Daniel De Leon

Socialist Reconstruction of Society

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About this edition

Socialist Reconstruction of Society

Daniel De Leon

EDITION BASIS

Original English address · 1905

PAMPHLETS EDITION

New Pamphlets typography and digital formats, 2026. The complete identified source text is retained.

TEXT AND REUSE

Historical author text selected for this edition: U.S. economic copyright term expired (published before 1931). Daniel De Leon died 1914. Even Mexico's current life-plus-100 calculation for these identified contributors ended by 31 December 2014. No third-party modern translation, introduction or annotation is included. This is an edition-specific assessment for the United States and Mexico, not a worldwide certificate.

EDITORIAL TREATMENT

Historical wording and paragraph order follow the identified source. Print line breaks are reflowed. New pagination, contents and digital navigation are provided. Modern website navigation and unrelated editorial apparatus are excluded.

RIGHTS SCOPE

Complete historical address and both concluding audience questions and answers. The two bracketed modern introductory footnotes, source-site publishing history and reproduction of the campaign poster are excluded. The original statistical footnotes are retained. The title Socialist Reconstruction of Society was adopted in 1918; the 1905 title was The Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World.

SOURCES

Daniel De Leon, The Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World. Address, Minneapolis, 10 July 1905; serialized in Daily People, 24–29 September 1905, and published as a pamphlet by New York Labor News, October 1905. Reissued under the title Socialist Reconstruction of Society from 1918.

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Address

Workingmen and Workingwomen of Minneapolis:

Our chairman did not overstate the case when he said that the Industrialists Convention, which closed its sessions day before yesterday in Chicago after two weeks of arduous labors, marks an epoch in the annals of the Labor Movement of America. I may add, although his words imply as much, that the Chicago Convention marks also a turning point in the history of the land.

What was done there? You will be able to obtain an approximate idea, a hint, from the public declaration—the Preamble to the Constitution—adopted by the Convention. The document is short: I shall make that shortness still shorter by picking out just three of its clauses, the clauses which I consider most important, and by the light of which the significance, not only of all the others, not only of the document itself, but of the Movement which uttered it may be appreciated, gauged and understood.

The three clauses are these [reading]:

> "There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life."

The second clause declares [reading]:

> "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common."

Lastly, but not least, the third clause is as follows [reading]:

> "Between these two classes a struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the political, as well as on the industrial field, and take and hold that which they produce by their labor through an economic organization of the working class without affiliation with any political party."

These three clauses I propose to take up with you in the order in which I have read them. I consider

THE FIRST CLAUSE

pivotal. Does it state a truth? Does it state a falsehood? Is it true that the condition of the Working Class is one of hunger and want? or is the contrary statement, heard so often, the correct one? Upon this subject the men engaged in the Social Question are irreconcilably divided. Deep is the cleft that divides them. On the one side stand those who were gathered, or were represented, at Chicago. They maintain that the condition of the Working Class is one of hunger, want and privation; that from bad it is getting worse and ever worse; that the plunder levied upon them mounts ever higher; that not only does their relative share of the wealth which they produce decline, but that the absolute amount of the wealth that they enjoy shrinks to ever smaller quantity in their hands. That is the Socialist position. Over against that position is the position of our adversaries of various stripes—from the outspoken capitalist down to the A.F. of L'ite. They assert that the condition of the Working Class is one of well-being; they claim that from good it is getting better and ever better; they maintain that both the absolute amount of the wealth that the workingman enjoys and his relative share of the wealth that he produces is on the increase; some of them, like the English organ of the New Yorker Volkszeitung Corporation, the "Worker" of February 5, of this year, go so far in their assault upon the Socialist position as to pronounce "a wild exaggeration" the claim that "the capitalist system filches from the Working Class four-fifths of all that class produces." The two positions are irreconcilable. If the latter be true, or even approximately true, then the other two clauses that I am considering from the Preamble, aye, the Preamble itself, together with the whole work of the Chicago Convention, fall like the baseless fabric of a nightmare; contrariwise, if the former, if the Socialist position is true, then all the rest are conclusions that cannot be escaped, and the Chicago Convention builded upon solid foundation. All, accordingly, centres upon this first clause. Is it true? Is it false? Let us see.

[Here the speaker turned to a large yellow poster, tacked upon a blackboard, and conspicuously displayed upon the platform to his right]

Let me introduce you to this document. You will find it excitingly interesting. It is entitled, as you see, "Uncle Sam's Balance Sheet." As you notice, it is full of figures. Be not alarmed by them. I shall need but only two of these columns, the last two, for my purpose. I have not cut out the others, in order not to lay myself open to the charge of presenting a "garbled document." This poster is intended to give, both statistically and pictorially, a convincing presentation of the progress in affluence made by the people of this country. Let me introduce you a little closer to

the document. The columns of figures that you see were not gathered by me: they were not gathered by any Socialist; quite otherwise. This document was issued or circulated by the National Executive Committee of the Republican party during last year's presidential campaign. Seeing, moreover, that on this first column are given the successive Democratic and Republican administrations that presided over the Nation's destiny during the last fifty years, it is fair to consider that the statistical, aye, also pictorial, presentation of conditions cast upon this canvas, is the joint product of both the ruling parties. You may ask why do I trot before you the figures of the foe; why not present you with my own. I shall tell you. If I say "John Jones is a thief," the charge may or may not be believed: I would have to prove it. But if John Jones himself says he is a thief, then I am saved all further trouble. [Applause] It is a fundamental principle of the law of evidence that a man's own testimony against himself is the best evidence possible. [Applause] By tacking that poster before you, I have clapped the highest spokesmen of the Capitalist Class upon the witness-stand. They cannot go back upon their own words. [Applause] I propose to make them convict themselves. [Applause]—I must earnestly request you to desist from applauding. The heat in this hall with this vast audience is intense. We must all be anxious to get out as soon as possible. These frequent interruptions by applause only defer the hour of our joint deliverance.—There is one more thing I wish to introduce you to on this document, before I take up the figures. As I stated, the document is intended to be a pictorial, besides a statistical presentation of affairs. Let me invite your attention to this picture on the poster's extreme right. You will notice it is Uncle Sam—but how lean, how hungry, how poor, how shabby, how scraggy he looks! That is supposed to represent the country as it started. Now look at this other picture on the poster's extreme left. You will notice by the goatee and other tokens that it is still Uncle Sam—but how changed! No longer are his clothes in tatters; they must be of good material because they do not burst despite his immense girth. [Laughter] He has a gay, jaunty appearance; judging from that, from the tip of his hat, the twirl in the feather that surmounts it, and the twinkle in his eye, he is probably on a spree, half seas over—his face shining with the oil of contentment. That picture is intended to symbolize the country to-day. Now let us find out who this Uncle Sam is—the Working Man or the Idle Man, the Capitalist. The figures will tell us exactly.

This first column is headed "Product of Manufacture." It gives, from decade to decade, the value of manufactured goods in the country, from 1860 down to 1900. I shall not read off the figures in detail: they would be too cumbersome to carry on your minds: nor is that necessary. I shall mention them only in round numbers.

For the decade of 1860 the value of manufactured products amounted to nearly $2,000,000,000 in lump sum.

For the decade of 1870 it amounted to over $4,000,000,000.

For the next decade, 1880, it amounted to over $5,000,000,000.

For the decade following, 1890, it was over $9,000,000,000.

Finally, for the decade of 1900, the value of manufactured products was over $13,000,000,000. [3]

This is a magnificent progression, as you will notice. From nearly $2,000,000,000 in 1860, the wealth produced by Labor rose steadily, until in 1900 it reached the gigantic figure of nearly seven times as much—$13,000,000,000! This, no doubt, indicates a vast increase of wealth with a corresponding potential increase of well-being. So far so good. But be warned in time. The existence of a good thing is no evidence of its being enjoyed by the Working Class. I must right here request you to get your thinking caps ready. Let me take an illustration. Suppose I say that in this hall, with a thousand people, there are $10,000 to be found. That fact alone is no indication as to how those $10,000 are distributed. It may be that, on an average, each one has about $10. It may also be that of that $10,000 I alone have $9,999. 99 in my pocket, in which case only a lone copper would be left to straggle in the pockets of the remaining 999 people in this hall. This first column of the poster informs us what the value is of the goods produced. It does not tell us how that wealth is distributed. It only gives us an idea of the increasing magnitude of Labor's productivity. As to distribution, it is to the next column that we must look; and now make ready for the exciting interestingness that I promised you.

The next column is headed "Wages Paid." Here also the amounts are summed up from decade to decade. I shall run over them, again in lump.

In the decade of 1860, the total wages paid to the workingman was over $300,000,000.

In the next decade, 1870, the total wages rose $400,000,000—they were over $700,000,000.

In the decade of 1880, they rose by $200,000,000 more, and amounted to over $900,000,000.

In 1890 the increase in the total wages paid was double. The wages paid to the workingman was over $1,800,000,000.

Finally, in 1900, the wages were over $2,300,000,000, or $500,000,000 more than in 1890. [4]

If we take a bird's-eye view of this wages column, its purpose is obvious. The way the figures are arranged they are meant to convey two ideas—first, that the share of the individual workingman is vast; secondly, that his rise towards affluence is steady and still vaster. It is expected that when a workingman is told or sees, black upon white, that in 1860 his class received the gigantic pay of over $300,000,000, he feels quite sure that he has a big chunk of that amount. The largeness of the total is intended to act as an opiate on his feverishly pinched purse. And when, black upon white, that initial total is seen to swell and double, from decade to decade, until it reaches the giddy height reached in 1900, then he is expected to be so thoroughly dazed and muddled that he knows not whether he stands upon his feet or his head, and is utterly incapable of thinking. The gigantic wealth, that is supposed to be his, positively crazes him. Now let us look closer at these figures. From now on until I get through with this poster, I must ask you to put your thinking-caps on, and keep them tied firmly to your heads.

Whenever figures of wages are presented to you, you must submit them to two tests. Not until you have done so will the figures convey to you any practical information. I propose to submit with you this column of wages to the two tests that I have in mind.

The first test is to ascertain the relative size, or percentage, that the wages bear to the total wealth produced. The test is easy. It merely involves a plain arithmetical calculation. Any fourteen-year-old child should be able to do the sum. Let us apply the test.

