parts of the country will continue to go on until practically the entire mass of trade-unionists are also Socialists. For ten years or more the American Federation of Labor has been furnishing multitudes of recruits to the Socialist party. In Wisconsin the trade-unionists and Socialists are closely united. In Milwaukee, in Butte, in Schenectady, and in thirty or more other cities the trade-unionists have backed the Socialist party almost to a man and won splendid victories. In hundreds of other industrial cities and towns, where the Socialist party now polls a big vote, although not large enough to win, the Socialists and trade-unionists work together in perfect harmony. The State Federations of Labor in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and of several other states are officered by Socialist trade-unionists.

**UNIONS CHOOSE SOCIALIST OFFICIALS.**

As evidence of the more favorable attitude taken by trade-unionists toward Socialism, we find the brewers, the bakers, the tailors, the flint-glass workers, the machinists, the coal miners, the metal miners, the painters, the carpenters, the cigarmakers, the brick, tile and terra cotta workers, the cloth hat and cap makers, the electrical workers and the printers electing Socialists to high official positions in their unions. It is quite remarkable to anyone who carefully studies the growth of Socialism in the unions to see what immense progress has been made in that direction during the last few years. The mass of trade-unionists are forcing their way into independent labor politics, and the only opportunity of that sort which is now offered them is through the Socialist party. Consequently, both by reason of its very nature, and owing to the support of the trade-unionists, that party is recognized today as the Independent Labor party of America.



That anyone should have expected any other outcome seems a little strange to the Socialists. Abroad a trade-unionist who is not a Socialist is somewhat of a curiosity. When a workingman in Europe speaks of "the party" or of "our party," he means the Socialist party, but here workingmen who do not read Socialist papers and books rarely realize how identical in many respects the Socialist and trade-union movements are. Even the ideals of Socialism and trade-unionism are much the same.

#### SIMILARITY OF INDUSTRIAL IDEALS.

The trade-unionist believes that he should get the full product of his toil, and he is striving day in and day out to gain more and more of that product.

He strikes for shorter hours, better conditions and higher wages, always with the idea that he is gradually, by such battles, gaining more and more of what his labor produces. He realizes perfectly that it is impossible for him to receive the full product of his toil so long as the Carnegies, the Vanderbilts, the Rockefellers, the Goulds, the Astors and the other great landowners, mine-owners and mill-owners can take untold millions out of industry. He is convinced that the immense profits of the Standard Oil, of the Steel Trust, the Beef Trust and the railroads must somehow come out of the labor which has produced the wealth of those great industries.

He perhaps has no plan which seems to him certain to accomplish a juster distribution of wealth, but he knows by experience that strikes and trade-union activity gain for him larger and larger returns for his labor. Naturally he holds fast to a method which has achieved something for him, but that does not mean that he is content with the little he gains, or that he will not support his strikes with his ballot as soon as he is convinced that it is advisable and necessary. . . .

**DIFFER ONLY IN MODE OF ATTACK.**

Not only are the ideals of the two movements very similar, but their analysis of the conflict which exists in modern society is identical. The only variation between the views of the trade-unionist and the Socialist comes, then, in the manner of attack. The Socialist is convinced that the trade-unionist should not only battle with the individual employer, but that he should also seek to meet the employers as a whole, as represented by the state. Here capitalism makes the laws, writes the title deeds of wealth and controls all that machinery of government which makes it possible for capital to dominate both the industrial and the political institutions of society. The Socialist urges the masses to use the immense volume of votes at their disposal to capture political power, to change the laws of the country and administer the state and society in the interest of the workers.

What possible antagonism can exist between a trade-union movement, which is struggling for shorter hours, better conditions and higher wages, and a Socialist movement, which is endeavoring to organize men politically for the purpose of controlling the legislatures, the courts and the executives of the nation? The two movements and struggles do not in the least interfere with each other. By no flight of the imagination nor by any possible perversion can they be considered antagonistic. They aid each other, supplement each other, and, as a matter of fact, cannot fully succeed without the support of each other.

**TACTICS IDENTICAL, THOUGH IN DIFFERENT FIELDS.**

Curiously enough, the tactics and methods used by trade-unionists to battle with the employer on the industrial field are identical with those used by the Socialists to battle with the masters of society on the political field. As the trade-unionist seeks to organize all the workers engaged in the industries of the nation, so the Socialist

seeks to organize all the workers who vote in the nation. As the trade-unionist seeks to unite men into one body so that they shall be able to strike together and thus to enforce their demands, so the Socialist seeks to unite men into one body so that they may be able to vote together and thus control the political life of the nation. The need of the trade-unionist is an all-extensive trade-unionism. The need of the Socialist is an all-extensive political unionism. The one pleads for unity in the trade and industry; the other urges unity in politics. Both should exist supplementary or complementary to each other, in order that men might battle both as toilers in the shops and as citizens in the nation, for the complete emancipation of labor from the tyranny of capitalism.

Every trade-union is a revolt against industrial slavery. The workers have been forced by the bitterest of experience to realize the folly of leaving to the employers all authority as to the number of hours, the rate of wages, or the conditions of employment. So long as these matters were left to the employers, the workers were compelled to suffer incredibly long hours, wretched conditions of employment and starvation wages. The modern trade-union movement arose as a kind of rebellion, not only against these conditions themselves, but also against the authority and power of the masters to dictate such conditions. There is no way to think of the modern trade-union movement except as a direct challenge to the industrial authority of the employer. The Federation of Labor itself is an attempt to bring together the multitude of isolated trade organizations, to mould them into one great national independent body which shall constitute a hostile power to all the forces that now declare that the masters and not the men shall decide how many hours the toiler shall work, at what price he shall sell his labor, and under what conditions he shall do his work.

**POLITICAL UNIONISM MUST SUPPLEMENT TRADE-UNIONISM.**

It is perfectly clear that when a workman stands alone he is incapable of opposing the will of the boss. If he does not like his hours or his wages or his conditions of employment, he is told to quit, and that is the end of his protest and of him. It is only when all the workers of a trade get together that they can demand concessions from the employers and obtain them. It is only when the workers of a trade are able to withdraw all the laborers from the shops of any employer and thus completely paralyze his industrial operations that they have the power to decide how many hours they will sell each day of their lives, how much labor they are willing to give for certain wages, and under what conditions they will work in the shops.

This is what the modern trade-union means, but when the Socialist attempts to carry the same thought and method into the political field, Mr. Gompers is horrified and declares with vehemence that the whole project is chimerical, impossible, ridiculous. If organization has achieved a measure of industrial freedom, why is it not possible for organization to achieve some measure of political freedom? In any case, why should he who pleads with the workers to organize themselves in order to struggle against industrial slavery, protest against and even ridicule the Socialists, who urge those same workers to launch their own independent, self-reliant political union, in order to struggle against the political authority of the masters? Nothing is more astonishing to the Socialist than to see certain eminent trade-union leaders argue so ably, clearly and forcefully the principles of trade-unionism, only to throw up their hands in dismay when the same principles are employed for building up political unionism.\*

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\*"Labor in Politics," pp. 181-83, 188-93.

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