The poster informs us that in the decade of 1860 the wages paid were over $300,000,000. It also informs us that the wealth produced by Labor during that same period was nearly $2,000,000,000. Applying that arithmetical calculation to the two full sets of figures, we ascertain that the wages were twenty per cent. of the wealth produced. Now we are in possession of a fact. It is not a very cheering fact, but it is a useful fact to know. It is the first fact that conveys practical information. By its light the huge total wage of over $300,000,000 shrinks to its real, its social, dimensions. We now know, from the figures given by the poster itself, that in 1860, out of every $100 that he produced, the workingman got only $20: somebody else got $80; from it we learn that in 1860 the workingman was plundered out of $80 for every $100 worth of wealth that he brought into existence. Immediately a suspicion arises in our minds as to who this fat and festive Uncle Sam must be. But we snuff out the suspicion: twenty per cent. of one's product is not much; indeed, it is very little; but we remember that this is only a start, and that the soaring figures promise progress. Encouraged by this hope, we proceed to test the next decade.

Applying the same arithmetical calculation to the figures given on the poster for the decade of 1870, we again ascertain the percentage of Labor's share—the relation that the increased total wage bears to the increased total production. What we there discover gives such a shock to our nerves that the pencil almost drops from our hands. Remember that in the previous decade the share of Labor was twenty per cent.; remember also that we were promised progress. The expectation started by the promise justified the hope that we would be getting at least one per cent. more. Vain hope! The share of Labor, as brought out by the test of the figures furnished by the poster itself, is—eighteen per cent. ! A curious progress, this. It is the progress of the cow's tail—downward. In 1860, the share of Labor was $20 out of every $100 worth of wealth that it produced; in 1870, we find its share has gone down to eighteen per cent. In 1860, the plunder levied upon the workingmen was $80 out of every $100; in 1870, the plunder, as revealed by the figures furnished by the poster itself, is $82 out of every $100 worth of wealth produced by the workingman. The suspicion, started in our minds by the revelations in 1860 as to who this stout and lusty Uncle Sam is, revives. [Applause] But again we suppress it. Our hopes are buoyed up by the consideration that many a babe, instead of immediately growing, is assailed by the whooping-cough, measles and bronchitis, and declines, but only temporarily; he rallies quickly, and then grows strong uninterruptedly. That may have been the case with us in 1870. Cheered by these thoughts we rush on to the next decade.

Again we apply that simple arithmetical calculation, now to the figures of the wages paid and the wealth produced in the decade of 1880. The percentage traced by our pencil looks absurd. We must have made a mistake. We go over the sum once more. No mistake. The workingman's share in 1880 is lower than the twenty per cent. that it was in 1860; it is lower than the eighteen per cent. that it was in 1870; it is now seventeen per cent! Arrived at this point, we are no longer able to suppress the suspicion as to who this rotund and jolly Uncle Sam is. [Laughter and applause] Nevertheless, we do not yet lose heart. Still mindful of the promise held out by the poster regarding our progressive affluence we proceed to the following decade.

The same arithmetical calculation is gone through. We compute the ratio of the wages paid in 1890 to the wealth produced in that decade. Lo, a surprise! The decline has stopped, the percentage of Labor's share in 1890 has risen above the percentage in 1880; it has risen above the percentage in 1870; it is now again twenty per cent. as it was in 1860. Thankful for small favors, we look back. Having expected another decline our agreeable surprise almost makes us feel happy. Nevertheless, we wonder where the "progress" comes in. The figures furnished by

the poster itself reveal that we are in 1890 just where we were when we started in 1860. After thirty years of arduous toil; after thirty years, during which the soil of the land was literally drenched with the sweat and blood and marrow of the workingman; after thirty years during which the American working class produced more heiresses to the square inch than the working class of any other country, to purchase European noblemen for husbands; at the end of thirty years during which the working class, as this poster itself shows, produced a phenomenal amount of wealth—at the end of these thirty years the American working class is just where it was thirty years before, the wretched retainer of only $20 out of every $100 worth of wealth that it produced! This is hardly a progress worth bragging about. It is conservatism of misery. Nevertheless, hope springs eternal in the human breast. Perhaps the long lean years are at last over. Perhaps a brighter day is suddenly to burst upon us, and we are suddenly to make up for lost time so as to look in 1900 like this affluent, well-fed, well-clad, jolly Uncle Sam who, according to the poster, typifies the worker.

And so we apply the test to the figures for 1900, the last ones furnished on the poster. The same arithmetical calculation is resorted to. Woe is us! Our hopes are dashed. The percentage of the share of Labor comes down kerslap. It is as low as it ever was—seventeen per cent! The temporary rise in 1890 was but the flicker in a dying man's eye—the precursor of collapse.

The lie attempted to be given to the Socialist regarding the outrageousness of the plunder, that he maintains the Working Class is subjected to by the Capitalist Class, rolls down the throat of its utterer. Even making allowance for the value of imported raw material to which the Labor of other countries has given value, even making generous allowance for all that due allowance should be made for, the figures to which this poster testifies establish the conclusion that the pittance of one-fifth of its product is a liberal estimate of the share that the Working Class is allowed to retain. The first of the two tests, to which these figures of "Wages Paid" must be put, dispels their halo; it exposes a good portion of the naked and hideous reality; it points to the conclusion that, not this lusty Uncle Sam, but that other miserable being at the other end of the poster typifies the American workingman. The second test will establish the fact beyond peradventure.

Let me go once more over the figures on this column of "Wages Paid," so as to refresh your memory. The wages paid in the manufacturing industries are here given as

Over $ 300,000,000 for 1860;

Over $ 700,000,000 for 1870;

Over $ 900,000,000 for 1880;

Over $1,800,000,000 for 1890; and

Over $2,300,000,000 for 1900.

The purpose of such a presentation of the run of wages is obvious. The intention is to convey the idea that the condition of the individual workingman improves; that it has improved gigantically. The presentation of figures in that way is intended to convey the idea that the wages or earnings of the individual workingman have soared upwards—and to convey the idea crushingly. I shall prove to you from the attitude of this witness, whom I have here pinned on the stand, that his purpose is to obtain a snap-judgment upon imperfect information; that he is guilty of that worst form of deception which consists in stating a half-truth and suppressing the other half; in short, that he is a swindler.

Keep your thinking-caps tight on your heads. Is the fact that in 1860 the output in wages amounted to $300,000,000 and that in 1900 the output ran up $2,000,000,000 more—is this fact enough to warrant any conclusion as to the improved condition of the workingman? Let me illustrate with a simpler instance. Suppose I were to tell you that last month I paid out $10 in wages, and that this month I am paying out $20. I would now be paying out double the amount in wages that I paid out last month. Does that mean that my workingmen are now getting twice as much wages as they did last month? They may—and they may not. Whether they do or do not, depends not merely upon the increased total of the wages paid: it depends upon something else besides. What is that something else? Obviously, the number of men that I employed last month, and the number of men that I employ this month. If last month I employed only two men, it would mean that their wages averaged $5 a piece; if this month, however, I am employing ten men, then, although the total amount that I am now paying out in wages doubled, the wages of my men would have gone down by over fifty per cent. [Applause] The total wage may rise mountain high, and yet the individual wage may decline perpendicularly. [Applause] Let us now bring this column of dazzling figures paid out in wages to the touchstone of the principle that I have just elucidated. The first thing noticeable is the total absence from this, or from any of the other columns on the poster, of any statement with regard to the number of men among whom these successive grandiose figures have to be divided. No statement of their number for 1860; no statement of their number for 1870; no statement of their number for 1880; no statement of their number for 1890; no statement of their number for 1900. The witness on the witness-stand is dodging; he is prevaricating; he is perjuring himself. [Applause] We should need no more than that to know what to

do with his case. Nevertheless, I do not propose to convict him by indirection; I propose to convict him explicitly.

The Census, furnished by the agents of the identical class that got up this poster, informs us that, in 1870, there were 2,053,966 workingmen employed in the manufacturing industries. The wages paid to them, according to this poster, were $775,584,343. By dividing the total number of workers to whom these wages were paid into that amount we obtain the figure of $377 as the average annual wage for that decade. Stick a pin there.

In the next decade, 1880, when the total wage stated on this poster was $947,953,795, there were according to the Census 2,732,595 workingmen engaged in manufacturing. Dividing this figure into that grand total of wages we shall obtain the average wages paid then, and thereby also an idea of the workers' condition. The figure obtained is $346—$31 LESS THAN BEFORE! Although the total wage had risen during the last ten years about $200,000,000, the individual wages WENT DOWN $31!

We proceed to the following, the decade of 1890. For that period the poster gives $1,891,228,321 as the wages paid. The Census informs us that that amount must have been distributed among 4,351,535 workingmen. Again dividing this number into the total wage paid to them we obtain $445 as the average wages. This denotes a rise. What these absolute rises amount to, that they vanish like mist before the sun, that they are a snare and a delusion, in fact a cheat—that I shall make clear presently. For the present, sticking closely to the present line of inquiry, we shall consider it an absolute gain. So considering it, it is legitimate to contrast the gain made by the workingmen with the absolute gain made by the class whom we now know this fat Uncle Sam represents. After twenty years of such toil as I need not describe to you, we find that the wages of the average workingman increased by the giddy amount of $68 a year, or nineteen cents more a day, while the small class that this jolly customer—this rotund Uncle Sam—here represents progressed during that same period only to the tune of the modest figure of $3,228,883,529—and there were no four million of them among whom to divide that "little windfall." [Applause]

We proceed to the next and last, the decade of 1900, when, according to this poster, the total wages paid were $2,330,578,010, and, according to the Census, there were 5,541,539 workingmen engaged in the manufacturing industries. Dividing the latter figure into the former we obtain the average wages received by the

workingmen.

It

was

$439—$9

LESS

than

in

1890!

Take notice—notwithstanding the total amount of wages paid had INCREASED by $439,349,689, the actual earnings of the average workingman DECREASED by $9! I stated a minute ago that the average increases in wages credited to the individual workingman are “paper increases,” and I promised to prove it. I shall proceed to do so now. As we have seen the wages declined $9 between 1890 and 1900. Nevertheless, the figures actually show that from 1870 to 1900 there is an increase in the average wage amounting to $59 a year. Even if this paltry figure could stand, it would be a mockery. What else but a mockery is an increase of $59 a year, after thirty years of toil, for the class the sweat of whose brow and the marrow of whose bone raised the total wealth during that period by the gigantic figure of $8,806,954,124! It is a tragic mockery. There is but a step even from the tragic to the ridiculous. I shall prove to you that even that paltry $59 increase dwindles down to the proverbial “thirty cents.” [Laughter] The line of argument that I shall now take up is but a subdivision of that second test to which I have been submitting this column of “Wages Paid,” and which has knocked the bottom from under it. The secondary test to which I shall now submit it will smash the remaining fragments. I must request you not to drop your thinking-caps. You will need them. You saw how misleading, because insufficient, were all comparisons of wages paid at different epochs, without a simultaneous statement of the number of wage-earners, among whom the wages were distributed in the respective periods. I shall now prove to you how such comparisons of wages paid at different epochs, even to the identical wage-earner, are also misleading, and given with “intent to deceive,” unless other factors are considered. Let me begin the argument on this head with an illustration. Say that last year my wages were $1 a day and that this year my wages are $1. 25 a day. Is the mere fact that I am receiving in cash twenty-five cents more than last year sufficient premises from which to conclude that this year I am better off by twenty-five cents’ worth of wealth? Let me help you to the answer by giving you a further

illustration. Suppose that last year, when my wages were a hundred cents, the cost of living—rent, food, clothing, the absolutely necessary necessaries of life—was ninety-nine cents. What would follow? It would follow that I had a penny over and above my wants. I could either put that in the savings banks [laughter], or invest it in stocks [laughter] as we are told that workingmen do extensively. [Laughter] But suppose further that now, when my wages are one hundred and twenty-five cents, the cost of living has gone up so as to run up to one hundred and twenty-six cents. What is the result? The result is that I am "busted." [Laughter and applause] You see the point. He who tells us that our wages have gone up without stating how the cost of living is conducting itself—such a man is attempting a fraud upon us. That, once more, is the case with the witness whom I have nailed on this board. On that subject also he is silent as the tomb. His silence, however, need not leave me in the lurch. I don't need him. I shall, with your consent, turn you into living statistical columns. I request all those of you, the women included, who certainly know a good deal on this head—all those of you whose experience it is that the cost of living is now lower than it was twenty or ten years ago, to raise your right hands. I shall request the chairman to count the hands. [The chairman rose, looked over the audience, and reported "No hands in sight."] I shall now request all those to raise their right hands whose experience it is that the cost of living is now just what it was twenty or ten years ago, no lower and no higher. Kindly raise your right hands those of you who can testify to that. I shall again request the chairman to count the hands. [The chairman rose, looked over the audience and reported "No hands in sight."] I shall take a third poll. Let all those raise their right hands whose experience it is that the cost of living has gone up and gone up perceptibly. [All the hands go up] Will the chairman count? [The chairman: "Too many to count."] From the Atlantic, across and beyond the Mississippi, that is the identical response I have everywhere received from the audiences that faced me. Beginning with rent, the necessaries of life have everywhere gone up.—There goes a big chunk—the bulk, probably even more—of that wondrous $59 increase in wages since 1870! [Applause] I shall now proceed to knock out whatever fraction may possibly still remain of the "increase." You have seen that a knowledge of the cost of living is indispensable in order to form a correct idea as to whether an increase in wages means improved conditions. You have seen that there may be an increase in wages and yet no proportional improvement in conditions if the cost of living has increased. Intimately connected with the subject of the price paid for goods is the subject of the quality of the goods. Again let me illustrate before entering upon the subject itself. Suppose that twenty years ago I paid $10 for a suit of clothes and that that suit lasted me two years, say two winters. Now, suppose again that this

year a suit of clothes, that looks as good, lasts me only one year, say one winter. What does that show in point of price? It shows that, whereas twenty years ago a $10-bill furnished me with clothing for two years, now a $10-bill furnishes me with clothing for only one year. In other words, if I do not wish to be in rags the second year, the clothing that twenty years ago cost me only $10, now costs me $20. The conclusion from this fact is that "deterioration" of goods spells "increased price." On the face of things the price has remained what it was; in point of fact it went up. Now then, both in food and clothing the extent to which deterioration has gone during the last twenty years staggers {the? } imagination. The reports of the shoddy turned out by our factories would be incredible were they not so well authenticated. This is a matter of general experience. It is particularly the housekeeper who makes acquaintance with this fact. Inquire from any woman fifty years old to-day and she will be able to tell you upon the subject tales that are sad. One elderly housekeeper whom I interrogated upon the subject put it this way: "When I married and bought a suit of underclothing for Henry it lasted two years, often longer; now when I get any underclothing I have to start darning the darned thing from the time it is put on." [Laughter] Similarly with food. There is hardly an article of food, especially the food that the workingman can afford to buy, that is not adulterated, consequently, that has not deteriorated in quality. Essays galore are cropping up upon the extent to which this baneful practice has gone. These essays show that health is thereby undermined, even if life is not thereby speedily snuffed out. One of these essays of recent date claims that the food adulterations are directly responsible for the death{s} of over 400,000 infants a year; and it traces the sickness and death of thousands upon thousands of adults to the same cause. Let me quote another authority upon this head. You will find on page 132 of the Congressional Record, under date of last December 12, the following passage: It is a passage from the speech delivered by Senator Stewart in the course of the debate on the Food Bill [reading]: "I do not think the country has any idea of the extent of the poisons that are administered in the food that is sold and eaten in this country. I think it is sapping the foundation of the constitution of our people. If we had to raise soldiers now as we did in 1861 I do not believe that throughout the country we could find as large a percentage of young men fit for hard service as there were at that time." The proof of the pudding, in this as in everything else, ever lies in the eating. If wages really increase, and the cost of living does not rise, and the necessaries of life—food and clothing—do not deteriorate; if they remain good or even improve, what must be the result? Obviously the people who enjoy them must be hale and hearty; they must be healthy while they live, and their lives must be long. If, on the contrary, earnings barely increase and that increase is more than eaten up

by higher prices and by the deterioration of such necessaries of life, as food and clothing, the fact is bound to appear in the condition of the class that is affected thereby. If you ever are in New York, take a walk in the evening on Forty-second street, or Fifth avenue where the clubs are located of the Republican and Democratic parties, and of several other capitalist societies. There must be similar clubs here in Minneapolis; they are found in all our large cities, even in some smaller manufacturing towns. Peep through the large pier-glass windows into the gorgeous precincts. You will see gray heads abound. Is it that these gentlemen are prematurely gray? Is it that they are so poorly fed and clad that it has turned their hair? Hardly! I admit that their aged appearance is somewhat to be accounted for by their lives of dissipation, and their covert Mormon practices. Nevertheless, they have reached old age. Such is the good quality of the goods that they consume that all their dissipations and immoral practices do not prevent their reaching old age. Having taken in that sight, move into the wards which the working class inhabit, and drop into the places where workingmen congregate. Make sure and take along a little pad of paper and a pencil. On that pad jot down a tally mark for every gray head that you come across. You will find few indeed to record. Why, look at this assemblage of workingmen. There is hardly a gray head among them. In an assemblage of half this size, but of capitalists, you would find the gray heads numerous. Among workingmen they are far and few {few and far? } between. Is it that the workingmen are so well-fed and so well-clothed that their hair preserves its color even into old age, and thus conceals their years? Oh, no! The gray heads are few among them because their hair is not given a chance to turn. Long before the season, they have sunk into early graves, the victims of intense toil, aggravated by small earnings, and this in turn aggravated by the adulteration of the goods that alone their earnings can purchase. [Loud applause] An interesting side-light is thrown upon this subject by the official report recently made to his government by the British Consul in Chicago. Speaking of the machinists in particular, he said that if a machinist in the United States is forty-two years of age and out of work, it is difficult for him to get a job; and he proceeds to explain why—said he, if the man has worked as hard as he is expected to, then he is worn out at forty-two; if he is not worn out, then it is a sign that he did not work as hard as he is expected to, and they have no use for him either way. [Laughter] I wish to furnish one more piece of testimony under this head before I dismiss the subject. The man I am about to quote is not a “fire-brand agitator”; although he often spoke in public, his subject never was of the sort that might tempt a man to exaggeration. It is Huxley, the slow, plodding, accurate scientist. He said that four-fifths of the people die of slow starvation. There may be those among you who are of a

statistical turn of mind. If such there be, they may have nosed among the statistics of mortality furnished by the Census and other official sources. Such friends of statistical turn of mind may say: “Why, that’s nonsense; a man or two may occasionally die of starvation; but hundreds and thousands of them, impossible! I have seen the statistics on mortality; I have seen the list of diseases; there is consumption, pneumonia and all sorts of other diseases; but I never saw starvation entered among the causes of death.” People holding such views are in error; in serious error. A man may be dying of slow starvation and not know it. His stomach may be full; he may never have felt the gnawings of hunger; and yet he may be dying of slow starvation. If in summer a man is not properly clad, he is emitting more heat than his system can stand—he is dying of slow starvation; if in winter he is not clad warm enough, he is consuming more heat than his system can afford—he is dying of slow starvation; his stomach may be replete, he may imagine himself well-fed, but if the matter in that stomach is adulterated food, then the organisms that carry the nutrition from the stomach, and spread it throughout the body, find no nutrition to carry, the tissues that are consumed are only partially replaced—THAT MAN IS DYING OF SLOW STARVATION. [Applause] The fact is brought home to him when it is too late; aye, it is concealed from him and from his friends even then. He catches a cold; a robust constitution would cast off the distemper without difficulty; his constitution, however, is not robust; his constitution has been long drained by slow starvation; the slight distemper throws him on his beam-ends; it develops into pneumonia; he dies; the physician reports pneumonia as the “cause of death”—BUT STARVATION IT WAS. [Applause] And so down the line of consumption, rheumatism, diabetes and most of the other ills plentifully bestowed upon the Working Class by the “increased wages” that the Capitalist Class lavishes upon the working class. Because—never lose sight of this fact—it is the identical capitalist class which regulates wages, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, raises the cost of living and adulterates the goods needed to live on, which, as you saw, is but another form of raising prices. We are through with the witness. He stands convicted out of his own mouth. The condition of the working class has gone from bad to worse. Not this roly-poly of an Uncle Sam, but that other emaciated being typifies the wage earner of the land. [Applause] Some say, and I am of those, that craft or pure and simple Unionism has promoted, aye, urged on these wretched conditions. Others, I know, claim that pure and simple or craft Unionism is not to be held responsible; they claim that, on the contrary, were it not for pure and simple Unionism, conditions would now be even worse. Those who are of this opinion hold that, instead of being decried, pure and simple Unionism should be praised for what it does. Even accepting this,

the most favorable summary possible of the work of pure and simpledom, it would follow that pure and simpledom is, at best, a brake to check the downward run of the chariot of Labor; it would follow that pure and simpledom not only is utterly incompetent to emancipate the Working Class, but that it is not even able to prevent decline; that all there is in it is the capacity to slacken or reduce the downward trend of things. Even accepting this most favorable of views, it would be an argument to cast the thing aside. [Applause] The mission of Unionism is not to act as rear-guard to an army defeated, seasoned in defeat, habituated to defeat, and fit only for defeat. The mission of Unionism is to organize and drill the Working Class for final victory—to "take and hold" the machinery of production, which means the administration of the country. [Applause] I shall, however, prove to you that pure and simpledom deserves no credit whatever. I shall prove that it is directly responsible for existing evils, that it is an accomplice in capitalist crime, and has become a scourge to the Working Class. This takes me to

THE SECOND CLAUSE

of the three clauses of the Preamble that I proposed to take up with you, the last two of which are, as I stated in opening, pivoted upon the first which I have just demonstrated.

The second clause—I shall read it again—is as follows:

> "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common."

In a way, this clause also stands proved by the figures on this poster, together with the obvious conclusions that flow from them. Whatever the interests may be of a class whose material welfare steadily towers up, and the interests of the class whose material welfare, and all that thereupon depends, sinks perpendicularly and in even tempo with the former's rise, as illustrated by these figures—whatever these two sets of interests may be, they can have NOTHING IN COMMON. The relations between these two sets of interests are not even the relations of two, though opposing, yet supplementary forces, such as physics tells us of. They are the relations between the vampire and the victim, whose blood it drains—and such relations surely establish nothing in common. Of all one-sided relations, these relations "take the cake and the pie." [Laughter and applause] Indeed, people who prate about the "mutuality," the "brotherhood," the "identity" of interests of the Capitalist, or Employing Class, and the Working Class demand of the workingman that for which they would spank their own children if they believed it possible. They want of you that you believe it possible to divide an apple between two men in such a way that each shall have the bigger chunk. [Laughter] An impossibility! If the workingman produces four dollars [illustrating with the fingers of his left hand] and the capitalist take two, there are only two left to the workingman; if the capitalist take three, the workingman has to put up with one; if the capitalist appropriate {appropriates? } three and a half, there is nothing but fifty cents left to the workingman. Inversely, if the workingman hangs on to a whole dollar, the capitalist's share is reduced to three; if the workingman pushes forward and keeps two, there are but two left for the capitalist; should the workingman preserve three, the capitalist would have to put up with one; and should the workingman "divide" in such a way that he "takes and holds" all that he produced, my capitalist will have to go to work. [Laughter and applause] In other words, he would cease to be a capitalist. Now, then, the figures on this poster quite clearly illustrate the law that underlies the capitalist system of production. That law does not aid the workingman to preserve an increasing share of his product; it aids, aye, it requires

the capitalist to intensify his plunder increasingly. His chunk must be ever thicker, ever and correspondingly thinner must be the workingman's slice. No common interest there! As far as this aspect of the clause which I have just read is concerned, it is too obvious to require further proof. But weightier sense and meaning, meaning and sense of more immediate, practical pith and moment lies imbedded in that clause.

It is an inevitable consequence of the falsehood regarding the hand-in-hand prosperity of capitalists and workingmen that their relations are mutual, and, consequently, that they stand upon a footing of equality. Of course, if the two are getting along swimmingly, they must be peers, even if it be conceded that their peerage may be of different rank. Down from that parent falsehood, set afloat by the capitalist professors, politicians and pulpiteers, and zealously carried into the ranks of pure and simple Unionism by the Labor-Lieutenants of the Capitalist Class, a long line of descent of increasingly insidious and practically pestiferous falsehoods may be traced. The ancestral falsehoods of the hand-in-hand progress of capitalist and workingman begets the son-falsehood of the equality of workingman and capitalist; the son-falsehood begets the grand-son fraud of "contracts"; and you will see how the grand-son fraud litters a prolific progeny of its ilk to Labor's undoing.

What is a "contract"? I am not going to give you any Socialist definition of the term. The term has nothing to do with Socialism. It is a term the meaning of which has grown up with the race's experience. The definition I shall give is the law-book definition. It is the definition accepted and acted upon in all the Courts of Equity. A contract is an agreement entered into by two equal parties; a contract is an agreement entered into between peers; a contract is an agreement entered into by two freemen. Where the parties to a thing called a contract fall within these categories, they are said to be of contracting mind and power, and the document is valid; where that which is called a contract lacks any of these essential qualities, especially if it lacks them all, the thing is null, void and of no effect; it is a badge of fraud of which he is guilty who imposes the contract upon the other. Let me illustrate:

Suppose that some Minneapolis agent of a lecture bureau, anxious to secure my invaluable services as a speaker for this evening, had written to me to New York, asking for my terms; and suppose I had answered that I would come for $500. He would have written back wanting me to come down a peg or so. I would have replied. Suppose that after considerable chaffering {? } I had agreed upon $400 and

he had yielded, whereupon a document would have been drawn up reading somewhat like this:

“John Jones, party of the first part, and Daniel De Leon, party of the second part, have mutually covenanted and agreed that the party of the second part will deliver an address in Minneapolis on the 10th day of July, and the party of the first part will pay the party of the second part for his services the sum of $400 in U. S. currency.”

This document being signed would be a contract. If on the appointed day I came, delivered the goods, and John Jones failed to pay me, I would have a just cause of action against him for breach of contract; if, on the other hand, I failed to put in an appearance, he could sue and recover damages from me on the ground of my breach of contract. Whatever people may think of the steepness of my price, the contract would stand. It would stand—why? Because both he and I were free to accept or reject: neither of us acted under compulsion: we were both FREE AGENTS.

But, now, suppose that, instead of writing, he came down to New York, rushed into my office, whipped a Colt’s horse-pistol out of his hip-pocket, cocked and held it with the muzzle an inch from my head, and said: “Sign this! ” laying before me a sheet of paper containing this legend:

“John Jones, party of the first part, and Daniel De Leon, party of the second part, have mutually covenanted and solemnly agreed and bound themselves as follows, to wit: that the party of the second part will deliver an address in Minneapolis on the 10th day of July, and the party of the first part will pay the party of the second part for his services the sum of five cents, which sum of five cents the party of the second part hereby acknowledges to be a liberal payment for his services, the said sum being agreed upon after a friendly and mutual understanding between the said party of the first part and the said party of the second part.” [Laughter]

Would I sign? Why, of course, I would! [Laughter] I would sign above, below, to the right, to the left. [Laughter] I would never stop signing. [Laughter and applause] I would keep on signing like a “moving picture,” until that pistol was removed from its close proximity to my temple.—THAT IS THE SITUATION OF LABOR WHEN IT SIGNS “CONTRACTS.” [Prolonged applause]

Now, say, that he, John Jones, returns to Minneapolis with the “contract” in his pocket, and a glow of righteous, patriotic contentment on his face. Say he hires a hall, prints and circulates posters announcing the meeting and address, and inserts advertisements in the papers; say he even pays the bills, and does not cheat in that

also. The day of the meeting, the hour arrives—but not I. The hall fills—but not with me. Hour upon hour passes—whoever else may be there, I am absent. The audience storms at him; calls him names; insists upon and gets its admission moneys back. Say that, indignant at my "breach of contract," John Jones were to institute a suit for damages against me. What would happen? He would be thrown out of court for a swindler, he might even be prosecuted for "assault with intent to kill." That "contract" is null, void and of no effect; it is a badge of fraud of which he is guilty; it is all that because I was not FREE, because he held me under duress.—EXACTLY SO WITH THE WORKINGMAN WHO SIGNS "CONTRACTS"; EXACTLY SO WITH THE CAPITALIST WHO EXTORTS THEM. [Applause] The workingman does not stand upon a footing of equality with the capitalist; he is not of contracting mind and power with the employer. The latter holds over him the whip of hunger that the capitalist system places in the hands of the master, and with the aid of which he can cow his wage slave into acquiescence. Why, among themselves, and even in their public utterances, when anger throws them off their guard, the apologists for capitalism blurt out the fact that "only the lash of hunger" can keep the workingman in the treadmill. At the bar of man and of justice the "contracts" that Labor signs are null, void and of no effect. And yet what do we see? The spectacle is of such daily occurrence that it has assumed the nature of a "system," of a deliberate manœuvre, indulged in by employers jointly with their Labor-Lieutenants to paralyze the Labor Movement; aye, worse yet, to give it the aspect of a rat-pit.

This is the way it works. Say I am a railroad magnate. I make my "schedules" or contracts, not with all my employes together, but with each craft separately,—and there cannot be too many autonomous crafts among them to suit me. Incidentally, let me call your attention to the circumstance that the A.F. of L. is steadily disintegrating its national and international Unions into autonomous crafts. Its candle-holders endeavor to make much out of some few exceptional instances, in order to make it appear that "the A.F. of L. itself is steadily becoming industrialist." The increasing volume of jurisdictional feuds tells the opposite tale. As I proceed you will be able to appreciate the meaning of the absolute craft autonomy tendency that manifests itself in the A.F. of L. But to return. I make my separate contract with each of the separate crafts engaged on my railroad line—and there cannot be too many of them to suit me. My contract with my locomotive engineers is drawn up to expire, we shall say, on April 15; my contract with my switchmen is drawn up to expire on September 3; my contract with my firemen is drawn to expire, say, on January 21; my contract with my trainmen is drawn up to expire, say, on November 30;—and so forth, down the line of as many crafts as

pure and simple Unionism splits my workingmen into, and it can't split them into too many for my comfort. Each separate craft being tied up with a separate contract, expiring on a separate date, I got the industry at my mercy. Say that, "contract" or no "contract," obedient to that underlying law of the capitalist endless screw; that economic law that neither capitalist nor his class can rein in; that relentless economic law which dictates their conduct in their wrestlings with one another and that causes the capitalists to interpret these contracts to suit themselves;—say that my switchmen are driven to rebellion and strike. What do I do? I telephone to my chief Labor-Lieutenants—the Presidents, Grand Chiefs and Superlative Secretaries of the national Unions—and, simultaneously, I touch the button, and set the press agoing, both the capitalist newspapers and the Labor papers, so-called, edited by the pupils of the Civic Federation. My Labor-Lieutenants hasten to respond to my call. Like black birds, they hie {?} themselves to the scene from the four quarters of the compass. And then, to the orchestration of: "Infamous men, they have broken their contracts! Scandalous men, they have violated their sacred agreement! " and more to this effect from the press that I have set agoing, and that causes every old woman of both sexes and of all ages to look askance at my striking switchmen as so many serpents under the grass,—to the tune of that artificial concert my national Labor-Lieutenants fall to work. They do not turn their attention to the men on strike: these contract-breaking miscreants are below the contempt of my virtuous Labor-Lieutenant. They call around them the men in the other departments—engineers, firemen, conductors, etc.—and with the aid of their understrappers, the local skates, address them in this language:

"Behold yonder sinks of iniquity: They have broken their contracts! It is a wonder the lightning of heaven does not come down and blast them. Surely the bones of the patriotic founders of this Republic are rattling in their graves at the discovery that there can be such lawless men encumbering this soil of freedom. Look at 'em! They broke their contracts! Surely YOU will not do the same? Surely YOU will not be so base! Surely YOU will be true! "[Laughter and applause]

And the men thus addressed cross their arms over their manly chests, and bowing low to the Goddess of Contract, that has been conjured up before them for the occasion, make answer:

"Not we! WE shall be loyal to our word. WE shall respect our agreements. WE shall not break our sacred contracts! "[Laughter]

Which, translated into English, means—"WE SHALL SCAB IT UPON OUR FELLOW WAGE SLAVES." [Prolonged applause] And they do! And thus we

have seen Union locomotive engineers scabbing it upon Union firemen, and Union firemen scabbing it upon Union brakemen, and Union brakemen scabbing it upon Union switchmen, down the line; and we have seen all of these jointly scabbing it upon Union trolleymen and upon all manner of other Unionmen on strike by transporting either the militia and military to dragoon the workers into submission, or the hungry unemployed to take the places of the men who went out. Thus we have seen Union molders scabbing it upon machinists; Union machinists scabbing it upon Union elevatormen; Union cigarmakers upon waiters; Union waiters upon brewers; Union brewers upon glucose workers; Union teamsters upon carpenters; Union bricklayers upon garment workers; Union soft coal miners upon hard coal miners,—and so down to the very last and least of the craft organizations, and all against each. [Applause] It is a fact, deep with significance, though it seems to escape the observation of superficial observers, that it is not the UNORGANIZED SCAB who breaks the strikes, but the ORGANIZED CRAFT that really does the dirty work [loud applause]; and thus they, each of whom, when itself involved in a strike, fights like a hero, when not themselves involved, demean themselves like arrant scabs [applause]; betray their class—all in fatuous reverence to "contracts"! [Loud applause] Only the other day we had a glaring illustration of this disgraceful performance in the city of New York, when the men on the Belmont Interborough struck for living conditions, and Gompers, together with the other lackeys of the Belmont Civic Federation, ably assisted by their local sub-lackeys, such as Mr. Morris Braun, of the Gompers International Cigarmakers' Union No. 144, howled down the men on strike as contract-breakers, revoked their charters as "unworthy of Unionism," proclaimed directly to Belmont that "the men had done wrong," and kindly begged his pardon for the sinners. [Voices: "Shame! "] Still another and even more pathetic instance was that of the strike of the New York newspaper boys, upon whom Hearst had raised the price of his paper. These little tots, who, by their very appearance, herald in the open the merciless cruelty of capitalism even against the defenseless child; underclad; underfed; undershod; deprived of the innocent joys of childhood, that are so essential to the building up of the future man; stunted in schooling; prematurely thrown into the temptation of vice; walking, running, yelling monuments of capitalist cannibalism—these waifs walked before Typographical Union No. 6, and asked for support, for the support of men many of whom were fathers themselves, and who, had they struck with the boys, certainly would have insured them victory. Did they?

> An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven,
>
> Shall I lay perjury upon my soul? asks the scoundrel in Shakespeare. "A contract! A contract! We have a contract in the pocket of our master Hearst!

Shall we lay breach of contract upon our conscience?" asked the craft Union compositors. Of course they wouldn't! [Laughter and applause] They slobbered over the boys their "sympathies"; they bestowed upon them all the sweet words that butter no parsnips—and the boys went down in defeat. It should be here added, although a digression, that when a year or so later that identical Typographical Union had its strike against the "Sun," those bearded men went down upon their knees before the identical boys whom they had left in the lurch, and implored their support. Let the fact be recorded as an evidence of the inherent nobility of the human heart, and in honor of childhood—the ever-renewing promise that human feeling and human instinct shall not perish from the earth—that when appealed to, the boys returned evil with good, and helped the printers fight their strike. [Loud applause] It was a pure breath of Industrialism. And in Chicago, during recent months, what was the spectacle presented there? We saw the Garment Workers valiantly, with drums beating and colors flying, march to the fray. They fought bravely and were beaten off the field. Thereupon the Teamsters put on war-paint and fell to in support of the routed Garment Workers. They, too, fought with the desperation of heroes, and went down. Possibly after them some third division of Labor may take the field to avenge the cause of the Teamsters, after these went down in the attempt to avenge the Garment Workers after their fight was lost!—Do you know what would happen to the General, who, in face of the embattled foe, instead of concentrating his forces for the fray, were to send first one small division into the field of battle; wait until that was annihilated; then send a second small division; again wait until that was routed; and then send a third, likewise to be wiped out, until his whole powerful army was demoralized and took to flight? Do you know what would happen with that General? He would be grabbed by the neck, court-martialed, and shot in the back for treason. Now, I am no prophet, nor the son of a prophet; yet, concluding from the facts that are thronging to the bar, I venture the statement on this 10th day of July, 1905, that the day is nigh when the Working Class of America will court-martial the Gomperses, the Mitchells, the Stoneses [loud applause] whose generalship is sacrificing the army of Labor—court-martial them for treason to the Working Class. [Loud applause] Thus, we trace, in direct line of descent from the ancestral falsehood concerning the mutuality of relations between the Employing Class and the Working Class, a long genealogy of fraudulent principles, culminating in "contracting" the Working Class into paralysis, and the crop of evils that flow therefrom. Falsehood can only breed Falsehood, and Falsehood's spawn is Evil; inversely, Evil can be sired and damed by Falsehood only. In the framework of the capitalist social system, the Working Class and the Employing or Capitalist Class have nothing in common. The

principle is a beacon on the track of Labor's march to emancipation; the contrary principle is a false light that lures to social wreck. [Applause]

THE THIRD CLAUSE,

of the three leading and typical clauses in the preamble, is the longest of the three; it is of special importance: I must bespeak your continued and close attention [Reading]:

> "Between these two classes a struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the political, as well as on the industrial field, and take and hold that which they produce by their labor through an economic organization of the working class, without affiliation with any political party."

This clause contains two distinct ideas, joined in two separate sentences {sic}. The two ideas are so distinct—the idea of the absolute necessity of political unity, and the seemingly contrary idea of the sufficiency of economic organization to ultimately strike the shackles from the wage slave—that they must be treated separately.

1. *Political Unity.*

I cannot claim for the Industrialist Movement and its Preamble, or Declaration of Principles, the palm of originality over craft Unionism for the thought that is implied in the sentence that the toilers must "come together on the political as well as on the industrial field." The thought therein implied is that politics is a concern of Unionism. This is no new thought. Strange as it may seem at first blush, it is a thought that pervades craft Unionism as well; stranger still, it is a thought that the Labor-Lieutenants of the Capitalist Class, in charge of craft or pure and simple Unionism, have made themselves the special guardians of. On this head, the merit of Industrialism does not lie in the utterance of a new thought. The great merit lies in uttering loudly a fact, which, being kept secret by the said Labor-Lieutenants, enabled them to profit by it at the expense of the membership. It is the case of a guardian concealing from his wards the hidden riches of their estate, and, on the sly, trafficking upon those riches himself. Much lies in the thorough apprehension of these facts.

Who of you has not witnessed the sight of a Labor Leader jumping up at a craft Union meeting, as if a torpedo had exploded under his seat, every time the economics or sociology of Labor was expounded? The sight is common. Whatever the subject that presents itself to a Union, it cannot choose but be handled from one of two view-points—either from the view-point of capitalism, or from the view-point of Labor, that is, Socialist economics. Impassive, complacently smiling, perhaps even blissfully snoozing, the Labor Fakir will sit in his seat, so long as the

discussion is carried on along capitalist lines. But let the first word be uttered that has the ring of Socialist, that is, Labor economics, and you will notice a sudden transformation. Like a faithful watch-dog of capitalism, the fakir will snarl, jump up and bark. I have more than once deliberately tested the thing at the meetings of craft Unions with which I happened to be connected. I would join a discussion that was in progress,

peacefully

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fakir

looking

on unconcernedly—discussions on immigration, discussions on boycotts, discussions on wages, discussions on tenements, discussions on the liquor traffic, etc., etc. I would carefully avoid the word "politics"; deliberately would I avoid it. Neither the word "politics," let alone the name "Socialist Labor Party" would drop from my lips. They were as words tabooed, and alien to me while I spoke. But lo, no sooner did I deploy my argument so as to bring out the Labor, which is the Socialist, view-point of the subject, than up would jump the watch-dog of capitalism with the protest: "No politics in the union!" [Applause] He was right; that is to say, Labor or Socialist economics IS politics. BY THE SAME TOKEN CAPITALIST ECONOMICS LIKEWISE IS POLITICS. [Loud applause] Capitalist economics is at home, capitalist economics is tolerated, capitalist economics is safeguarded, aye, capitalist economics is fought for in craft Unionism—who would dare gainsay that politics IS a palpitating fact in the Union? or who would dare deny that the Labor Lieutenant of the Capitalist Class is the special custodian of that treasure? It is proven. Upon this particular

head—the

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of Unionism—Industrialism utters no new principle, leastwise a principle that it would lie in the mouth of craft Unionism to dispute. Great, however, is the merit of Industrialism in the consequences that flow from its utterance. Through craft Unionism the watch-dogs of the Capitalist Class keep the treasure a secret for their private gain. By openly proclaiming the treasure, Industrialism renders it public property. The consequences that flow herefrom mark the turning down of an old and the turning up of a new leaf. That leaf is inscribed "Political Unity." [Applause] It is not a political organization—as the Preamble indicates and I shall prove—that can "take and hold" the land and the capital and the fullness thereof. That—as the Preamble proclaims and I shall prove—is the function reserved for the economic organization of the working class. Nevertheless, society moves from stage to stage, not via a succession of shipwrecks, but via evolution. Each succeeding social stage connects with the one preceding. Before the new is established and its methods are in operation, the methods of the old are per force resorted to. They are the navel-strings of the child aborning. The evolution from the capitalist system to Socialism marks a revolution of first rank. The methods of the Socialist Republic will be methods that flow from its own material frame-work. The latter is so diametrically the opposite of the capitalist social frame-work, that the two methods will bear no comparison. Capitalist society requires the political State: accordingly, its economics translate themselves into political tenets; Socialist society, on the contrary, knows nothing of the political State: in Socialist society the political State is a thing of the past, either withered out of existence by disuse, or amputated—according as circumstances may dictate. For all that, Socialism is the outgrowth of, the higher development from capitalism. As such, the methods of the Socialist Movement on its march toward Socialist society are per force primarily dictated by the capitalist shell from which Socialism is hatching. Seeing that capitalist economics translate themselves into politics, Socialist economics cannot wholly escape the process. A part, the better, the constructive part of Socialist economics, translates itself into the Industrial organization of the Working Class: it translates itself into that formation that outlines the mold of the future social system; another part of Socialist economics, however, inevitably translates itself into politics: it inevitably takes that form that matches capitalist methods. Upon that plane the Socialist Movement crosses swords with the modern ruling class—these to

uphold, it to dislodge them from and dismantle their Robber Burg. [Applause] This is the fact that lies at the bottom of the Marxian tenet to the effect that the Labor Movement is essentially political. In a country like ours, where, in keeping with full-fledged capitalism, the suffrage is universal, the inevitable political character of the Labor Movement is rendered all the more marked. The sentence of the Preamble that we are now considering, and which urges the necessity of political as well as industrial unity, is planted upon these facts. Where, for instance, one set of workingmen imagine that they should pool their votes with their free trade employers, it is out of all question that they can be a unit on the industrial field with another set of workingmen whose economic views are that protection guarantees them work and better wages. Where, to take another issue, one set of workingmen share the capitalist economic notion that the gold standard means good wages, they cannot possibly be united on the political field with those of their fellow wage-slaves, whose political tenets on finance is that plentiful money means plentiful wages. These two sets cannot be industrially united, any more than politically, for the simple reason that they do not stand upon the rock-bed of the class struggle. Trace their economic and their political views to their respective sources, and you will find them to be identical—THE FUNDAMENTAL ERROR THAT THE EMPLOYEE'S CONDITION IS DEPENDENT UPON THE CONDITION OF THE EMPLOYER. The baneful result of the error is obvious: employers are economically divided into warring, competing clans; consequently, if the workingmen are appendages to their employers, they cannot choose but be likewise divided. Class ignorance, accordingly scatters the ranks of the Working Class. The rupture produced upon the industrial field is reflected upon the political field, and there we see the Labor vote likewise scattered—cast for all the scores of parties in the field, from the soundest Socialist down even to the Utopian Prohibitionist; and, on the other hand, the rupture exhibited upon the political reacts back upon and intensifies the division on the industrial field where, thanks to the baneful policy of craft Unionism, we see Labor's hand at Labor's own throat. [Applause] In this connection the speculative question has sprung up in some minds whether political unity is brought about by industrial unity, or industrial unity by political unity. As a question of speculative philosophy, it may be relegated to the realm of idle discussion. In natural philosophy a similar question appears in the conundrum: What was first, the hen or the egg? One man answers: "Of course, the hen: without the hen, there is no fowl to lay the egg"; another declares: "Nonsense, the egg must have been first: without the egg, there is nothing for the hen to be hatched out of." We know that in material life the evolutionary process is so gradual that result reacts back upon cause in such an endless chain that, in the limited span of

man's observation, the exact line of demarcation is not always ascertainable. Cause and effect become relative matters, frequently dependent upon the view-point of the moment. It is likewise in social matters. As an abstract question, it is idle speculation whether political clearness causes economic clearness, or, inversely, economic clearness brings about political clearness. We know that at certain stages of the Movement political clearness may be ahead of industrial clearness, and will act upon and stimulate it; likewise do we know that at certain other stages, there is no political unity, consequently, no political clearness possible, except as a result of economic unity, and that presupposes clearness. He who is engaged in raising poultry will get the eggs from which to hatch the hens; he who wants eggs for the market will get the hens to lay them; and he who wants both will cultivate both; he will not wear out his energies in speculations regarding the "original cause." That is the posture of the Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World. It recognizes the necessity of both political and industrial unity; it proclaims the fact; nor does it conceal its opinion as to which of the two, at this stage of the Movement, must precede in order to make the other possible. The construction of the sentence under consideration, proclaiming the necessity of unity "on the political field, AS WELL AS ON THE INDUSTRIAL FIELD," amply indicates which of the two unities Industrialism considers to be the necessary prerequisite at this stage of the Labor Movement in America. The sentence proclaims the fact that, at the stage reached by the Labor Movement in America, the political unity of the Working Class can only be the reflex of economic unity; it also proclaims the underlying, the pregnant fact that the political Movement is absolutely the reflex of economic organization. A brilliant passage in Marx' "Eighteenth Brumaire" casts a brilliant side-light upon this particular subject. Referring to the conduct of the feudal lords of England during the British Revolution, Marx says they believed that the British Crown and the Church of England were the subjects of their enthusiasm, until the hour of danger wrung from them the admission that what they really enthused for was GROUND-RENT. And so we see the Editors of the privately owned press of the Socialist or Social Democratic party in the land, called in this State Public Ownership party, conducting themselves to-day. They believed that Socialism was the object of their enthusiasm, until the hour of danger—the issuing of the Chicago Industrialists Manifesto, and the holding of the Chicago Convention—has wrung from them the admission that what they really enthused for was the flesh-pots of the A.F. of L. [Applause] Political unity is a slogan of Industrial Unionism.

2. *The Function of Unionism.*

I shall now proceed to the second, the closing sentence of the third of the three clauses that we have been considering—the sentence which sets up the theory that the final, the consummating act of Working Class emancipation must be achieved by the toilers "taking and holding" the product of their labor "through an economic organization of the Working Class, without affiliation with any political party." In no country, outside of the United States, is this theory applicable; in no country, outside of the United States, is the theory rational. It is irrational and, therefore, inapplicable in all other countries, with the possible exception of Great Britain and the rest of the English-speaking world, because no country but the United States has reached that stage of full-orbed capitalism—economic, political, and social—that the United States has attained. In other words, no other country is ripe for the execution of Marxian revolutionary tactics. [Applause] No wonder the theory has set all the owls, the pseudo-Marxists included, afluttering; no wonder it has set all the pod-snaps of the A.F. of L., together with its kindred craft "Brotherhoods," apondering, and aconning the "contradiction" of demanding "political unity," and in the same breath proposing to take and hold the machinery of production through an economic organization "without affiliation with any political party." In this sentence of the Preamble is condensed what may be called the code of Marxian "tactics," as distinguished from the code of Marxian "economics"; the code of "action," as distinguished from the code of "theory." As a consequence, the sentence outlines the form of the governmental administration of the Republic of Labor. It involves the vital Question of the function of Unionism, a Question that is so widely misunderstood that, on the one hand, we see the "intellectual," ever sneering at Unionism, and arguing, as is his wont, from partly correct and mainly false premises, that "the Union is a passing institution," not worth bothering about; and, on the other hand, the "Unionist," so-called, with a practical instinct that tells him the Union is no "passing institution," but who blunders into the superstition of revering as "Unionism" that which is purely a capitalist contrivance, labeled "Union" in order to deceive, and calculated to block the path of Unionism indeed. The Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World is the first pronouncement on the field of practice that clinches this many-sided issue. As becomes her opportunities, therefore her duty, this fruit first ripened on the soil of America.

It does not lie in a political organization, that is, a party, to "take and hold" the machinery of production. Both the "reason" for a political party and its "structure" unfit it for such work. I have at considerable length dealt with some of the aspects of this question in the address I delivered last year in Newark, N. J., "The Burning Question of Trades Unionism." I shall now take it up somewhat more in detail.

The “reason” for a political party, unfits it to “take and hold” the machinery of production. As shown when I dealt with the first sentence of this clause—the sentence that urges the necessity of political unity—the “reason” for a political Movement are {is? } the exigencies of the bourgeois shell in which the Social Revolution must partly shape its course. The governmental administration of capitalism is the State, the government proper: that institution is purely political: political power, in the language of Marx, is merely the organized power of the Capitalist Class to oppress, to curb, to keep the Working Class in subjection. [Applause] The bourgeois shell in which the Social Revolution must partly shape its course dictates the setting up of a body that shall contest the possession of the political Robber Burg by the Capitalist Class. The reason for such initial tactics also dictates their ultimate goal—THE RAZING WITH {TO? } THE GROUND {OF} THE ROBBER BURG OF CAPITALIST TYRANNY. The shops, the yards, the mills, in short, the mechanical establishments of production, now in the hands of the Capitalist Class—they are all to be “taken,” not for the purpose of being destroyed, but for the purpose of being “held”; for the purpose of improving and enlarging all the good that is latent in them, and that capitalism dwarfs; in short, they are to be “taken and held” in order to save them for civilization. It is exactly the reverse with the “political power.” That is to be taken for the purpose of ABOLISHING IT. It follows herefrom that the goal of the political Movement of Labor is purely DESTRUCTIVE. Suppose that, at some election, the class-conscious political arm of Labor were to sweep the field; suppose the sweeping were done in such a land-slide fashion that the capitalist election officials are themselves so completely swept off their base that they wouldn’t, if they could, and that they couldn’t, if they would, count us out; suppose that, from President down to Congress and the rest of the political redoubts of the capitalist political Robber Burg, our candidates were installed;—suppose that, what would there be for them to do? What should there be for them to do? Simply TO ADJOURN THEMSELVES, ON THE SPOT, SINE DIE. Their work would be done by disbanding. The political Movement of Labor, that, in the event of triumph, would prolong its existence a second after triumph, would be a usurpation. It would be either a usurpation, or the signal for a social catastrophe. It would be the signal for a social catastrophe if the political triumph did not find the Working Class of the land industrially organized, that is, in full possession of the plants of production and distribution, capable, accordingly, to assume the integral conduct of the productive powers of the land. The catastrophe would be instantaneous. The plants of production and distribution having remained in capitalist hands, production would be instantly blocked. On the other hand, if the political triumph does find the

Working Class industrially organized, then for the political Movement to prolong its existence would be to attempt to usurp the powers which its very triumph announces have devolved upon the central administration of the industrial organization. The "reason" for a political Movement obviously unfits it to "take and hold" the machinery of production. What the political Movement "moves into" is not the shops, but the Robber Burg of capitalism—for the purpose of dismantling it. [Applause]

And, now, as to the "structure" of a political party. Look closely into that, and the fact cannot escape you that its structure also unfits the political Movement to "take and hold" the machinery of production. The disability flows inevitably from the "reason" for politics. The "reason" for a political party, we have seen, is to contend with capitalism upon its own special field—the field that determines the fate of political power. It follows that the structure of a political party must be determined by the capitalist governmental system of territorial demarcations—a system that the Socialist Republic casts off like a slough that society shall have outgrown. Take Congress, for instance, whether Senate or House of Representatives. The unit of the Congressional representation is purely politically geographic; it is arbitrary. The structure of the Congressional district reflects the purpose of the capitalist State—political, that is, class tyranny over class. The thought of production is absent, wholly so from the Congressional demarcations. It cannot be otherwise. Congress—not being a central administration of the productive forces of the land, but the organized power of the Capitalist Class for oppression,—ITS constituent bodies can have no trace of a purpose to administer production. Shoemakers, bricklayers, miners, railroadmen, together with the workers in all manner of other fractions of industries, are, accordingly, jumbled together in each separate Congressional district. Accordingly, the political organization of Labor intended to capture a Congressional district is wholly unfit to "take and hold" the plants of industry. The only organization fit for that is the organization of the several industries themselves—and they are not subject to political lines of demarcation: they mock all such arbitrary, imaginary lines. The central administrative organ of the Socialist Republic—exactly the opposite of the central power of capitalism, not being the organized power of a ruling class for oppression, in short, not being political, but exclusively administrative of the producing forces of the land,—ITS constituent bodies must be exclusively industrial. The artillery may support the cavalry; the cavalry may support the infantry of an army in the act of final triumph; in the act, however, of "taking and holding" the nation's plants of production, the political organization of the Working Class can give no help. Its mission will have come to an end just before the consummation of that consummating act of Labor's

emancipation. The form of central authority to which the political organization had to adapt itself and consequently looked to, will have ceased to be. As the slough shed by the serpent that immediately reappears in its new skin, the political State will have been shed, and society will simultaneously appear in its new administrative garb. The mining, the railroad, the textile, the building industries, down or up the line, each of these, regardless of former political boundaries, will be the constituencies of that new central authority the rough scaffolding of which was raised last week in Chicago. [Applause] Where the General Executive Board of the Industrial Workers of the World will sit there will be the nation's capital. [Applause] Like the flimsy cardhouses that children raise, the present political governments of counties, of States, aye, of the city on the Potomac herself, will tumble down, their places taken by the central and the subordinate administrative organs of the Nation's industrial forces. [Applause] Obviously, not the "structure" of the POLITICAL Movement, but the structure of the ECONOMIC Movement is fit for the task, to "take and hold" the industrial administration of the country's productive activity—the only thing worth "taking and holding."

THE BALLOT.

The Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World poses well both the political and the economic Movement of Labor, and it places them in their proper relation towards each other.

Inestimable is the value, dignified the posture of the political Movement. It affords the Labor Movement the opportunity to ventilate its purposes, its aspirations and its methods free, over and above board, in the noon-day light of the sun, whereas otherwise, its agitation would be consigned to the circumscribed sphere of the rat-hole. The political Movement renders the masses accessible to the propaganda of Labor; it raises the Labor Movement above the category of a "conspiracy"; it places the Movement in line with the Spirit of the Age, which, on the one hand, denies the power of "conspiracy" in matters that not only affect the masses, but in which the masses must themselves be intelligent actors, and, on the other hand, demands the freest of utterance. In short and in fine, the political Movement bows to the methods of civilized discussion: IT GIVES A CHANCE TO THE PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF THE GREAT QUESTION AT ISSUE. By proclaiming the urgency of political as well as of industrial unity, the Preamble amply and sufficiently proclaims the affinity of the economic with the political Movement. At the same time, by expressly proclaiming that the "taking and holding" is an act that falls wholly within the province of the economic

organization, the Preamble locked a dangerous switch, a switch into which to run there is grave danger, the danger of rendering the Socialist, which means the Labor Movement, illusory, and a roosting place for the "intellectual" riff-raff of bourgeois society.

The ballot is a weapon of civilization; the ballot is a weapon that no revolutionary Movement of our times may ignore except at its own peril; the Socialist ballot is the emblem of RIGHT. For that very reason the Socialist ballot is

weaker than a woman's tears,

Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance,

Less valiant than the virgin in the night,

And skilless as unpracticed infancy,

unless it is backed by the MIGHT to enforce it. [Applause] That requisite Might is summed up in the Industrial organization of the Working Class. Now, mind you, that MIGHT the Labor Movement needs, as much, I would almost say, against the political Movements which its own breath heats into being, as against the capitalist tyrant himself. It needs that Might against the capitalist tyrant to put the quietus upon him; it also needs that Might to prevent the evil consequences to which, in this corrupt atmosphere of bourgeois society, the political Movement is inevitably exposed. The two points are vital. Much, infinitely more than appears at first sight, hangs thereby.

Despite the sharply marked economic feature of the Labor Movement, the principle, that it is bound to take on a political form also, is founded on no fine-spun theory. Even discounting the force of the sociologic arguments that I have presented to you, and which point to the inevitableness of the political manifestation of the Labor Movement, there is a consideration that I have referred to only incidentally so far, and which, when properly weighed, places the matter beyond the peradventure of a doubt. That consideration is the existence of universal suffrage in the land. The institution is so bred in the bones of the people that, notwithstanding it has become a gravel in the shoe of the capitalist, he, powerful though he is, dare not abolish it outright. Among such a people, chimerical is the idea of expecting to conduct a great Movement, whose palpable aim is a Socialist Revolution, to the slogan of "Abstinence from the Ballot-box! "The proposition cannot choose but brand its supporters as freaks. Whether the economic Movement wills it or not, its political phase will assert itself on the political field. Men from its own ranks, and men from outside of its ranks, will raise the standard of Labor politics. Nor will the capitalist be slow in endeavoring,

while humoring the thing, to draw the sting from it. Watchfully though he guards his political burg, he will, from time to time, carefully select some "promising" candidate from the Labor ticket, and allow him admission; or, may be, he is sometimes taken napping, and some Labor candidate slips through the fingers of his outposts at the ballot-box. Subjected to the lures and wiles at the disposal of the capitalist, these successful Labor candidates in the parliaments of capitalism, ten to one, succumb. They succumb due either to their own inherently corrupt souls, or to their muddle-headedness. In either case they betray the Working Class; the effect is harmfully felt by the economic Movement. Against this danger there is but one protection—the Industrial, that is, the classconscious economic organization to keep that ballot straight. Nothing short of such an economic organization will prevent the evil, because nothing short of such an economic organization can keep sharp the edge of the special sword wielded by the political Movement of Labor. What that special sword is I have shown before. It is purely DESTRUCTIVE. The economic Movement may take a little at a time. It may do so because its function is ultimately to "take and hold" the full plants of production; and save them for the human race. The political Movement, on the contrary, has an entirely different function: its function is wholly to tear down the political Burg of capitalist tyranny. It follows herefrom that the political Movement of Labor may not even remotely partake even of the appearance of compromise. It exemplifies the revolutionary aim of the Labor Movement: it must be uncompromisingly revolutionary. This fact dictates the conduct of the successful political candidates of Labor in the parliaments of capitalism. The principle found expression in the celebrated maxim uttered by William Liebknecht, when he still was in the full vigor of his Socialist aspirations—"Parlamentiren ist paktiren," to parliamentarize is to compromise, to log-roll, to sell out. [Applause] When, in later years, experience brought home to him the unfortunate fact that the bourgeois of Germany had not finished their own revolution; when he discovered that that revolution had first to be completed, and that there was none to undertake the task but the Social Democratic Movement; when that hard reality faced him and his Movement, Liebknecht wisely adapted his course to the requirements. To parliamentarize is legitimate tactics with the bourgeois revolution. The parliamentarizing that the German Social Democracy thereupon, with Liebknecht at its head, has been constrained to practice, demonstrates that the Movement in Germany has been constrained to adopt the tactics of the bourgeois revolutionist;—precisely the reason why such tactics are wholly out of place, wholly inadmissible, aye, a badge of treason to the Working Class when applied in America. [Applause] Without the MIGHT of the class-conscious economic back of the political Movement, the political Movements

that the Labor Movement inevitably promotes in America will not only be divided but, as a further result, will promote that confusion of thought that runs into corruption and that, reacting back upon the economic Movement, itself, help to scuttle its efficiency. It surely is no accident that, without exception, all the Labor candidates, so far allowed by the Capitalist Class to filter through their garrisons at their election defiles, whenever the office to which they were allowed to be returned elected was of any importance, have uniformly "parliamentarized," that is, "log-rolled," in short, sold out the Revolution. We saw it happen during the heyday of the K. of L.; we saw it happen more recently in Haverhill, in Brockton, in the Massachusetts Legislature, in Paterson, in Sheboygan; we see it happening now in Milwaukee. It is a matter of self-protection with the economic organization to watch and control the political. Skilless as unpracticed infancy, a danger to Labor itself, is the sword of Labor's ballot without the Might of the class-conscious economic organization to whet its edge, to keep it sharp, and to insist upon its being plied over the skull of the foe, to insist upon that at the peril of the muddle-heads, of the weakling, of the traitor. [Applause]

There now only remains one point to consider, and I am through. It is the point with regard to the necessity of the Industrial organization in order to supplement the Right of the ballot with the Might requisite to put the quietus upon the Capitalist Class itself. The point implies what is generally, but wrongly, meant by

THE GENERAL STRIKE,

a term, that, through misuse by its own advocates, who have hitherto placed the cart before the horse, is greatly misunderstood, and should be substituted by the more appropriate term of THE GENERAL LOCK-OUT OF THE CAPITALIST CLASS.

Political power is reached through the ballot-box. But the ballot-box is not an open field; it is a veritable defile. That defile is held by the agents of the Capitalist Class. The election inspectors and returning boards are capitalist appointees; they are veritable garrisons with which the Capitalist Class holds the defile. To imagine that these capitalist garrisons of the election defiles will complacently allow the candidates of the Revolution, whose program is the dismantling of the political burg of capitalism, peacefully to file through, is to indulge in a mooncalf 's vision. The revolutionary ballot of Labor is counted out now; it has been counted out from the first day of its appearance; it will be counted out even more extensively in the future. This fact is taken by some as a sufficient ground from which to conclude that the political Movement is utterly useless. Those who arrive at that conclusion

fall into the error of failing to realize that correct conclusions never flow from single premises. They can be arrived at only by considering all the premises in the case. While the Socialist ballot was, is and may continue to be counted out, the political Movement accomplishes that which all the counting out will not be able to counteract. A man may monkey with the thermometer, yet he is utterly unable to monkey with the temperature. Place a lump of ice to the bulb of the quicksilver in this room of suffocating heat, the column will sink below zero, yet the temperature remains at fever heat. Place a piece of burning coal to the quicksilver bulb in midwinter, the mercury will rise to fever-heat, yet the temperature remains cold, unaltered. So with the election returns. They are the political thermometer. [Applause] The political pickets of the Capitalist Class may monkey therewith to their heart's content—they will be unable to alter by the fraction of a degree the political temperature that prevails all around. Now, then, that political temperature, for reasons that I have already explained, IS PRE-EMINENTLY THE PRODUCT OF THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT OF LABOR. [Long applause] Wait, I have not yet proven the point. It still remains to be clinched. The question may still be asked, aye, it is asked, What does the hottest of political temperatures avail, if the Capitalist Class retains the power to nullify it by counting us out? It may avail much; here, in America, it may mean the consummation of that ideal so dearly pursued by the Socialist—THE PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF THE SOCIAL QUESTION. Look across at Europe. The feudal spirit still prevails there in an important respect, as a consequence of the continued prevalence there of large chunks of feudal institutions. In Europe, even the Capitalist Class is feudalized, let alone the surviving feudal heads. Though guilty of all the crimes of the decalogue {Decalogue? }, there is one vice that the feudal lord is substantially free from. That vice is COWARDICE. Valor is the burthen of the songs that rock their cradle; valor is the theme of the nursery tales to which they are raised; deeds of valor are the ideals set up before them. Take as a type the semi-crazy, semi-crippled Emperor of Germany. He will fight whatever the odds. In Europe a peaceful solution of the Social Question is out of all question. But how is the lay of the land here, in America? Was it songs of valor that rocked the cradles of our capitalist rulers? Was it tales of noble daring that formed the themes of the nursery tales to which they were brought up? Were the ideals that they gathered from their home surroundings the ideals of manliness? In short, did they reach their present position by deeds of valor? No! Daily experience, confirmed by every investigation that one set of capitalists institutes against another, tells us that they reached their present status of rulers by putting sand into your sugar, by watering their stocks, by putting shoddy into your clothes, by pouring water into your molasses, by breaches of

trust, by fraudulent failures and fraudulent fires, in short by SWINDLE. [Applause] Now, then, the swindler is a coward. Like a coward, he will play the bully, as we see the Capitalist Class doing, towards the weak, the weak because disorganized, Working Class. Before the strong, the bully crawls. Let the political temperature rise to the point of danger, then, all monkeying with the thermometer notwithstanding, your capitalist will quake in his stolen boots; he will not dare to fight; he will flee. [Applause] At least I, for one, expect to see him flee. But, indeed, he will not unless, back of that ballot that has raised the political temperature to fever-heat, is the Might of the Industrial organization, in full possession of the industrial establishments of the land, organized integrally, and, consequently, CAPABLE OF ASSUMING THE CONDUCT OF THE NATION'S PRODUCTION. The complete Industrial organization of the Working Class will then have insured the peaceful issue of the struggle. But perhaps the capitalist may not flee. Perhaps, in a delirium of rage, he may resist. So much the worse—for him. The Might, implied in the Industrial organization of the Working Class of the land, will be in position to mop the earth with the rebellious usurper in short order [loud applause] and safeguard the Right that the ballot proclaimed.

The futility of the ballot alone, however triumphant, was strikingly illustrated nine years ago during the first Bryan campaign. The political temperature against the plutocratic rulers of the land had risen to a point that they, for a moment, considered the battle at the ballot-box lost in advance. That, however, did not disconcert them. Through their national mouth-piece, Mark Hanna, they threatened to stop production. In other words, they threatened to go on strike. [Laughter] The threat was no idle bombast. They could. It was known that they could. Craft Unionism placed it in their power to do so. The threat had its effect. But let the capitalist attempt, under the pressure of the political temperature raised by the ballot of Labor,—let him attempt to strike. In possession of the Might conferred and implied by the Industrial organization of their class, the Working Class would forthwith LOCK OUT THE CAPITALIST CLASS. [Loud applause] Without political organization, the Labor Movement cannot triumph; without economic organization, the day of its political triumph would be the day of its defeat. Industrialism means Might. Craft Unionism means impotence. All the plants of production, aye, even the vast wealth for consumption, is to-day in the keeping of the Working Class. It is workingmen who are in charge of the factories, the railroads, the mines, in short all the land and machinery of production, and it is they also who sit as watchdogs before the pantries, the cellars and the safe deposit vaults of the capitalist class; aye, it is they who carry the guns in the armies. But this place of vantage is of no avail to them under craft Unionism. Under craft Unionism, only

one craft marches into the battlefield at a time. By their idly looking on, the other crafts scab it upon the combatant. What with that and the likewise idle on-looking of those divisions of the workers who man the commissary department, so to speak, of the Capitalist Class, the class struggle presents, under craft Unionism, the aspect of petty riots at which the empty stomachs and empty hands of the Working Class are pitted against the full ones of the employing class. Was this ignorance? Was this treason? Whether treason or ignorance, the turning in the long lane has been reached. Both the present conduct of craft Unionism and the future conduct of industrial Unionism was well portrayed by one of the delegates at the Chicago convention. Illustrating the point with the five fingers of his right hand far apart, he showed that to be the posture of the craft or autonomous Unions—disconnected from one another for all practical work, and good only to act as a fan, a fan that had hitherto done nothing but scare the flies away from the face of the Capitalist Class [laughter]; and, proceeding thereupon to illustrate the further point by drawing his five fingers tightly into a compact fist, he showed that to be the posture of industrial Unionism—a battering ram, that would leave the face of the Capitalist Class looking materially different from the way it looked when it was merely fanned. [Loud applause] The impotence wherewith the Right of the Working Class has hitherto been smitten, is now to be organized into a Might without which that Right is but mockery. The signal for that organization was struck last week at the Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World; and the word has gone out, as it could go out from no other country but America, in language that fits our full-grown capitalist development—

“Unite! Unite on the economic field upon the only basis that economic unity is possible—the basis of the solidarity of the Working Class, the only solid fact from which political unity can be reflected! Unite! Unite upon the only economic principle capable of backing up the Right of the Labor ballot with the Might to enforce it! Unite for the General Strike at the ballot-box, to overthrow the political Robber-Burg of capitalism, backed by the General Strike, against, or, rather, the General Lock-out of the Capitalist Class from the industrial fields that it has usurped. Unite for the emancipation of the Working Class, and to save Civilization from a catastrophe! ”[Loud applause]

No. 1.

Q.—Do you not believe that the Capitalist Class will seek to prevent the growth of the Industrial Workers of the World by demanding from each employee a sworn affidavit that he is not a member of that organization?

A.—They may try that, but it will fail of its purpose. I showed you that the "contract" which I was made to sign by a pistol being held to my head was null. It was null because it was not I but the pistol that signed the contract. Likewise with such affidavits. They would not be sworn to by the workingman, but by the whip of hunger held over his head. The whip took the oath, let the whip keep it. [Laughter and applause]

No. 2.

Q.—If I were to join that new Union, I would immediately be thrown out of work by the officers of my organization. What is a man to do?

A.—Look across to Russia. Individual uprisings are speedily crushed. The individual's safety lies in mass uprisings. The tyranny of the Grand Dukes of the A.F. of L. and such kindred craft organizations can be overcome only by mass-uprisings against them. Such a tidal wave of rebellion against the Labor Lieutenants of the Capitalist Class is now shaping, soon to burst over their heads. [Applause]

Historical statistical notes

3 The exact figures are:
In 1860—$ 1,885,861,676.
In 1870—$ 4,232,325,442.
In 1880—$ 5,369,579,191.
In 1890—$ 9,372,437,283.
In 1900—$13,039,279,566.

4 The exact figures are:
In 1860—$ 378,878,966.
In 1870—$ 775,584,343.
In 1880—$ 947,953,795.
In 1890—$1,891,228,321.
In 1900—$2,330,578,010.